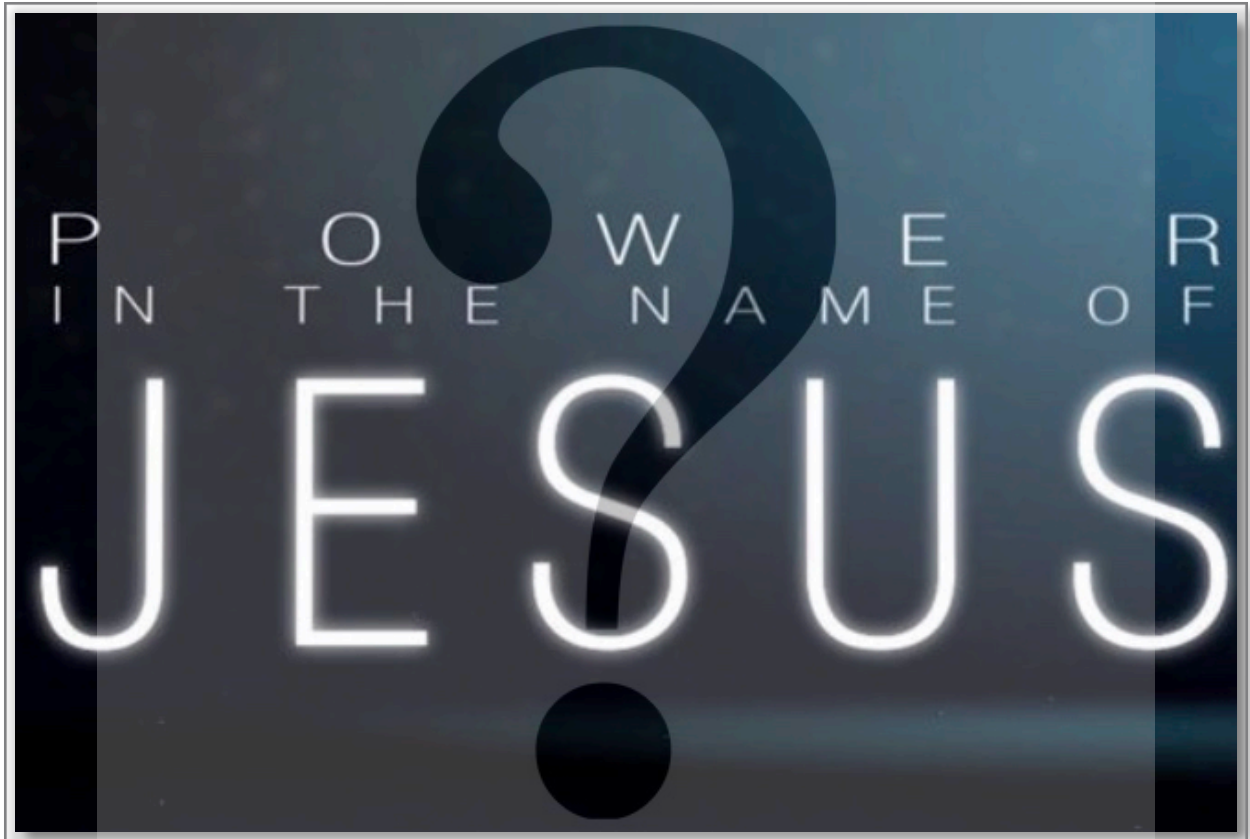


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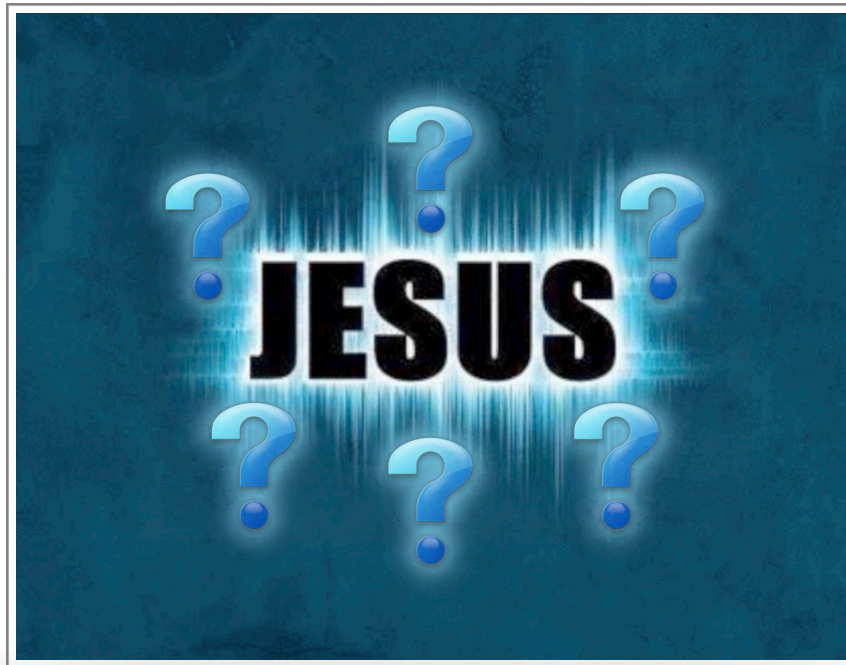
There's Something About That Name



R.J. Parish

There's Something About That Name

“The Name of the Son of Elohim is great and without bounds, and the whole world is supported by it. - The Shepherd of Hermas: Similitudes 19: 138



Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!

In the 1970s, a man named William J. Gather wrote a song by this same title, an ode to the name he believed belongs to the Messiah. “Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!” He sang, “there’s just something about that name. Master, Savior, Jesus, like the fragrance after the rain.” He goes on to insist in the song, “Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! Let all heaven and earth proclaim. Kings and kingdoms will all pass away but there’s something about that name.”

So goes the song by Mr. Gather, and he could not be more correct... The Name of our Lord and Savior and Master is pleasing like the scent of passing rain. It truly does outlast both kings and kingdoms, outshining all other lights in the universe, and ought to be outspokenly told to every living soul and treasured the world over. The one true Name of our Lord and Messiah is undoubtedly so precious that Heaven and earth should and do proclaim its greatness and ever sing its praise unto the ending of all time. Yet, if all this is right regarding our Saviors' sacred Name, then before we utter any single word of wonder or worship, should we not first be certain beyond all reasonable doubt that the name we know and love is in fact and in reality, that divinely inspired appellative the angel, Gabriel, gave Joseph and Mary to call Him?

If it is true like our savior said in John 3:18, "whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of Elohim," then that original Name is important for our salvation. If it is true like His apostle John said, "to all who received him, to those who believe in His Name, He gave the right to become children of Elohim," then that blessed Name is important for our identity. If it is true like our Savior said, "I will do whatever you ask in My Name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father," then that ancient Name is important as our power. And if it is indeed true like the apostle, Peter, said in Acts 4:12, "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other Name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved," then once more that perfect and pure Name is important not only for salvation but as salvation. In our time we've been calling Him "Jesus," but there's something about that name

...His Name isn't Jesus.

The name "Jesus" is entirely an invention of the English language and one we've been using less than 500 years. A nickname really and nothing more (though there is nothing wrong with it for what it is, but a nickname nonetheless). We must acknowledge the fact that it is our name for Him, and thus it is "man made." Our name for Him is not the same as His own Name for Himself, or more perfectly put, Heaven's Name for Him. The Almighty Himself sent His angel to tell Joseph a special Name to call his Stepson

and also separately to tell Mary that same special Name for her Son. In Matthew 1:21, we are told the reason for this special Name is,

"... because He will save His people from their sins." That special Name was also required to match for meaning the prophecy about the Messiah spoken by Jeremiah, "In His days, Judah will be saved, and Israel will live in safety. This is the Name by which He will be called, 'YAHWEH (YHWH) our Righteousness. '"

In the twenty-first century, we were taught to trust in the name of "Jesus", but in the first century, they were taught to trust in the Name of "Yahshua", which means "YAHWEH Saves." So, how then do we come to be calling Him "Jesus" 2000 years later? How do we get "Jesus" out of "Yahshua"? Well...It wasn't easy! Translation is the process of bringing the meaning of a word from one language into another, but this is not a pattern followed when it comes to carrying names from one language to another. That process is called transliteration, the attempt to convey the sound of a word from one language using the sounds of another language...but also the grammatical rules of that language too. This is most often impossible to reproduce perfectly due to the lack of shared alphabets between languages and the presence of conflicting rules. It becomes even more complex the further a word is transliterated into subsequent tongues. A single word carried from one language into another will most often share recognizable elements such as "Kefa" in Hebrew to "Petra" in Greek, but to take that new word and cross over to a third language, "Peter" in English, and even a fourth, "Pedro" in Spanish yields an end result unrecognizable to its ancestral self when set side by side (Kefa/Pedro).

All this movement and manipulation creates a hybrid title unlike the initial word and one which will hold no meaning at all in the end. This is precisely what happened to develop the name we've come to associate with our Saviour, a name never spoken nor even thought of in His own time, and one which would be 15 centuries and more in the making. If we were to transliterate our Messiah's own Name from "Yahshua" in Hebrew directly into English, the world we live in would know the Messiah as "Joshua", not "Jesus", but we did not carry the Hebrew sounds for His Name straight from His language to ours. Instead, we first filtered it through two other forms of speech. The Name was taken from Hebrew into Greek, from Greek into Latin, and from Latin into English.

Thereby, in our time, we have sounds which may be used to relate to our Messiah, of which we are fond of calling faithfully, but in all actuality they have no real meaning beyond association. This name holds no linguistic significance in any language, let alone our own. The bottom line is that the name "Jesus" is quite simply a term of endearment, conjuring up a mental connection with the Messiah. It is not the Name that saves, serves as power, and identifies us as children of the Most High. For that Name, and all the promises that come with it, we must look back 2000 years and then some.

As always we begin our study with Scripture, since it is the only source of authority for all our faith and practice. I'm not talking about our English translation of Scripture or our various versions thereof. To find our Messiah's True Name, the only Name of power nations need fear and praise, we must turn to the Hebrew "Old Testament" and the Greek translation of the "New" Testament, then coupling our findings with our knowledge of the culture and times. In Matthew 1:21, the angel said that Joseph was to ". . .give Him the name 'Iesous because He will save His people from their sins, " but this is a non-sequitur, because the word "Iesous" does not indicate anything regarding salvation for anyone. In fact the name "Iesous" does not give any indication of any meaning at all, as it has no actual meaning, itself being a transliteration of the Name, "Yahshua." If then the name "Iesous" is what the Bible really recorded (and we know the Bible does not err) why should we believe the Messiah's real Name was "Yahshua", a word not appearing in the New Testament? While the copies of the New Testament are penned in Greek, all indications illustrate that they are themselves translations from Hebrew. Pairing this fact with our knowledge that our Messiah was in-fact Hebrew, not Greek, and by all accounts His mother and step-father were Law abiding Hebrews too, it does not follow that the Jewish Messiah would have a Greek name.

Additionally, and moreover, another man is mentioned on two occasions in the "New" Testament, a man of whom much is said in the "Old" Testament, and the "New" Testament calls him "Iesous" as well, though he has another name in the "Old". Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8 speak of the successor of Moses and ruler of all Israel, who led the people into the promised land, and both passages call him "Iesous" just like the Saviour is always called throughout the "New" Testament. In the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the "Old" Testament, there too he is called "Iesous", the same as the "New" Testament

calls our Messiah, but in the original “Old” Testament, the Hebrew language calls this man "Yahshua". When the scholars transliterate the name of this man in the “Old” Testament into English, they call him "Joshua", and when they transliterate the two references of him found in the “New” Testament where his name is written as "Iesous", they still render his name as "Joshua". Yet every time the Greek says "Iesous", referring to our Messiah, they render it "Jesus" instead.

Judge-for yourself if that makes sense. If "Iesous" can be rendered as "Joshua" twice when every other time it is rendered as "Jesus", is there something being missed? This then is how we may know that the Name of our Messiah and Saviour is in fact "Yahshua" and not any other name. But how then if that is so did we come to be calling Him "Jesus" instead? For this we must breakdown the word phonetically. "Yahshua" was transliterated into "Iesous" through a search for similarity between alphabets, compromise for the rules of Greek grammar, and the silly superstition of Jewish tradition.

The "Y" sound is duplicated in Greek with and "I", that has a "Y" sound. (There is no "Y" equivalent in Greek.) Then follow the superstitious nonsense, to make the short "ah" into the long "e". Since the exile in Babylon the Jews have harbored the tradition that the Creator’s NAME is too holy to be spoken, and have spent exorbitant amounts of effort to hide It from the world, including its poetic short form, "YAH" found within a number of names of people, places, and things. This was done either by contraction or by the use of alternate vowel sounds, therefore "Yahshua" became “Y'shua” in short, or otherwise as “Yoshua” or "Yeshua". Ergo, "YAH" becomes "Ye", and "Ye" becomes "Ie". As there is no way to represent the "sh" sound in the Greek language, a simple "s" sound is substituted making, “Yesh" into “Ies". The long "u" is duplicated by the diphthong “ou" which sounds the same in Hebrew and in Greek, making, “Yeshu" into “Iesou". Finally, the "s" ending appears in the Greek to conform to the grammatical rule of masculinity. In Greek "a" is a feminine ending and “ous" is masculine, so “Iesoua" would imply that the name bearer was a woman which could not be done. To wit, "Yahshua" was made "Yeshua" through Jewish superstition, and "Yeshua" became "Iesous" in the above described manner. But getting "Jesus" out of that took far longer than getting "Iesous" out of "Yahshua".

As it is all too natural for mankind to reshape our religion into our own image rather than allowing that faith to reform us to better reflect its values and virtues, so also in the early years, after the Messiah's Resurrection and Ascension to Heaven, His Divine Name, "Yahshua", began to be replaced among His people with the transliterated Greek form, "Iesous", as more gentiles came to the faith than did Jews. As Gentiles began to dominate the assemblies throughout the empire and Greco-Roman influence began to hold sway both in thought and custom, as well as linguistically, the faith of the ages was changed enough to prevent the conversion of many holy Jews. That, and Greek being the common tongue in Western lands at the time, furthered the use of "Iesous" as the substitute title of the Messiah. And with the ultimate fall of the holy city of Jerusalem in the early second century and the outlawing in the region of all things deemed to be (or appearing the be) Jewish, the loss of the Messiah's real Name was assured.

Our Saviour was known as "Iesous" in the whole Roman world for the better part of two centuries, until Greek could no longer remain the language of the Ecclesia (the entity later to become known as the Church). Greek had evolved too much in the culture and was continuing to morph and to change late in the fourth century. For this reason and others, the Holy Roman Catholic Church adopted Latin, instead, as the official Church language. The *Vetus Latina* or Old Latin Bible was translated from the Greek Bible into Latin which had by that time fallen into disuse as a common tongue. Rather than transliterating the Messiah's Name from the original, "Yahshua" or even the related "Yeshua", they transliterated the already transliterated name, "Iesous". Greek and Latin being far closer languages to each other than, Hebrew and Greek, the word "Iesous" changed very little, becoming "Iesus". And "Iesus" is how it would remain for nearly thirteen-hundred years.

After the Norman Invasion in the tenth century, the letter "I" began very slowly to develop into two pronunciations and two ways of being written. As the writing developed "i" evolved into "j". Yet still for many centuries both "I" and "J" made the sound of "I" and "Y". And in-fact "Iesous" did not become "Jesus" in our English Bibles until the 17th century. Which means when Columbus sailed the ocean blue in 1492, the Lord was known as "Iesous". When the Protestant Reformation began in 1517, the Messiah was known as "Iesus", and when King James commissioned the so-called "Authorized

Version” of Scripture in 1611, the Saviour was known as "Jesus". Eventually during later editions of the King James Version, "Jesus" was changed to "Jesus" and so it has stayed even to our own time where we preach the Gospel of one, Jesus Christ instead of the good news of Yahshua the Messiah.

Many people will ask, "What difference does it make?" And different theologians draw up battle lines on differing points related to this issue, ranging from a risk of salvation to the worship of a false god, but the bottom line is this: It matters, because our Saviour said it matters. Are you going to Hell because you call Him “Jesus” when that's not His Name? Are you secretly serving somebody other than the only begotten ‘Son’ of YAHWEH? I would quickly emphatically declare that that's above my pay grade, but I'd demand of anyone to prove such things from Scripture not conjecture! Yahshua declared in John 10:14 and 27, "I know My sheep and My sheep know Me...I know them, and they follow Me". We do not follow a simpleton-Saviour who can't figure out our intentions toward Him just because we gave Him a nick-name. He sees our hearts, and we see His. The connection goes deeper than words. That said, however, we have a responsibility once we know the truth and can not fall back on the Lord's knowledge of our hearts when we choose not to act on the knowledge of the truth in our minds.

If we want to know our Messiah, Who He really is, not our modern idea of Him molded to our imagination, then we need to own the fact that He is Hebrew, lived as a Hebrew, spoke Hebrew, and has a Hebrew Name. Our Lord Himself said we would have persecution in this world and said in John 15:21, "They will treat you this way because of My Name." But the Disciples also promised in John 20:31, "By believing you will have life in His Name." Scripture teaches that every good and true thing comes by calling on "Yahshua," the True Name, and that without this Name nothing good will ever be bestowed in full. Moreover it has been said by the writers of the early “Church”, "The Name of the Son of Elohim is Great and without bounds, and the whole world is supported by it. " And why now should we not believe it is so, now that we know the real and true Name of that ‘Son’ of the Most High? We cannot back track now without hypocrisy, for we have already said in our songs that all should hail the power of the Name, insisting angels prostrate before it. We've already declared that His Name calms our fears and bids our sorrows cease, that it is music in the sinner's ears, that it is life and

health and peace. We've announced to all Creation that His Name is above all names and exalted more and more, exclaimed how sweet His Name sounds in the believer's ear and that His Name is wonderful. We told everyone who lives and breathes that in the Messiah's Name we have the victory, and in His Name satan has to flee. If it really is as we've proclaimed, that there is something about that Name which is like fragrance after the rain and of which kings and kingdoms fade before it, then we cannot with good sense and in good faith ask such a question, now that we've found the Name we should truly praise, though it be other than we had been taught to believe.

In Ancient Hebrew culture, names always mattered not simply as sounds to associate with people, places, and things, but they are thought to speak of the deeper reality of the nature of people, places, and things. Names were said to define fate, to designate class, to determine quality, and to declare expectations. In ancient times anyone or thing could be fully known by the mention of a name. A name signified the sounds that identify a person, and it symbolized that persons' reputation, authority, power, and renown. The sounds of the name were just as important as all that it stood for, and they were just as impossible to separate from their meaning as they were to be without meaning. And a change in a name or the addition of a new name spoke of a change in status or the increase of status.

Adam was given his name to remind him always that quite literally he came from dirt and in death would return to dirt. Eve's name indicated that she would be mother to all the living. Abram's name had meant, "Exalted Father" but the Creator changed it for purposes of the covenant to Abraham, meaning, "Father of nations" in reflection of the vows of the promise just made. And likewise the Almighty also changed the name of Sarai meaning "princess" to Sarah meaning "Mother of nations," because she, with Abraham would fulfill the promise of the covenant. When their son was born, he was named "Isaac" meaning "laughter" so that Sarah would never forget that she had laughed at the promise that she would have a son and because Isaac would bring them much joy. Esau's name means "hairy", and so he is said to have been. Jacob's name calls him a "supplanter" and so he was, fooling his brother out of his birthright. Only after wrestling with the Angel was Jacob's name divinely changed to "He who struggles (or rules) with Elohim." And such became the name of the promised nation, Israel. Moses was named,

"drawn out" because he was, as a baby, drawn out of the Nile, but later in life he was also drawn out of Egypt and even later was to draw out all Israel from Egypt too. Moses' successor was called Hoshea meaning, "salvation" until he was to take over for Moses and lead all the people. Then his name was changed by the Moses to "Yahoshua, " meaning "YAHWEH is Salvation." (Yahoshua contracts to Yahshua.) Even Messiah Himself gave James and John the name "Sons of Thunder" indicating their behavior, and He changed Simon's name to Kefa (Peter) meaning, "rock" because he was stubborn.

This is why it matters what Name we call our Messiah, because whatever Name is His will tell us and the whole world where He came from and where He went, why He was here and why He left, what His mission was the first time, and what it will be when He returns. That Name will define who our Saviour is collectively to all believers and personally to each of us, and most of all our Saviour's real Name will define who we are as His disciples. The world hates us when they know we follow "Jesus", but they loath us entirely when they know we follow "Yahshua." Any change to a Name indicates a change in the person to whom the name belongs, but Scripture tells us that our Saviour is "the same yesterday, today, and forever." If then His Name can change, so can His Word, His commandments, or His Promises. So we ought to ask ourselves why we have an aversion to His true Name. We ought to question not our salvation in the next life but our intention in this one. We ought challenge ourselves to adapt our understanding to His rather than Him to our imagination. Indeed there is just something about that Name: Like its Owner "Yahshua the Messiah," it is...

...the same yesterday, today, and forever!



FROM YAHSHUA TO JESUS: HOW THE NAME DEVOLVED

