

Chapter 4

WHO IS THE MESSIAH AND WHAT IS HIS NAME?

Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What *is* his name, and what *is* his son's name, if thou canst tell?

PROVERBS 30:4

The Messiah is a figure central to Jewish culture as the anticipated saviour of the Jews. The Hebrew word for Messiah is *Mashiach* which means “*anointed.*” There are no references to the word “messiah” in the King James New Testament (however the word “messias” is used twice). Rather than use a word that more closely resembled the actual Hebrew word *Mashiach*, the King James translators used an English form of the Greek word *Christos* in their translations. Hence we read about Jesus *Christ* rather than Messiah Je-

sus. This has hindered most Christians' understanding of the Hebrew roots of their faith.

Even though Jewish tradition speaks of two Messiahs: Messiah Ben Joseph (the Messiah as the suffering servant) and Messiah Ben David (the Messiah as the ruling King) most Jews do not accept that the Messiah has already come. They do not accept Jesus as the suffering servant who was sacrificed as the atonement for sin and who defeated death and Satan.

While the Jews do believe that a Messiah will someday arise, they do not believe that the Messiah will be the Son of YEHOVAH. They believe it is blasphemy to say that YEHOVAH has a son (Mark 14:61-64). Yet the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible) clearly shows that YEHOVAH has a son as written in Proverbs 30:4 above. Additionally, Moses wrote of a special prophet that YEHOVAH would raise up, a prophet of Israel of the stature of Moses, who would speak all the words that YEHOVAH would give him. Christians believe that this prophet is Jesus—the Son of YEHOVAH:

I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

DEUTERONOMY 18:18

It is interesting that the word *raise* is used in the verse above—for three reasons. First, a father “*raises up a son,*” so it could be inferred that the prophet is to be the son of the Father—reinforcing the fact that YEHOVAH has a son. Second, the Messiah would be *raised* (lifted up) on the cross as a sacrifice for our sin thereby providing us a way to eternal life (John 3:14-16). Third, that the Messiah was *raised* up after his crucifixion—defeating death and Satan—by his Father’s power (Galatians 1:1).

The Jews knew of and were awaiting the special prophet written of in Deuteronomy 18:18. When John the Baptist was being questioned by the representatives of the Pharisees (who were sent to find out who John was) they asked him specifically if he was *the* prophet:

And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

JOHN 1:21

The Jews also knew that YEHOVAH had proclaimed a curse regarding the prophet. As you will see in the chapter on blessings and curses, the Jews were very concerned about making a mistake regarding the prophet to come:

And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he [the prophet] shall speak in my name, I will require *it* of him.

DEUTERONOMY 18:19

To the modern reader the phrase “I will require it of him” is somewhat obscure. It means that whoever does not listen to the prophet to come, the one who is to be of the stature of Moses, will bear the judgment of YEHOVAH.

While the vast majority of Jews do not believe that the Messiah has appeared, there are 2.1 billion people or roughly 30% of the Earth’s living population that believe he has. Yet most of these people, while they have the correct historic personality, use a name that simply cannot be his given name: Jesus. As shown in a prior chapter, the letter “J” didn’t exist in English until the 1500’s and the letter “J” has never existed in Hebrew. It is extremely unlikely that the Messiah was ever called Jesus when he was on Earth.

Just as Rabbinic tradition obscured the name of the Creator, it is the Christian Church itself that has obscured the Messiah’s name. Rather than seeking out and proclaiming the true Hebrew name of the Messiah they have instead translated a hybrid name from Greek manuscripts that changes the Messiah’s name

into a word unrecognizable by the Jewish nation he was born into. We've inherited an incorrect translation of the Messiah's name without question—because we have trusted in men and their traditions.

Who is the Branch and who is the Root?

Translating from one language to another is done primarily to convey the same meaning in the target language as was intended in the source language. However, this shouldn't apply to given names. The target (foreign/secondary) language should respect the sound of the person's name in the source language and transliterate that sound into the target language's letter system. Rather than changing the original sound of the name another method of conveying the true sound should be developed.

In the case of the names of the Father and the Son—aren't they important enough for the secondary language to adapt to the source? Who is the branch and who is the root?

And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if

thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but
the root thee.

— ROMANS 11:17-18

Hebrew Name Review

Does the Messiah have a Norwegian name, a Chinese name, or a Roman name? Obviously not—he most likely has a Hebrew name since Jesus was born a Jew. The first verse of the New Testament shows us that Jesus, in the flesh, was in fact born a Jew (Matthew 1:1). Since Jesus was born a Jew we would expect him to have a Hebrew name. The following chart contains a list of Hebrew names in both English and Hebrew along with the original sound of the name.

English	Hebrew	Transliteration	Hebrew Meaning
Joseph	יוסף	Yosef	YHVH will increase
Jedidiah	יְדִידָהָ	Yedidya	YHVH's beloved
Jeremiah	יְרֵמְיָהוּ	Yirmiyahu	YHVH exalts
Jehoshaphat	יְהוֹשָׁפָט	Yehoshafat	YHVH has judged
Jonathan	יְהוֹנָתָן	Yehohanan	YHVH has given
Jehoshua	יְהוֹשֻׁעַ	Yehoshua	YHVH saves
Jesus	???	Jesus ???	???

It may appear that Jesus' Hebrew name should be *Jesus*. However, there is no such Hebrew name with that sound. What language is the sound of *Jesus* (ee-ay-sous) found? It is in the Greek language.

The New Testament Greek word translated as Jesus is Ἰησοῦς (*Iēsous/Yesous*) pronounced as ee-ay-sous. In fact, *Iēsous* (as *Iesus*) was used as the name of the Messiah in the original edition of the King James Bible in 1611 as well as other Christian Bibles as late as the 17th Century. Therefore, if one believes only in the Word as it was originally written in Greek then they would need to say the sound *Iēsous* when referring to the Messiah as that is the sound of the word from the original manuscripts and certainly not ‘Jesus’ with the ‘gee’ sound in English. But was *Iēsous* really the name and the sound that was delivered to Joseph?

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of YEHOVAH appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

MATTHEW 1:20-21

Did the angel of YEHOVAH speak to Joseph a name that has a foreign sound in Hebrew—Jesus? Did he speak to Joseph in Greek—Iēsous? Did the name Jesus even have a Hebrew meaning at the time of the

dream? We believe the answer to all three questions is absolutely *not*.

While the angel could have given Joseph a non-Hebrew name for his son and then explained that the name meant “*He shall save his people from their sins,*” there is another Hebrew name that closely matches that specific meaning. It is Yehoshua (or in English Joshua). The meaning of Yehoshua in Hebrew is “YEHOVAH is salvation” or “YEHOVAH saves.” Yehoshua is also the name of Moses’s second in command, the man who was considered a hero by the children of Israel, who led them to victory in their battles and who led them into the promised land.

Joseph, a devout Jew, would have been aware of the scriptures regarding the naming of people by YEHOVAH. He would have understood the importance of choosing the proper name for his child. He would have certainly been familiar and comfortable with the name Yehoshua as opposed to Jesus, or more accurately *Iēsous*, both of which would have sounded odd and alien to him and meant nothing in the Hebrew language.

Clues in the Septuagint & Greek New Testament

Perhaps one of the most significant clues that prove that the Messiah’s name should not be translated as

Jesus is also found in the name of Joshua and how it was translated into the Greek Septuagint (O.T.) from the original Hebrew scriptures and later from the Greek New Testament into English.

First we will examine the Septuagint—which is the accepted scholarly Greek version of the original Hebrew Bible (translated in the 3rd century B.C. *before* there was a New Testament). In it we find that the Hebrew name Yehoshua (Joshua) is translated exclusively over 450 times (except for three instances) as *Iēsous*. The following is an example from the original Hebrew text, the Septuagint translation from Hebrew to Greek, and the Septuagint translated from Greek to English (transliterated for ease of pronunciation):

In Original Hebrew text:

Vay•tzav **Yeho•shoo•a** et-shot•rei ha•am
le•mor,

JOSHUA 1:10

In the Septuagint (Hebrew to Greek):

kai eneteilato **Iēsous** tois grammateusin
tou laou legōn

JOSHUA 1:10

In English (Greek to English):

And **Joshua** commanded the scribes of the

people, saying,

JOSHUA 1:10

Therefore Joshua, Iēsous, and Yehoshua are synonymous. In other words **Joshua** = **Iēsous** = **Yehoshua**. The three times in the Septuagint that the name Yehoshua was not translated as *Iēsous* are found in Numbers 13:16 and I Chronicles 7:27 where it is translated as *Iēsoun* and *Iēsoue* respectively as well as in Nehemiah 8:17 where it is translated as *Iēsou* (from the Hebrew Yeshua—the *short form* of Yehoshua):

Joshua's name also appears in the original Greek *New Testament*. It appears only two times—in each case it is translated from the Greek word *Iēsous*. However the Greek word *Iēsous* is also translated hundreds of times into English as Jesus. Interestingly, the King James version of the Bible (unlike virtually all other versions) translates the two occurrences of Joshua's name in the New Testament from Greek into English as *Jesus* rather than *Joshua*, which clearly does not fit the context. First we will review Acts 7:45:

which also our fathers having in succession received, did bring in with **Joshua**, into the possession of the nations whom Elohim did drive out from the presence of our fathers, till the days of David,

ACTS 7:45 (YLT)

Which also our fathers that came after brought in with **Jesus** into the possession of the Gentiles, whom Elohim drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David;

ACTS 7:45 (KJV)

Next we will review the reference to Joshua in Hebrews 4:8:

again He [Elohim] doth limit a certain day, 'To-day,' (in David saying, after so long a time,) as it hath been said, 'To-day, if His voice ye may hear, ye may not harden your hearts,' for if **Joshua** had given them rest, He would not concerning another day have spoken after these things;

HEBREWS 4:7-8 (YLT)

Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if **Jesus** had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

HEBREWS 4:7-8 (KJV)

Acts 7:45 is clearly speaking of the original covenant patriarchs and not the Messiah and in Hebrews 4:8 Paul is referring to the children of Israel who didn't enter into the promised land because of their unbelief. So why did the King James translators use the name Jesus instead of Joshua in these two passages? Either the translators of the King James didn't have enough discernment to see that the references were to the original covenant Joshua; or they wanted to mask the fact that the name of the Messiah came from a Hebrew root word; or they wanted the Messiah's name to be unique.

Untangling the Messiah's name

You can't have it both ways. One Greek name (*Iēsous*) cannot be translated as two different English names (Joshua and Jesus).

Ἰησοῦς (*Iēsous*)*

Septuagint LXX (O.T.) 300-100 B.C.	King James Bible (N.T.) 1611 A.D.
Hebrew —→ Greek Yehoshua —→ Ἰησοῦς (<i>Iēsous</i>)	Greek —→ English Ἰησοῦς —→ Iesus (<i>Iēsous</i>) (<i>Yesus</i>)

***Approximate word count of Ἰησοῦς (*Iēsous*) and its derivatives:**

Septuagint—Ἰησοῦς(172), Ἰησοῦν(40), Ἰησοῦ(45)

Greek N.T.—Ἰησοῦς(462), Ἰησοῦν(129), Ἰησοῦ(332)

The following chart shows how the Hebrew Yehoshua was translated into Greek and then was split into two different English names:

Language	Joshua into Jesus	
Hebrew (original text)	Yehoshua	
Greek (Septuagint and Greek N.T.)	Iēsous	
Old English (1611 King James O.T. & N.T.)	Ioshua	Iesus
English (Modern English Bibles)	Joshua	Jesus

It is clear from the Septuagint, which was written hundreds of years before the New Testament, and the two references in the New Testament (Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8) that *Iēsous* was translated from the Hebrew name “Yehoshua” and then into English as Joshua. To translate the vast majority of the occurrences of the word *Iēsous* later as Jesus instead of Joshua throughout the whole New Testament has caused the true name of the Messiah to be hidden from the vast majority of both Christians and non-Christians alike. But by the grace of Elohim the Hebraic roots movement is rapidly changing this blindness and more and more people are coming to learn the Messiah’s true name.

Another clue that the Messiah's original given name is Yehoshua is how some Jewish writings referred to Yehoshua after his death and resurrection: Yeshu. The meaning of Yeshu is hidden in the acronym YSHU or "**Yemach Shmo u'Zikro**" transliterated. In Hebrew this phrase means "may his name be blotted out." By leaving off the "a" from Yeshua (the short form of Yehoshua) every time someone spoke the Messiah's name as "Yeshu" they were cursing him—with one of the strongest curses that a Jewish person could utter.

Does the Messiah really care what name he is called by? Consider first that *all* that the Son did was what he saw the Father do (John 5:19). We have shown in the first chapters of this book and will continue to show in subsequent chapters that YEHOVAH cares deeply that His true name be proclaimed to all ends of the Earth. The Messiah therefore also wishes for his true name to be proclaimed as well.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in **my name**,
that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

JOHN 14:13

Next, consider Matthew 12:21. This short verse contains a deep prophetic promise that revolves around knowing the true name of the Messiah.

And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

MATTHEW 12:21

It is also important to note that the first part of the Creator's name is embedded in Yehoshua's name:

← Read right to left

Yehovah	יהוה
Yehoshua	יהושע

It is in this name, Yehoshua, that the disciples both taught and healed in after the Holy Ghost had come upon them. It is also the name that the religious leaders forbade the disciples to speak on behalf of:

And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Yehoshua, and let them go.

ACTS 5:40

The Messiah prophesied this persecution of his followers:

Remember the word that I said unto you,
The servant is not greater than his master.

If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for **my name's sake**, because they know not him that sent me.

JOHN 15:20-21

Once again, just as with the Creator's name, there is not complete agreement on the Hebrew name of the Messiah. However, the commonly accepted Hebrew names of the Messiah are: Yehoshua, Yeshua, Y'shua, and Yahshua. Any one of these names gets us exponentially closer to the Messiah's Elohim-given name than does the Greek *Iēsous* or the English *Jesus*. However, we are more inclined towards the name "Yehoshua" which means "Yehovah saves." The first part **YEHO** refers to YEHOVAH—as in **Yehovah** and the last syllable **SHUA** means "saves."

Both Yehoshua, the son of Nun, and Messiah Yehoshua, the son of *none* (no *Earthly* father) fulfilled the meaning and purpose of their names: "*Yehovah saves.*" Yehoshua's (son of Nun) mission was to bring the children of Israel into the promised land while Messiah Yehoshua's mission was to bring fallen mankind into the promise of eternal life as "Sons of Elohim" (John 1:12).

So does it really matter which name we use to refer to the Messiah? How would you feel if someone chose to call you by another name, a name you were not known by, which gave credit for your achievements and sacrifices to another? For example, when we (Linda and Peter) were married our surname changed. We put both of our last names together to form a new name: Miller-Russo. But even to this day some family and friends do not address us by our new name. We don't hold this against them, but we find it odd that they cling to the past and do not honor the present.

Likewise, many Christian preachers continue to use "Jesus" rather than the Messiah's real name most likely because it is easier for them to go along with tradition rather than change. They may also resist teaching their congregation the true name of the Messiah for fear of upsetting their flock and potentially losing their financial support.

For they loved the praise of men more than
the praise of Elohim.

JOHN 12:43

As Yehoshua's sacrifice was placed before us to choose to believe or not believe; to accept the blood redemption or to reject it; so too have you been given the choice to challenge religious traditions and use the

Messiah's Hebrew name—Yehoshua—the name which was given to him by YEHOVAH and which has been placed before you today.

In this chapter we have replaced the title “the LORD” with YEHOVAH and will do so for the remainder of this book. Also for the remainder of this book the name Jesus will be replaced with the Hebrew *Yehoshua*. New Testament references to “the Lord” or “Lord” (lower case) have been changed to YEHOVAH, master, or saviour depending upon the context of the verse. For example, in Luke 4:18-19 where Yehoshua is reading from the scroll of Isaiah (61:1-2) some Bibles translate the name YHVH from Hebrew to lower case “the Lord” or upper case “G_D” even though the verses are explicitly referring to YEHOVAH's name. For another example of this compare Jeremiah 31:31-34 with Hebrews 8:8-12.

Other Biblical names have been left alone however for ease of reading. The purpose of changing “the LORD” to YEHOVAH and Jesus to Yehoshua is to highlight the actual names of the Father and His Son (Messiah), to honor them and to break the “traditions-of-men” spirit that has covered the Jewish and Christian churches for far too long.