

Divine Name Revelations

Should We Honor the Traditions of Men?

By William Schnoebelen © 2012

One of the most important issues confronting every Believer is whether or not they should KNOW and USE the Divine Name. The Psalmist writes:

Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my Name. – Ps. 91:14

The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. – Prov. 18:10

One of the key identifiers of the people of Yahuwah is that they shall know His name (**Is. 52:6**). The prophet Ezekiel said that in the end times, He *will* make His Holy Name known in the midst of Israel (**Ezek. 39:7**). Numerous other passages support this vital component of every believer's heritage.

Some may ask, "*Why would Yahuwah's Name have to be made known to Israel? Shouldn't they already know His name?*" Unfortunately most do not. Although a few scholars know His Name, the truth is that during the time period between the Testaments, Jewish authorities created a ruling (without scriptural support) that the Divine Name was not to be used. There may be other reasons this decision was made, but it has produced devastating results. The fact is that His True Name was deemed too holy for common discourse. This in spite of the fact that it is evident in the Bible that Israelites used His Name in respectful greetings to one another, as Boaz does with his reapers in **Ruth 2:4**.

Because of this well meant but superstitious doctrine, the use of His Name, YAHUWAH, began to vanish from among the people of Israel. By the time Yah'shua came to earth, folklore demanded that the name ONLY be spoken *once a year*, in the Holy of Holies, by the high priest, on *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement). The vast majority of Israelites were left with no knowledge of the true name of their Heavenly Father!

A SUBSTITUTE name was given to them for prayers and reading of the Scriptures. The substitute was ADONAI, which essentially means "Lord." However, both in Hebrew and many other languages, the word Lord can mean a titled landholder, a human being or other lesser/false deity. This causes error and confusion.

This confusion also comes because another word is translated "lord" in Hebrew and that is Ba'al. Though most Bible students know Ba'al as a false god of the Canaanites, they may not know that his name is also just a generic title. It can mean "lord" or "husband." In numerous places in the historical Scriptures, like Judges, the term

Baalim (which literally means Ba'als – *plural*) is used (**Judges 2:11**)¹. Just as Paul wrote, “**gods many and lords many**” (**1 Cor. 8:5**), the term Ba'al can be used as a term for one or *more than one* lord.

By the time of Messiah, millions of devout Jews and Israelites were calling upon the generic name Adonai in their prayers. When they stood up to read Torah and they came to the Tetragrammaton (the four-letter name of Yahuwah), they would not read it, but instead would say, “Adonai”. As time past, they also began using the word “Hashem” which simply means “the Name” in Hebrew.

This is why when our Master, Yah'shua, came to earth to minister; He said He came in His Father's name:

I am come in my Father's Name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. – John 5:43

During Yah'shua's time, no one knew the Father's Name except the elite priesthood, and they would not divulge it to *anyone*. In fact, speaking the name was considered blasphemy!

This is why Yah'shua prayed and asked His Father to “**glorify THY name**” (**John 12:28**). In fact, in the great High Priestly Prayer of **John 17**, He said that He had manifested the Father's Name to His disciples (vs. 6) and that He had declared the Name to them (vs. 26). But also note this in verses 11-12:

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine Own Name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy Name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

The Divine Name, Yahuwah, is an important element of our being “kept” safe and secure, both spiritually and physically.

A Pious Deception

This is why Yah'shua enraged the Pharisees of His day. He insisted on using the Divine Name in public! Recall the famous passage in **John 8**:

¹ Just as a small example, Judg. 3:7, 8:33 and 10:6; 1 Sam. 12:10, 1 Kings 18:18, Jeremiah 2:23, Hosea 2:13 and 11:2

² Malcolm Hay, THE ROOTS OF ANTI-SEMITISM

Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I Am. – John 8:58

The phrase Yah'shua used here is "I Am," in Hebrew - the Divine Name (Ex. 3:14). That's why they "**took up stones to stone him.**" (vs. 59)

After the fall of the temple in 70 AD and the Bar Kochba rebellion (2nd century Jewish "messiah" whose revolt was crushed by Rome), there arose a serious split between the Pharisees and the Messianic Believers in Yah'shua. At the same time, gentile "Christianity" was on the rise and gradually, the Messianic Believers became marginalized – especially with the rise of the Roman church under Constantine.

The gentile church became increasingly anti-Semitic. For example, John Chrysostom (a prominent "church father" who died in 407) taught that the synagogue was "*...worse than a brothel...a temple of demons devoted to idolatrous cults...As for me, I hate the synagogue... I hate the Jews for the same reason.*"²

Ignatius of Antioch, an earlier "father" (martyred in 117 AD) wrote³:

For if we are still practicing Judaism, we admit that we have not received God's favor...it is wrong to talk about Jesus Christ and live like Jews. For Christianity did not believe in Judaism, but Judaism in Christianity.

Augustine (d. 430 AD) taught⁴:

How hateful to me are the enemies of your Scripture! How I wish that you would slay them (the Jews) with your two-edged sword, so that there should be none to oppose your word!

Oddly enough, in spite of rising anti-Semitism in the established church, the Pharisees' custom of substituting the name Adonai or Hashem for the true Divine Name was kept in the production of Scriptures. The Masoretic text became the standard for the Hebrew writings (*Tenakh*⁵) and its use of Adonai became the standard. Even in the New Testament, Yahuwah's name is missing – "out of respect for the Jews."

Down through the centuries, almost all Bibles in any language would translate the Divine Name as some form of "LORD." Even within the beginnings of the modern Messianic movement, (Jews who believe Yah'shua is the Messiah) many of the Bibles produced use ADONAI or Hashem for the Divine Name – so as not to trespass against the old edict. Brothers and sisters, this is pious and condescending to the Truths that are Yahuwah.

² Malcolm Hay, THE ROOTS OF ANTI-SEMITISM

³ Epistle to the Magnesians

⁴ Augustine, CONFESSIONS, 12.14

⁵ Tenakh is an acronym for *Torah-Naviim-Ketuvim* – meaning the "Law-Prophets-Writings." It is the Hebrew term for what Christians call the "Old Testament."

I am a Jew, but I'm not offended by the use of the true Name! Yah'shua warned about Pharisees who “**transgress the commandment**” by their tradition (**Matt. 15:3**). Just because generations of rabbis (the descendants – doctrinally – of the Pharisees) have created traditions, but we do not have to follow those traditions if they contradict the Torah!

Exodus 20:7 says, “**Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain...**” Though most Christians think that forbids blaspheming His name (which it does), it also means something else.

Frequently in the Scriptures, you will see the word “vain” used in context to mean “meaningless” or “irrelevant.” In fact, using the Law of First Mention⁶, you will see that in Ex. 5:9, (“**...let them not regard vain words**”) the context *has nothing to do with blasphemy and everything to do with saying the words are silly or irrelevant.*

In another use, **Lev. 26:16** says, “**ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.**” Here again, the word “vain” means something useless or pointless. A similar use is in verse 20 of the same passage. What the rabbinical leaders have done is made the Divine Name “vain” in the sense of making it pointless, useless and irrelevant. *What good is a name that no one knows?*

Thus, we exhort members of the Messianic community to stop tiptoeing through the *Tenakh*! A key part of Yah'shua's mission was to proclaim the name of His Father and we need to continue to do that! Of course, as many understand, using the name “Jesus” for Yah'shua also makes the Father's Name vain. How is that?

Well, consider that He said He came in His Father's name (**John 5:43**). His Hebrew name, Yah'shua, contains the poetic short form of the Divine Name, **Yah**. Jesus does not. Yah'shua in Hebrew means “Yah saves” or “Yah is salvation.” Jesus does not. In fact, there are *dozens* of places where the Hebrew Scriptures say “YAH'SHUA” for the word, “salvation.”

Just a few examples:

The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. – Ex. 15:2

The LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation. – Ps. 118:14

⁶ A common and important rule for Bible interpretation which says that the first time a word is used in the Scriptures, it is key clue to its meaning.

Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. – Is. 12:2

See the beautiful truth here? If the rabbis had not removed the Divine Name and changed the name of Yah'shua, a devout Jew reading these and many other passages would plainly see that Yahuwah has become Yah'shua! That is a **clear** prophecy of the incarnation of Messiah! One might suspect that there was a satanic conspiracy at work here, to keep the truth from devout Jews as long as possible.

However, please understand that we are NOT saying that there is anything wrong with the name "Jesus." I was saved in 1984 by calling upon Jesus Christ. The Almighty understands and knows our hearts. I know that calling upon Jesus has saved millions and that is fine. However, I believe that in these end times, when the Spirit is being poured out on more and more Jewish people and the church itself is becoming more involved with the Hebrew roots movement that it is better to use His real name.

If you have a foreign guest in your home – let's say a man named "José," you would not call him Joe. That would be disrespectful. It would not be a sin, but it would be disrespectful. I think, in the same way, it is more respectful to call our Master by the name His mother called Him and His disciples called Him.

Also, remember, the letter "J" did not even exist until a few hundred years ago, so we can know *with certainty* that no one called Him Jesus in 30 AD.

Yahuwah or Jehovah?

Since Isaiah uses the name "JEHOVAH," let me address this. Most of my readers know that I believe the Authorized Version (King James Bible) is THE Word of the Almighty, divinely inspired and preserved for us today. The AV uses the name Jehovah in several places - is this accurate?

If you own a copy of the AV 1611 (first edition), note that in that edition, there was no use of the letter "J." The letter "J" was just coming into use at that time. So, in the 1611 King James, Jehovah is spelled IEHOVAH. I would submit that the difference between Yahuwah and Iehovah is minimal – this tells us the original Name was Yahuwah!

There's also another use of the Divine Name in the AV. This is the commonly used word, *Hallelujah!* Many Believers know that Hallelujah means, "Praise the LORD" or "Praise Yah." However, in a holdover from the days before the letter J, we pronounce the name Hallelu-YAH. I have never heard anyone say "Hallelu-JAH."

We need to proclaim the name Yahuwah because evil flees when we do so. In the past 12 years of so since we have been using the Hebrew names for the Father and the Son,

we've noted that both in deliverance and spiritual warfare, the power and effectiveness of our prayers has been taken on an entirely higher order of magnitude. Demons were fleeing before, but with use of the Divine Names in Hebrew, they *really* scatter like cockroaches!

We give all the glory to Yahuwah for this, Who shared these precious truths with us! We are just His servants, but we want to be sure His Name is NOT made vain through neglect or disuse. If you are in a Messianic body that uses Adonai or Hashem for this name, in scriptures or preaching and worship, please encourage your leaders to prayerfully study and consider His Truths presented in this article. I understand that many congregations do this to not offend Jews who might be present.

However, we need to fear and please Yahuwah, not men (**Colossians 3:22**). If we are faithful to Him, the Spirit will work on the hearts of the Jewish people in a new and powerful way! He is faithful because we honor His name! Let His Name go forth! HALLELUYAH!

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