

How the Savior's Name Was Changed

Superstition, ignorance, and the dynamics of language led to a change in the Savior's Name, to a name He never had!

The Savior was born in Bethlehem of Judea of a Jewish virgin who spoke Hebrew (or perhaps Aramaic), a Semitic dialect. He was born into a society where Hebrew was the common language. The angel Gabriel had announced to Miriam (Mary) the mother that the Child about to be born would save His people Israel from their sins. His Name, therefore, would literally reflect this meaning and mission.

The Bible shows that whenever people were spoken to from on high, it was always to those who were familiar with or spoke the Hebrew language. Hebrew no doubt was spoken in the Garden of Eden. The Bible is a Hebrew book, given to spirit-filled Hebrew writers. The only language spoken for the first 1,757 years until the Tower of Babel incident was Hebrew. We must conclude, therefore, that Hebrew is the heavenly language.

Genesis 10:30 reveals that the tribes of Shem did not join the project at the plains of Shinar (Gen. 11:2) where the tower of Babel was built. According to Genesis 10, they dwelled at Mesha, in the foothills of Mount Sephar. Their Hebrew language was not changed. Request your free detailed mini-studies entitled, *Hebrew The Original Language* and *Hebrew/Aramaic Origin of the New Testament*.

With all those facts before us, we must ask, why do our Bibles call the Savior by the name Jesus that is neither Jewish nor Hebrew? Jesus has no translation in any language.

Why would a Jewish maiden, whose native tongue was Hebrew, living in a Jewish community of Hebrews, who had been addressed by the celestial messenger Gabriel, give her newborn a hybrid Latin-Greek name that carries no such meaning as Savior in either language? The Greek word for savior is "*soter*," while the Latin is "*salvare*." No part of this word is found in "Jesus," a name with no etymological meaning. Recall that the angel said His Name would be related to His purpose as Savior.

Jesus is Not the Name

The fact is, "Jesus" is not His name, and never was. The renowned Bible scholar and archaeologist Ernest Renan writes that the Savior was never called Jesus in His life!

Furthermore, there is not now nor was there ever an equivalent letter "j" in the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Nor is there any Hebrew letter that carries even an approximate sound of the consonant letter "j." Neither is there a letter "j" in the Greek alphabet.

Even our English "j" is of recent origin, appearing in English only 500 years ago, when it often replaced the letter "i," usually at the beginning of a word. The question before us is, what was the Savior's Name before there was a letter "j"? For some 1,500 years He obviously was called by another name that could not have contained the letter "j."

Would His Jewish disciples call Him by a hybrid Greek-Latin name when the Bible says they were unlearned and ignorant men? (Acts 4:13). They were common fishermen who spoke Hebrew or perhaps the closely related Aramaic dialect. Their Hebrew speech was then translated into Greek by linguists who gave us the record in our Bibles. Write for (or read online) our mini-study, *Was the New Testament Written in Greek?*

In this study we will pursue the origin of the English Jesus, and present evidence from both the Bible and secular sources revealing that the Name given from on high was the Hebrew Name "Yahshua," the same name as the Old Testament son of Nun whom we know as Joshua.

A Son Carries His Father's Name

The Savior clearly avowed, "I am come in my Father's Name" (John 5:43a). This passage means that He carried His Father's Name. Its meaning is not limited solely to His coming by authority or command of the Heavenly Father.

Just as today the family name is passed on from father to son, we would expect Yahshua to bear the Name of the Heavenly Father, AND come with His authority. In the Middle East a name carries far more significance and encompasses deeper implications than names in today's Western society. There is a reason the Savior was born in a Middle East society that even today holds one's name in high regard.

The Savior went on to say that although the people did not receive Him, if another would come in his own name, him they would receive. He added that Moses had written of Him, likely a reference to Exodus 15:2a, "Yah ...has become my salvation," [Hebrew = *shua*, i.e., Yah-shua]. (See also Deut. 18:15-19.)

As already stated, the Savior's Name essentially is the same as that of Joshua (pronounced "Yoshua"), the son of Nun (Num. 13:16). Joshua's name originally was Hoshea, or Hoshua, but Moses had prefixed the short or poetic form of the Sacred Name, Yah, calling Him Yahoshua, meaning Salvation of Yah.

From the Babylonian captivity onward, the "o" sound was dropped, according to linguistic authorities, and by the time of the Savior's birth the name was no longer "YahOshua," but became Yahshua. This custom of shortening names is commonplace. For example, "bedlam" comes from Bethlehem, Jon from Jonathan, and Liz or Beth from Elizabeth.

The Savior Yahshua indeed came in the Name of His Father, for His very Name means "the Salvation of YAH." His Name contains the sacred, poetic, heavenly family Name Yah: YAHshua. One has but to look at Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8 in the King James Bible where the hybrid "Jesus" erroneously appears. It is obvious that scribes went through the King James Bible and everywhere changed the true Name of Yahshua to Jesus. With overzealous intent, the name Joshua (Yahshua) the son of Nun had been mistakenly replaced with the hybrid "Jesus" as well! Later the **King James Version** (KJV) revisions and newer Bible versions have replaced the more proper Joshua.

No Other Name Has Salvation

Salvation comes through Yahshua the Messiah. Salvation is through Him alone. *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*, Acts 4:12.

Please note that your Bible specifically says there is no other Name! It does not say there is no other "person," which might allow you to call Him by whatever name you wish. Yahshua is the only Name by which we have salvation. There is no other name than Yahshua, which literally means the salvation that Yahweh has sent.

In talking with the penitent Jews at Pentecost, Peter was inspired to give this special Name through which we are to receive salvation. He did not say to be baptized in the person of the Messiah. Peter gave us a very specific command to call on the personal Name given by the Father, Acts 2:38, *Then Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the Name of Yahshua Messiah for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."* To be sure, the person of Yahshua is important. But the Name He was given by the angel came from On High and carries a very special meaning for the Savior, embodying the Name of Yahweh the Father

Himself. The Name Yahshua acknowledges both the Father and the salvation that is in His Son Yahshua.

Upon learning truth, we are to walk obediently in it. Most of us have learned deeper truth in small increments, and then put into practice what we have learned. Yahweh will continue to reveal more truth only if we accept and follow those things He has shown us. Why should He give more insight to those who reject and rebel at what He has already revealed?

Once we know the truth, past ignorance does not justify our continuing in ignorance. *And the times of this ignorance Yahweh winked at, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, Acts 17:30.* He reveals His truth to those who willingly seek and follow it.

Disguising the Name Yahweh

How did the Sacred Name get changed in our Bibles? The concealing of the four letters of the Tetragrammaton YHWH (יהוה) representing the Name of the Father first began with the Israelite priests. It was carried further by the ignorance of the early Christian translators.

The superstitious Jewish scribes, aware of Leviticus 24:16 and other verses that demanded reverence for Yahweh's Name, decided the best way to keep from blaspheming His Name would be to invoke substitute titles instead of calling on the proper Name of Yahweh. In their way of thinking, prohibiting the utterance of the Sacred Name would eliminate the potential of blaspheming it.

To forestall anyone's reading the Tetragrammaton and vocalizing the Name Yahweh, the scribes had placed diacritical marks of the vowels for Adonai over the Hebrew letters for His Name. In fact, the first vowel carried the sound of "e" as in met so the reader would read Yeh, and not blurt out even the short or poetic form, Yah. Theirs was a misguided zeal.

Early Translators Also Hide His Name

The early Christian translators were poor Hebrew scholars. In fact, most were ignorant of Hebrew, knowing only Greek and Latin. Having the attitude of "not wanting anything to do with those detestable Jews," they refused even to learn Hebrew and were thus unable to read the Old Testament in the original language. The main source of their information came from the Greek Septuagint translation of the Old Testament and not from original Hebrew texts.

The Greek has three declensions of nouns, three genders and five cases. The noun suffix (ending) indicates its use in the sentence, which also is true of most European languages.

For example, in Greek the masculine, nominative singular of the Savior's Name (rather an attempted transliteration) ends in "s." This explains why we also have so many proper nouns in the King James Bible whose Hebrew has been changed to end in the Greek form "s," such as Judas, Elias, Jonas, Esaias, Zacharias, Jermias, Annas, and Silas. These names were lifted directly out of the Greek Septuagint with no consideration that they were Hebrew names (often having the ending "Yah,"). As stated, neither Hebrew nor Greek has a letter "j." Both the Latin and the English letter "i" (with a sound as in police) is regarded as an equivalent to the Hebrew "yothe" (also "yod"). Never should the Savior's Name begin with the sound of "j" as in "jeers" but should begin with the vowel sound "ee," followed with "ah."

In the Septuagint, the equivalent Greek letter for Yahshua began with a capital I (or *iota*), and in the Latin was properly translated with a capital I. Later this became the letter "j" in Latin and was used for a capital "I" in early English, known as the "cursive J."

Where Did 'Yeshua' Come From?

Following the example in the Septuagint, Christian scholars did attempt to transliterate (bring across the sound of) the Savior's Name as it was written in the Greek.

Writing Yahweh's Name in the Hebrew texts (יהוה), Jewish scribes (hundreds of years earlier around the 9th to 10th C.E.) inserted a *shewa* (·) instead of the *qamets* (ָ), changing the vowel sound "ah" to "eh" to forestall blurting out the short form "Yah" of the Sacred Name. This practice is still found in the erroneous "JEHovah." (While using "Jehovah" might be considered better than using a substitute title in place of the Name of Yahweh, it is still an incorrect transliteration).

Thus, we have the Savior's Name beginning with "JE" when it should be "YAH" as in "halleluYAH." We don't say "halleluYEH."

Using the Greek capital "I" (*iota*), the Greek translators did not insert the vowel letter "a" (*alpha*) but had ignorantly accepted the Hebrew diacritical vowel points and used the letter "e" (*eta*). Thus they began the Savior's Name as "Ie."

The Greek has no "h" in its alphabet, only a rough breathing mark at a word's beginning that appears as a reverse apostrophe. No "h" appears in Greek of the poetic form "Yah." In fact, from the above, we can see the first part of the Tetragrammaton in Greek would be written "Ie" (with no "h" as they had none) to be consistent with the Jew's rule of "Yeh" to avoid vocalizing the "Yah" sound. Nor did the Jews want in any way to associate Yahweh's Name with that of the Savior's, which might be seen as acknowledging His position as the very Son of Yahweh Who came in His Father's Name.

The Greek language has no "sh" sound, so only the "s" (*sigma* = s) appears. Thus far, we have the first three letters of the Savior's Name (again, rather an attempted transliteration), "IES (ΙἸς)." In the Greek this is followed by "o" (o = *omicron*), the sound being short, as in lot. This is followed by the "u" (*upsilon* = u), sounded as "oo."

The transliteration in Greek, then, is something like "Ee-ess-oo-uh." Say it rapidly and we get a fairly close rendition, "Yesuah," remembering no "sh" sound was available. In ancient Greek the Savior's Name incorrectly appears as "IESOUS (ΙἸσοῦς)" with the suffix "s" for the Greek ending. The Latin translation (*Iēsus*) was then made primarily from the Greek text, bypassing the original Hebrew.

Yahshua = *Iesous* in Greek

As the Savior's Name was then transliterated into the Latin directly from the Greek translation, we have the masculine, nominative singular ending in "s," which was erroneously brought into the Latin as *Iesous*, and later became *Jesus*.

When the capital "I" was given a cursive tail around the year 1,500 C.E. to become the "J," it also took up the sound of the French "J" as in "journal". Yahshua's Sacred Name was soon corrupted to "Jesus" in English.

However, in Latin the "j" is sounded as "i" in police, or "ee." The Balkan country Yugoslavia was once spelled *Jugoslavia*, but was pronounced as it is today, Yugoslavia. Maps at the turn of the century often identified the U.S.S.R. as "*Sowjet Russiah*." The "j" had the "ee" sound and the "w" had the Germanic "v" sound. The word "major" is pronounced as "*mayor*" in both Latin and German. June and July are pronounced "Yune" and "Yuly."

All of this may be burdensome and technical, but necessary to show the evidence that the Name of the Hebrew Savior is Yahshua. He came in His Father's Name, "YAH." Had the Christian translators gone back to the original Hebrew His Name could have been faithfully preserved in the correct form "Yahshua." Instead, His Name was taken from the Greek into Latin, and then English,

losing the Hebrew and we end up with a Latinized-Greek hybrid instead of the holy, saving Name Yahshua. It is like taking loose change repeatedly from one pocket to place in another and losing a little of it each time.

‘Yeshu[a]’ a ‘Smoking Gun’?

Beyond the technical is a little-known fact that the Pharisaical Jews had referred to Yahshua as “Yeshu” for a specific reason. This, in particular, is a condemnation and curse upon the Savior Himself.

“...it became customary not to use Y[a]shua’s correct name but intentionally and consciously to use the distortion ‘Yeshu,’ because at some point someone realized that ‘Yeshu’ is also an acronym consisting of the first letters of the Hebrew insult, ‘*Yimach sh’mo v’zikhro*’ (‘May his name and memory be blotted out’; the words adapted and expand the last phrase of Psalm 109:13),” *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, by David H. Stern (p. 5).

In the *Babylonian Talmud*, a collection of Jewish oral traditions from about A.D. 200-500, we read: “On the even of the Passover Yeshu ...was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried. ‘He is going forth to be stoned because he has practised sorcery and enticed Israel with apostasy. Anyone who can say anything in his favour, let him come forward and plead on his behalf.’ But since nothing was brought forward in his favour he was hanged,” *The Journey from Texts to Translations*, by Paul D. Wegner (p. 133).

This fits neatly with the doctrinal pattern of not wanting to use or say Yahweh’s Name (i.e., Ineffability of the Name), especially when intrinsically tied to the Person Who proclaimed to have been with Yahweh from the beginning (John 8:58). But as the Yahshua also testified, the ignorant know not what they do (Luke 23:34).

We look forward to ignorance coming to an end. Indeed, it is coming to an end as we become aware of the Scriptural history and tradition of such things.

Necessity of His Name

The Savior’s Name means “the Salvation of Yah.” Nothing like this can be gleaned from the man-made, erroneous name “Jesus,” which developed from first the superstitious Jewish scribes, and then perpetuated through the ignorance of Christian scholars who were ridiculed by the Jews for their lack of linguistic knowledge of Hebrew.

Paul reveals, “Yahweh also has exalted [Yahshua] and given Him a Name which is above every name, that at the Name of Yahshua every knee should bow” (Phil. 2:9-10). The Name Yahweh gave to Mary, by which His Son was to be called, was Yahshua! This can be proved from margin notes in Matthew 1:21 and Luke 1:31 in most Bibles. The translators substituted and disguised the Holy Name, giving us the erroneous hybrid “Jesus.” It simply is not His Name! Furthermore, Paul says that the entire family of Yahweh will be called by the precious Name of “Yah” (Eph. 3:15). Some of the prophets carried His Name, such as IsaYah, ObadYah, ZephanYah, ZecharYah, and JeremYah.

We are to be given a specific name by the Father, and by which we will be known. How can anyone despise, ridicule and reject the Name Yahweh now, and then love and reverence it—and be called by it—in the Kingdom?

Names in the Bible have deep significance and have definite meanings. They give us deeper understanding. He has thus set before us an open door for more truth. His salvation is in the Name of His Son, Yahshua, and we are to keep His word and not deny His Name (Rev. 3:8). Under heaven there is none other Name than Yahshua and through Him we have salvation.

For a more in-depth look at this fascinating and salvational topic, request the free booklet *The Mistaken “J”* today.

© 2007, 2019 Yahweh’s Assembly in Yahshua
2963 County Road 233, Kingdom City, Missouri 65262
View us online at: www.YAIY.org
Call Toll Free: (877) 642-4101
Main Line: (573) 642-4100