

## **The Sacred Name - Is It Sacred or Mystical?**

The word "Lord," in the King James Version of the Old Testament, is translated from the Hebrew YHWH, commonly referred to as the Tetragrammaton. Scholars tell us it appears 5,321 times and is the most frequent designation for God. When used in the short form-Yah-and with other names attached to it, it appears more than 7,000 times. Many believe the pronunciation and meaning have been lost.

Sacred Names Advocates hold to the view that the pronunciation and meaning of the Name have not been lost, and that the Name is Sacred. Therefore,

Advocates are often referred to as belonging to the Sacred Name movement. They believe that the pronunciation of the Sacred Name is essential for salvation and that it must be used in worship. They believe it is a matter of extreme importance to know, use, and trust this name, that this is absolutely crucial in serving the "True Mighty One." To use this name is a foremost doctrine among them, which if practiced, will eventually lead to the salvation of the soul.

Below are some quotes or paraphrases of Sacred Name beliefs:

In order to have a right to the tree of life one must obey the Commandments. Those who love and make lies will be excluded. Since the Sacred Name is the first commandment of the Decalogue one must know and use it; continuing to believe anything less than the truth of the Word excludes one from Paradise. Those who believe we Sacred Name Advocates place the matter of the Name on an equal par with the Sabbath are very much mistaken. We do more than place it on an equality with the Sabbath. We give proof of its greater importance than the Sabbath. The first three of the Ten Commandments emphasize the importance of His name. Translations, which employ the use of the Sacred Name, demonstrate the importance of using the name "Yahweh" exclusively in worship. After this, our next obligation is to submit humbly to the inspired word of our Heavenly Father.

The idea that names differ in various languages is only a feeble excuse for using a name different from that of the original inspired Scriptures. In order to distinguish the Creator from all various objects of worship, we must call Him by His Personal Name if we wish Him to hear us.

We are not advocating the worship of a name. What we are advocating is the worship of Him who bears that name; the One whose Name alone is Yahweh. It is presumptuous to substitute a common title such as Lord because there are lords many on the earth and the master of the most humble slave is a "lord."

The issue when this age comes to a close will be the name of the Creator, His Son, and the mark, name, and number of the Beast. True commandment keeping includes the correct Name. It is the blasphemy of the Roman Catholic Church and her Protestant daughters who are defaming the Sacred Name of the Most High. The substitution of such

man-made titles as Lord, God, Herr, Gott, Theos, Jesus, and Jehovah are blasphemy. If you are a member of a religious organization that does not call itself the Assemblies of Yahweh, can you believe you are in the true body of the Messiah?

True worshippers incorporate the Name of the Father, which identifies them as part of the true spiritual family. Our purpose is to show the exclusive use of the revealed, Personal Name of the Heavenly Father.

One who does not know the Name of the Messiah or the Heavenly Father cannot be saved. The Name of the Heavenly Father is of supreme importance to your salvation. Without using it, you cannot be saved. It is necessary to restore the Sacred Names of the Heavenly Father and of the Savior. In the Bible “Lord” and “God” should be translated “Yahweh,” or “Lord” should be “Master.” “God” should be “Mighty One” or “Elohim.” “Lord God” should be “Yah Yahweh.” “Jehovah” should be “Yahweh.” “Jesus” should be “Yahshua.” “Christ” should be “The Messiah.” And “Ghost” should be “Spirit.” Man has gone away from his Creator and has amassed for himself a host of idols, worshipping them by many different names. The Sacred Name-Yahweh-is the one and only True Name of the Almighty which has been revealed to mankind.

## **Whose Name Is It?**

In general, Names Advocates insist that the Tetragrammaton is the personal, specific name of the Heavenly Father, and, as such, is not a title. We are told the Holy One of Israel is known by this name. But what is the derivation of the word Yahweh? The Encyclopedias tell us that a man by the name of Le Clerc originated it in the early eighteenth century. It is variously translated as YHWH, YHUH, JHWH, IHVH, and pronounced as Jehovah, Yahweh, Jahveh, Yahveh, Jahve, Jahwe, and Yahve. Although it is assumed the Name was known in the 1500s, it is actually much older. The Book of Jasher, by Alcuin of Britain in AD 800 mentions it, and it was more than likely pronounced as Yehouah or Yehowah. Yahweh is a modern reconstruction of the Tetragrammaton, and its origin and pronunciation are strictly a matter of conjecture.

Moses did not use the name YHWH without a reason. The word has a meaning. In the Moffatt Translation, Professor Moffatt translates it “The Eternal,” as it represents the Everliving One. While Israel of Old knew the Name and used it, there is no indication they understood the true significance. Even false prophets used it, which indicates that the use of the name did not bequeath special powers. The distinction between El Shaddai, a name that was disclosed to the Patriarchs, and YHWH, the name that was revealed to Moses, has led to scholarly debate. Some believe that God did not reveal Himself to the Patriarchs as YHWH, but a number of texts indicate otherwise. See for example Genesis 4:26; 9:26; 12:8; 13:4; 26:25; 28:13, 16, 20-21. Names Advocates believe that the name YHWH applies to the Father of Jesus Christ, whom they call Yahshua. They insist that those who say the YHWH of the Old Testament was the One who became the Savior of the New Testament are sidestepping the importance of the name of the Father. Their

argument regarding this is based on Jesus' statement, "I am come in my Father's name . . ." (John 5:43). They reason that if the Heavenly Father gave His name to His Son, who is our Messiah, then that name is intrinsic to our salvation.

Names Advocates will admit that Elohim is a multiplural noun, but like many others, say this applies to the unity of the Father and the Son. They admit there is more than one Being in the Godhead, as seen in Genesis 1:26; 3:22; 11:7. But the fact is: The Father was not revealed in the Old Testament period. Jesus said He came to reveal the Father (Matt. 11:27). The God of the Old Testament maintained a Father-Son relationship with the nation of Israel, as seen in Deuteronomy 32:6, Jeremiah 31:9, 20, and Hosea 11:1. The relationship was reciprocated by the Israelites (Isa. 63:16; 64:8, Jer. 3:4, Mal. 1:6; 2:10). Who was this God who was regarded as a Father to Israel? Jesus told the Jews " . . . Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). In effect, Jesus was proving His pre-existence, that He indeed was with God from the beginning, and that He was God (John 1:1-3). The Bible reveals that He was the Logos or Spokesman of the Old Testament, the One who created all things (John 1:3, 10, Eph. 3:9, Col. 1:16). He was made flesh and dwelled on this earth as a man-God in the flesh (John 1:14, Ph'p. 2:5-8, Heb. 2:14). He was the Christ (Savior), the Son of God (Matt. 16:13-17). As such, He was very God (Titus 2:10, 13). When He said, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30), He did not mean the Father and He are one person, but that they are one in purpose, and mission. He was the God of the Old Testament, the Father to Israel, the one who entered into a covenant relationship with them. His name in the Old Testament was YHWH. It was not the specific, personal name of the Father. It was the name of the One who became the Son.

### **Is the Name Exclusive?**

Was the name YHWH Christ's exclusive, personal name in the Old Testament period? Some Sacred Name Advocates recognize the problem of insisting that the name is exclusive. They see that Genesis 19:24 states that the Father's name was also YHWH. They admit that at one time, simultaneously, there was a YHWH on the earth and One in heaven, and that the One in heaven had to be the Father, and that the One on earth was also known by the name of YHWH. This admission completely destroys the idea that the name belongs exclusively to the Father. Genesis 19:24 makes plain that YHWH is a family name that applies to both members of the Godhead. As such, it is not the specific, personal name of the Father, because YHWH, like Elohim, applies to more than One. In Genesis 1:26 we read: And God [Elohim] said, "Let us make man in our image . . . ."

David understood this perfectly well, as he was aware of the Father and the Son. In Psalm 110:1, he wrote: "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." The obvious meaning is that the Father (YHWH) is talking to David's Lord-Christ. When Jesus brought this Scripture to the attention of the Pharisees, they had no answer (Matt. 22:41-46).

The fact is: In the Scriptures the Father is called YHWH. (Psalm 2:7 is quoted in Acts 13:33 and Hebrews 1:5; 5:5 indicating that YHWH is the Father). The word “LORD” in Psalm 2:7 is YHWH. Psalm 110:1 is quoted in Acts 2:34 indicating that the word “LORD” refers to the Father. The first LORD in Psalm 110:1 is YHWH. The Father is referred to as YHWH in Joshua 5:13-15, where the “captain” refers to the One who became Christ, while “the LORD [YHVH] refers to the Father. In Isaiah 61:1, the Spirit of YHWH is upon the speaker. Luke 4:18, applies the text to Christ and the YHWH who gave the Spirit to Christ was the Father. Isaiah 42:1 is quoted in Matthew 12: 8 and refers to the Father. Zechariah 2:8-9 shows that both the Father and the Son are called YHWH.

Additional texts include Genesis 22:15-16, where “the angel [Messenger] of the LORD” is YHWH. Also, compare Genesis 28:10-22 with Genesis 31:11, 13. The same thing is revealed in Exodus 3:2-4, Judges 2:1-5; 6:22-24. The “angel of the LORD” represented the Father, who is often referred to as YHWH. Clearly, then, the name YHWH is not the exclusive, personal name of the One who became Christ.

## **How Is the Name Pronounced?**

The following paraphrases or quotes are from Names Advocates. A look at various Advocate writings will verify these statements:

Such names as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Israel, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel were all faithfully transliterated [to write or spell words in the characters of another alphabet that represent the same sounds] from the Hebrew into English. But the Name of the author of the Bible was removed and a foreign name substituted in its place. It is, therefore, necessary to correct this error and “restore” the Name of Almighty Yahweh to the text of the Bible. The Bible commands us to use and call upon the name of the Almighty. It is those who only use and call upon the name of Yahweh who will be spared during the coming tribulation.

Just because the Jews in different parts of the world pronounce the Old Testament Hebrew differently, there is no reason to refuse to sanctify and hallow the Name of the Heavenly Father. Such words as Jehovah or Lord are not the sound of the four letters which comprise the Tetragrammaton. The reason the original Name is important is because substitute names obscure our instruction for spiritual survival. They introduce seemingly contradictions which generate conscious or subconscious doubts in our minds. By purging these names, doctrinal integrity will be restored and with it wholehearted belief. It is the use of these substitute names which has caused an underlying conceptual malaise and with it a lack of wholehearted belief. Those who become angry when they hear the Savior’s Hebrew Name obviously do not wish to learn they have been deceived by trusting in a substitute name which holds no salvation. How can we ever hope to gain everlasting salvation without calling on the Name which contains eternity as an intrinsic characteristic.

Since the Sacred Name is vital to salvation, it is necessary to prove which is the most correct form of the Tetragrammaton. Now the evidence is becoming more and more overwhelming that the Name of the Heavenly Father is Yahweh. Those who say the pronunciation was lost leave no alternative but to use the pagan substitutes. The form Yahweh is practically the best and the original pronunciation seems to have been Yahwe or Yahway. The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia says the prevailing opinion is in favor of the reading Yahveh but this is open to some question. The Rotherham Bible says the transliteration Yahweh is adopted as practically the best and the only competing form would be Yehweh. So, Yahweh, as the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, is 99 and 44/100% correct, and until some other form is positively proven we shall use this one. Modern scholars unashamedly confirm the more correct transliteration of the Tetragrammaton as Yahweh but refuse to use it exclusively in worship because of traditional rejection of such a necessity.

Jehovah is a hybrid name made up from the Father's true name plus the vowel points of Adonai. The Father's Name is not Yahveh or Yahvah, as some say, but Yahweh. This is because scholars say this name is the closest to the original as far as they can tell.

According to the Jewish Encyclopedia, Volume 12, page 118, members of the Babylonian Academy knew the correct pronunciation of the JHWH as late as 1000 AD. It is believed the Name is derived from the Hebrew word "to be" (havah). [Comment: For this reason some Names Advocates insist the pronunciation should be Yahvah]. Many of the Names people are troubled over the various forms of the Name but the majority has chosen Yahweh and "in faith" believes this is the correct name because of scholarly opinion].

The short form of the Sacred Name is Yah. When Yah is prefixed to the name of Hoshua, the result is Jehoshua or the short form of Yahshua. While many religious organizations know and use the Sacred Name of Yahweh, the personal name of the Heavenly Father, few of these organizations know and use the Sacred Name of the Messiah. The Savior's name was originally Yahshua. Yahshua is the combining of Yah and shua, which means, "shall save." Thus, we have the Savior's Name Yahshua which means "Yahweh is salvation." The Name "Jesus" does not mean "Yahweh is salvation" and as a consequence there is no salvation in the name Jesus. It was the Alexandrian Jews who altered the name Yahshua (Jehoshua) to Jesus in the Septuagint Version. The Greeks dropped the Hebrew terminology of names and substituted the name or letters of the supreme deity Zeus, and Yahshua became Iesous (Jesus). The form Yeshua originated because of the Jewish refusal to maintain the correct form Yah. Thus Yahshua was changed in the Old Testament Hebrew to Yeshua. Iesous came from the attempt to write Greek characters of the Aramaic Yeshua. Since sixteenth century English did not have the "J" sound, Jeshua was translated Iesous. Later, when the J sound was adopted from the French, the word became Jesus. Scholars have tried to show us there is no "sh" sound in the Greek and Iesous is acceptable. But Iesous is an attempted transliteration of Jeshua into Greek. If we are to find the pure and true worship we must return as closely to the source as possible. About the time of the suppression of using the Tetragrammaton in speech and writing, the Jews began to distort the pronunciation of Yah making it into Ye. Yeshua is late Hebrew or Aramaic. The Savior came in His Father's Name. This name is Yah. By combining Yah with the mission of the Savior we have Yahshua. Jesus is the English translation of the Greek Iesous or Iezeus. Iezeus is the personification of the Sun-

god, the equivalent of “Lord.” Will you worship the Greek Jesus or the Hebrew Yahshua. Your salvation depends on it.

The above comments give us one side of the coin, but what is the other? We have seen that the pronunciation of YHWH as Yahweh is regarded as more correct than the other names employed by Names Advocates. Sacred Name Advocates call our attention to the Moabite Stone (c. 900 BC) that contains the name of Yahweh, but they fail to tell us the Hebrew script at that time did not contain vowel points. The Moabite Stone, therefore, is of little value in determining the correct pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. Also, some who disagree with the Sacred Name concept claim that to restore the name Jehovah to a closer form of the Tetragrammaton someone placed the first “a” of Adonai (Lord) into the first syllable of YHWH and the “e” of Elohim into the second. The result is the modern word “Yahweh.” As we have seen, Sacred Name Advocates are not in agreement among themselves as to the correct pronunciation. What is significant is that the true sound of YHWH is not known. With the exception of three sounds, there were no vowel points in Hebrew until the system was developed in the eighth century AD. Prior to that time the pronunciation was carried down by tradition. Long before the vowel points were incorporated, the Jews refused to pronounce the Name. By the time the vowel point system was adopted, the pronunciation was not known.

A much-quoted statement from the Encyclopedia Judaica—that the pronunciation of YHWH was never lost—is based upon the idea that some of the early Greek writers of the Christian era testify to a pronunciation very nearly like Yahweh. What Names Advocates fail to mention with respect to the comment made in the Encyclopedia Judaica, is that the proper pronunciation of the YHWH is limited to the first syllable—Yah-only (Ency. Judaica, Vol. 1, article, “God, Names of”). What needs to be addressed is this: Can anyone, beyond a question or doubt, prove the correct pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton? Mark Twain once said that the difference between the “right word” and the “almost right” word was the difference between “lightning” and “the lightning bug.” All “proofs” come from human sources and history, and the best that can be said is that the various forms in use today are “educated guesses.” “Yahweh” is regarded as “more nearly correct” but, taking Mark Twain into consideration, is that enough? What is your reaction when someone consistently mispronounces your name? Imagine how God must feel if the pronunciation is not quite right. The derivation and pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton are still regarded as doubtful, and the form “Jehovah” is regarded as an error. Jehovah is the result of pronouncing the vowels of Adonai (Lord).

It is generally assumed that the YHWH is the causative form of the verb “to be.” The form Yahweh was first advanced by Jewish writers during the Middle Ages and now has wide acceptance. The serious objection to this is that the verb “to be” has no causative stem in the Hebrew. To express this idea another verb form must be employed. In Exodus 3:14 it is assumed that Yahweh is derived from the verb “to be.” But the verb “to be” is “hayah” not “hawah.” “Hawah” belongs to an earlier era of the language, so in the historical sense Yahweh is not a Hebrew name. See the Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th edition, article, “Tetragrammaton.” What needs to be asked is this: Did the Bible intend to give us an etymological interpretation of the name YHWH? And did Yahweh originate

with the Israelites, or did other peoples know it? Certainly the Midianites knew it, as seen by the account in Exodus 18. Indications are that tribes south of Palestine probably worshipped Yahweh (Ency. Brit., article "Jehovah"). God's relationship with Israel likely accounts for the large number of times the Tetragrammaton is used in the Old Testament.

Sacred Names Advocates insist that archaeology has now "exploded" the theory that there were no vowels in the ancient Hebrew alphabet. There were three vowels that were used in ancient times. These were "a," "i," and "u." They were vowel-consonants designed to function as the most important long vowels and served in a secondary function only. See McClintock and Strong, article, "Vowel Points." As such, this was an entirely inadequate method of vowel representation. Introduced sometime before the Christian era, this had to be changed in the early AD centuries. The present vowel point system was fully established in AD 900 and superseded the earlier systems. The earlier vowels that had been assigned as consonants were left intact, but a newer and much more comprehensive system was superimposed. Had the earlier vowels been sufficient, there would be no doubt as to the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, but this was not the case. (The Books and the Parchments, by F. F. Bruce, pages 40-41).

The fact is: The pronunciation of Yahweh is a rather strange combination of old and late elements. The "eh" ending is a late form. Also, the "w" has been changed to "v," which is another late element. So, the "w" syllable of Yahweh is a pre-Mosaic pronunciation. Also, the final "eh" is a post-Davidic form. What should be obvious is that Yahweh does not come from the verb "hawava" which is the earlier form of the verb "to be." Many Old Testament names and their meanings do not have an etymological connection, but are used as puns. Take Babel for example. Babel does not come from the verb "balal," meaning to confound, even though it sounds similar. It would not be wrong to conclude that YHWH does not come from the verb "hawah" (to be) but from an unknown origin that sounded like "hawah." If Moses spelled YHWH with four consonants, it would have to have more than two syllables. Why? Because all the letters were sounded. The pronunciation given by the Church Fathers is of late origin and contradicts earlier sources such as the older witness of Elephantine in Egypt. There, none of the elements appear as "eh." What we see is that critical speculation about the origin of YHWH seems endless. See the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Volume I, pages 210-212, edited by R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke. This curious fact prevails: The ancient pronunciation of YHWH has been totally lost. The Hebrews did pronounce and write the name of God, but the later proscription was so thorough that the vowels were entirely lost. Only the consonants remain. The Dead Sea Scrolls show that this ban was in effect 200 years before the time of Christ. Old Testament writers did not seem to be interested in etymology. They appear to have used puns and then wrote words that were descriptive of an event. The whole issue regarding the pronunciation is in reality an academic matter, as the God of Israel is much more interested in our personal relationship with Him than in the pronunciation of His name. Evidence now indicates that Yahweh is incorrect and Jahoweh might be the true pronunciation (The Law and the Prophets, pages 215-224, edited by John H. Skilton, Milton C. Fisher, and Leslie W. Sloat).

Ten Hebrew leaders had the name Y'hoshua. The Aramaic form was Yeshua, and was the name of our Lord. The natural transliteration into Greek would be Iesous, the English being "Jesus." R. Laird Harris states that the Greek language did not contain a medial "h," so Iesous would be the natural pronunciation (The Law and the Prophets, page 223). The name Joshua is Y'hoshua in the Hebrew (This can be seen by the vowel pointing in Nehemiah 8:17), and Yeshuah would be Y'shua, but there is no Scriptural support that the original spelling of Joshua was Yahshua. Yah is not the form used in either of these names.

In reality, we are left with no valid tradition for the pronunciation of YHWH. A truly valid tradition would have to go back to about 4,000 BC. The Septuagint is of no value because it follows the ban of pronouncing the name and relies on Greek equivalents. Early translations that attempt to pronounce the correct name are all speculative. The name Yahweh depicts an effort to find the real pronunciation of the Name, but depends upon the supposition that the Name comes from a verb form of "to be." The origin of the name is enmeshed in much controversy and no general agreement exists among the scholars (The Law and the Prophets, pages 218-219). Question: If the proper pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton is a divine requirement, why has God permitted it to be lost? If it is that important, why does the Creator leave us in such doubt? What needs to be realized is the primary way Israel of Old profaned the name of God was by disobedience to His commands!

## **What Does the Bible Say About Using the Name?**

Sacred Name Advocates insist the Bible commands both the restoration and use of the Sacred Name-Yahweh. The paragraphs below summarize their arguments regarding this view. The argument assumes that the Hebrew/Aramaic language is in some way sacred, and this is where the proper pronunciation for the name of God should be found. Below are selected arguments from Sacred Name literature, quoted or paraphrased.

The original Apostolic Assembly set out to return to the pure worship of Yahweh but somewhere along the way got sidetracked. It is the obligation of those who know the Name to restore the old paths by using the Sacred Name and proclaiming it to the ends of the earth. Yahshua the Messiah came for the express purpose of declaring the Name of the Almighty and to restore its use to the worship of Israel. It is the duty of true worshippers in our day to restore the faith and worship of Almighty Yahweh and the Savior Yahshua.

It was at the tower of Babel and the confusion of languages that the trend developed of calling the Almighty by many different names, titles, and designations. All the languages of the nations were confused at the tower of Babel except the Hebrew language. It is

through this language that the thread of sound doctrine comes. Since the Hebrew-speaking Israelites were able to understand the Heavenly Father when He spoke to them from the heavens at Mount Sinai, the heavenly language must have been Hebrew or something very similar. Yahweh's people were not at Shinar at the confusion of the languages. The ancestor of the Israelites, Heber, continued the language of his father. This language was the Semitic language which came to be known as Hebrew. If Hebrew is not a pure language why did God choose to speak to the Hebrews in their native tongue? There is no instance in the Bible where any person who ever received the Word of the Almighty was able to speak any language other than the Semitic languages. According to the Scriptures, the Hebrew language was the language of Eden. Speaking of Adam and Eve, the Scriptures say that their name was called Adam "in the day they were created."

We are not advocating the necessity of speaking the Hebrew language as a whole. What we are advocating is the necessity of calling our Heavenly Father and His Son by their true names. Since Yahweh revealed Himself to the Hebrew race and Israel in particular, the evidence is that Hebrew was the chosen tongue. The fact that Yahweh promised to return to man a pure language indicates the original language was Hebrew. Hebrew is the language God uses to communicate with mankind. The problem with the Greek New Testament is that it does not reflect the original language of the New Testament. The vernacular of the people of Judea during the first century AD was Aramaic, not Greek. The Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament Scriptures) was not used in Palestine, as it would not have been understood there. The translators of the Septuagint employed pagan names and terms. This is a terrible error. The Greek New Testament quotes the Septuagint in many instances. Something has to be wrong when the Greek New Testament does this. Our only recourse is to go back to the proper names of the Almighty and the Messiah. Dr. F. F. Bruce in his work, *The Books and the Parchments*, suggests we return to the Hebrew Scriptures to learn the meaning of various Bible terms. The New Testament writers followed the pattern of the Septuagint which had somehow gained some kind of inspired status.

Can the above arguments be disproved from both history and the Bible?

Notice that when Jesus was being crucified, He cried out to the Father, "Eloi, Eloi" (Mark 15:34). He was speaking Aramaic, not Hebrew. This is a proof that He saw no necessity in speaking Hebrew because it was sacred. Jesus used the Aramaic language, and this was the language of Babylon. The Sacred Name view is that Hebrew is a sacred language to the exclusion of all others, and that it has continued uninterrupted from the beginning. Yet at the tower of Babel, the Bible states there was only one language (Gen. 11:1). Since that time there is no proof that there has ever been a pure language on the Earth. If anything, God recognized many languages on the day of Pentecost. Why? Because those attending Pentecost heard the Apostles speak in many different languages (Acts 2:6-8).

**Is it possible to determine the origin of the Hebrew language?**

According to the Encyclopedia Judaica, article, "Alphabet," the Hebrews adopted the alphabetic script as well as the cultural values from the Canaanites during the eleventh and twelfth centuries BC, and used this script until the ninth century BC, when they began to develop their own. So, the Hebrew alphabet in use today originated with the Proto-Canaanite alphabet and is certainly not sacred. Going back to the account in Genesis 11, we see it was the language that was confounded. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown tell us that it is impossible to know the degree and extent to which language was confused at the tower of Babel, and that it must have occasioned a complete dissolution of human society. The old language was broken into a variety of dialects that rendered common intercourse impossible (See the Critical and Experimental Commentary, by Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown).

So, the question we should ask is: If the language of the world was confused at the tower of Babel, where is the pure language today? The confusion of the languages occurred about 100 years after the Flood, and all authorities agree that the word "Hebrew" comes from Eber, a descendant of Shem, a son of Noah. The Eber line continues with Salah and Arphaxad. Eber and these two descendants were born before the confusion of languages at the tower of Babel. Peleg, the son of Eber, of the line of Shem, was the first to be born after the tower of Babel. The only way a pure language could have continued is if Eber, Salah, or Arphaxad preserved it through the tower of Babel. Had one of these three retained the original language, the others would have been able to understand, and the people could have been brought back together as one. So, not one language today represents the original pre-Flood tongue. What this tells us is that the Hebrew language did not originate until after the tower of Babel.

The Jews adopted the Aramaic language during the Babylonian captivity (585-515 BC). This was the language of Babylon. The Jewish priests and scribes continued to use the Hebrew language, but this was not the practice of the common people. When the Scriptures were read to the common people, they were paraphrased from Hebrew into Aramaic so they could understand. Hebrew ceased to be a living language shortly after the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, as Aramaic became the language of use. Sections of the Old Testament were even written in Aramaic, or Chaldean, as it is sometimes called. These are: Jeremiah 10:11, Daniel 2:4-7:28, and Ezra 4:8 through 6:18. If Hebrew was the divine language why would God have inspired sections of the Old Testament to be written in Aramaic? Sacred Name Advocates answer that Ezra and Daniel originally wrote in Hebrew, but later scribes added Aramaic vowel points in certain chapters. If this is true then God did not preserve His word intact, and it has been doctored and perverted. The fact is: Sacred Name Advocates cannot accept that portions of the Old Testament were written in Aramaic because it would mean that the Hebrew language is not some kind of exclusive sacred language. While Hebrew and Aramaic are related, they are not the same language. As a whole, the Babylonian language replaced the Hebrew language. To say it is not a pagan language is simply not true. If we reject the Greek language as the language of the New Testament because it is pagan, should not the same be said of the Aramaic-the language that Sacred Name Advocates claim is the sacred language of the

original New Testament Scriptures? And why would Christ use a pagan language as Mark 15:34 reveals? Since it cannot be proven what the Name really is, does God still demand we address Him by His original Name? And if we do not know the Name how can we have any confidence that He hears us when we pray? Yet, He answers countless prayers. As we have seen, those who say they know the Name base this on “educated guesses,” insisting that “Yahweh” is the “closest” to the truth.

If Jewish translators of the Septuagint rendered the Hebrew names of God into Greek equivalents, for the purpose of giving understanding to the Greek-speaking Jews, why should we assume it is not permissible to do the same in any language? What is important is what the Name signifies, not how it is pronounced. One who exercises faith in God must believe that He is, not whether he knows the proper way to pronounce His name. If Christ is going to return to the world to a pure language after His Second Coming (Zeph. 3:9), it is obvious one does not presently exist.

Sacred Name Advocates tell the following about the New Testament period. Again, these are quotes or paraphrases.

Aramaic was the language in which the first Christian documents were written. By the end of the first century the language of the Church was definitely Greek. As far as the Jews were concerned they refused to allow themselves to be contaminated with Greek customs and manners. The Palestinian Jews jealously preserved their religion and language from contamination. The idea that the Jews of the Dispersion all knew Greek is advanced as a necessity in order to support a Greek New Testament. Even Josephus stated that the Greek culture did not contaminate the language of Palestine and that the Jews did not encourage the learning of the languages of other nations. Those who did so were viewed as common. If Greek was the common language of Palestine why did Pilate write the accusation against Jesus in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek? During the times of Yahshua the readings in the synagogue had to be orally translated to the people in Aramaic. Many scholars feel Aramaic is a dialect of Hebrew. This is why the Gospels and Talmud tell us that the Galileans were recognizable by their language.

There are numerous renowned scholars who feel that certain books of the New Testament were originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic and subsequently translated into Greek. We believe the entire New Testament can be traced back to Hebrew and Aramaic originals. Scholarship will prove if such a conclusion is correct. The Bible says the Messiah spoke Hebrew when he revealed His name to Saul (Acts 26:14). Scholars admit that the book of Matthew was written in Hebrew. Early Apostolic Assembly leaders (Eusebius, Origen, Jerome, Augustine) support the opinion that Matthew originally wrote to the Jews in a Semitic language (Hebrew or Aramaic). But there is a question whether or not Matthew translated his gospel into Greek. A compelling reason for rejecting the idea that Matthew was responsible for a Greek version of his gospel is because the text does not preserve the Sacred Name. It appears, what we now have in any one of the many copies of the Gospel of Matthew is an imperfect translation of imperfect copies of the original inspired Word.

One scholar often mentioned by Sacred Name Advocates is Charles Cutler Torrey. His work, entitled, Documents of the Primitive Church, is highly regarded. Torrey says that the mission of the Apostolic Church was to convince the Jews everywhere, beginning at Jerusalem, that Jesus was the Messiah. Torrey's view is summarized in the following statements. He says that at an early date educated and intelligent men, who were attracted to Jesus' mission and purpose, began written testimony. The four Gospels are the work of these men. So, the idea is absurd that it took 40 years or more before any written material was available. The Talmud confirms the conclusion that Mark and Matthew were written at an early date. The Talmud calls these writings "the Gospels" and regarded them as authoritative Christian literature. This was as early as the third quarter of the first century. The Gospels mentioned in the Talmud were Semitic, not Greek. Later it became Paul's program to expand and reinterpret the gospel. A Greek translation was also in circulation at an early date. The Aramaic originals did not outlast the first century, destroyed by the Jews, ignored by the Christians.

Torrey goes on to say that the reason we know Mark was written at an early date in Aramaic is due to the fact that the "abomination of desolation" in Mark 13:14 is a reference to the attempt made by Caligula to set up his statue as a deity in Palestine. When Caligula was assassinated and the abomination not set up as predicted, Matthew could write more plainly. Torrey included the idea that Paul apparently used the Gospel of Mark in his instructions in 2 Thessalonians concerning the second coming of Christ. He states that every point Paul covers can be derived directly from Mark 13. Very obviously, Paul's "word of the Lord" was derived directly or inferred from Mark 13. When the Gospels were originally written in Aramaic, the accompanying Greek translation needed explanations of Aramaic names, terms, phrases.

Regarding the book of Revelation, Torrey says that a member of the Church of Ephesus wrote the Apocalypse in AD 68 in Aramaic. The writer impersonates the Apostle John. In Torrey's view we can date the Apocalypse because it was written during the time of the sixth king (Rev. 17:10). This king was Nero. Nero Caesar adds up to 666. The worship of the Beast is clearly a reference to the worship of Nero, who was rumored to have come to life again after his assassination. The man who wrote the Apocalypse was a master of Greek who writes with a Semitic idiom. He is thoroughly at home with both Greek and Hebrew. The linguistic character of the book is unique and is a Greek translation from Aramaic. Like the Gospels, it mirrors every word and phrase of the sacred original. When the translator disregards Greek grammar, it is done so to imitate the Semitic grammar.

One other comment by Torrey should be noted. He says that the Gospels of Mark and Matthew were written with no thought of a religion or sect outside Judaism. The Nazarenes were regarded as loyal Jews, and their faith was that of contemporary Judaism except in the matter of the Messiah. Jesus did not tell His disciples in the Olivet prophecy that His return was to be delayed beyond the lifetime of the men then living.

Seizing upon the remarks of Torrey and a few others, Sacred Name Advocates conclude that the New Testament, for the most part, was written in Aramaic. They say that as late as the fourth century AD, the New Testament was available in Hebrew and Aramaic, but

Greek usurpers translated the New Testament into Greek and substituted the names of their pagan deities such as Zeus, Kurios, and Theos in the place of the inspired names of God. They regard such passages as John 1:38, 41-42 to be explanations from one Aramaic dialect into another. They tell us the phrase “. . . which is being interpreted, the Christ, ” (v. 41) is a translator’s note carried in the text instead of in the margin since there was no need for an interpreter between the two brothers speaking in John 1: 40-41. When the translator of the Greek text saw in his original Aramaic text a Hebrew word that he wanted to point out to his readers, he would transliterate the Hebrew word into Greek characters and then translate the Greek. When we begin with the basic understanding that we must call upon the Name of Yahweh to be saved, we can see that the explanations of those who do not believe the New Testament was originally inspired in Aramaic are not sufficient and do not support the Truth. When Aramaic names for the Creator are different from the Hebrew names we must realize these Aramaic names are not names but titles.

Sacred Name Advocates further conclude that there was a corruption of the New Testament text that demonstrates the reliability of the Hebrew Old Testament over the copies of the Greek New Testament. Since the commission to the Church ended in AD 70, the Christian Church was totally different later in the first century from its predecessor. Therefore, any disagreement between the Old and New Testament must be decided in favor of the Old.

While Sacred Name Advocates may not agree with some of Torrey’s views, they nevertheless rely on his material to substantiate the Sacred Name doctrine. They admit there are no inspired originals of the New Testament for doctrinal proof, and even while allowing that some portions of the New Testament were written in Greek, do not believe this is a sufficient reason not to use the names of Yahweh and Yahshua. In fact, they believe there is no Greek text that is not corrupt. All doctrine, therefore, must be based on the Old Testament. They view the concept of an inspired Greek text as unwarranted because it opposes the exclusive use of the Sacred Name. They believe we cannot worship “the True Mighty One” unless we use His correct inspired name.

Is the above true? There are some other considerations that should be examined.

First of all, Pilate did write the accusation against Jesus in three languages, and as we see, one of these was Greek (Luke 23:38). Both accounts of Matthew and John say specifically that the superscription contained the name of Jesus (Matt. 27:37, John 19:19). So, even if the original Gospels were written in Aramaic, we find the Greek name “Jesus” in the inspired original.

We are also told that the reason the Galileans were recognized was because they spoke Aramaic, while the Jews in Jerusalem spoke Hebrew. Not so! All Jews during the time of Christ spoke Aramaic. The common people did not know Hebrew. The scribes and priests were required to paraphrase the Hebrew into Aramaic before the people could understand. Peter was recognized by his accent, not because he spoke Hebrew (Matt. 26:73, Mark 14:70, Luke 22:59). He was understood perfectly by those around him.

Torrey's idea that Paul had to expand and reinterpret the gospel is typical of the view of many scholars. The fact is: Jesus made it very clear that the gospel was to go to the entire world (Matt. 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, 20). Paul did not have to reinterpret anything. His commission was to the Gentiles (Acts 22:21), and the language required for this was Greek, not Hebrew. When in Athens, Paul spoke to the philosophers. We can be sure he did not speak to them in Hebrew.

Scholars dispute Torrey's claim that the Talmud "proves" that Aramaic Gospels were recognized as authoritative Christian Scriptures. The Jewish authorities repudiated Christian writings, as a whole, and it is an assumption to call these writings the "Gospels" as we know them now. The idea that words written in Aramaic or Hebrew clarify the meaning of the Greek New Testament-words such as Gabbatha, Golgotha, Abaddon, and Armageddon-would have no significance if the rest of the New Testament was written in Aramaic. Aside from Torrey's interpretation that Mark 13:14 is the basis for Revelation 17:10, the commission to the Church did not end in AD 70. Following the destruction of Jerusalem, the Christians returned from Pella and carried on an extensive work until the second Jewish war in AD 135. After that time they relocated east of the Jordan River and remained. The faith of the Nazarenes was decidedly not that of contemporary Judaism. Contemporary Judaism was comprised of the "tradition of the elders" and was rejected by Christ. Early Christians separated themselves from these traditions that had their origin in Babylon.

To say the Old Testament takes precedence over the New in cases of Scriptural contradictions illustrates how little some Names Advocates understand about the inspiration of the Bible. Jesus plainly said the Scriptures do not contradict (John 10:35). So-called contradictions merely reflect mistranslations or misinterpretations and misunderstandings on the part of those who regard them as contradictions. The Bible always interprets the Bible (2 Pet 1:20). Men who try to do so often fail. These mistranslations do not include the "Sacred Name."

Early in the second century, Papias, bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, said, "Matthew compiled the oracles [of the Lord] in the Hebrew speech and everyone translated them the best he could." Bruce tells us, however, that Papias may be referring to something that was incorporated into the Gospels (Bruce, 231). Bruce adds that some sections of Acts are strongly marked by Aramaic idioms and appear to have been translated from Aramaic, but this is exactly what we should expect of the reports of the sayings of our Lord and others who spoke Aramaic. And, that the evidence is against those scholars who argue that the Gospels were written in Aramaic and translated into Greek. Continuing, he says that no doubt at an early date there were Aramaic summaries of the stories of Jesus, as well as collections of His sayings in circulation, and while the Gospels are drawn on these, they are not in themselves translations. While the study of Aramaic and its relationship to the Gospels may be interesting, it has its limitations and is not the key to unlock all mysteries (Bruce, 56, 70-71). We might add, neither is it the key to the pronunciation of the Sacred Name. What would be surprising would be a dearth of Semitic influence on the Greek language by those who thought and spoke in Aramaic (Bruce, 69).

Scholars who support the idea that there is evidence behind Aramaic influence in the New Testament Scriptures limit this influence to a few books only. No Aramaic copies of any New Testament book exist, but if by chance Matthew was written in Aramaic, there is every reason to feel Matthew was responsible for the Greek translation. Until about the middle of the first century, there was no need for any written Gospels, and this was true as long as there were any eyewitnesses to the life and story of Jesus (Bruce, 105). There is no substantiation whatsoever for the notion that Paul wrote the epistles in Aramaic. Paul worked among the Greek-speaking people, and there is no indication that he needed an interpreter. The Sacred Name argument that Greek-speaking Jews knew Hebrew (Acts 21:37-40) overlooks the fact that the incident described here occurred in Jerusalem. Yet, Sacred Name Advocates say Jews in Palestine could not speak Greek. But according to the Acts 21 argument, they could. So, which is it?

The fact is: There is no authority or proof of any kind that the preserved New Testament was written in any language other than Greek. From the grammatical viewpoint the New Testament, as a whole, could not have come from Hebrew or Aramaic. It is possible some exceptions may exist, but the burden of proof requires Sacred Name Advocates to produce a single copy of any Aramaic New Testament. All the writers of the second century (Tatian, Papias, Tertullian, Irenaeus) describe and quote the original New Testament writings, always in Greek. If even a single New Testament book was inspired in Greek, the entire Sacred Name argument vanishes into thin air. Why? Because the inspired Greek clearly shows that there is no Bible injunction or requirement to use the Sacred Names of God! But to preserve their movement, Sacred Name Advocates refuse to admit a single New Testament book was inspired in Greek. What this really means is that Sacred Name Advocates believe there is no inspired New Testament that has been preserved-thus we have no preserved words of Jesus Christ!

The presently existing Aramaic versions of the New Testament are translations from the Greek. Even Professor Torrey admits this. He says that the origin of the Aramaic Peshitta is unknown except that it is a close translation from the Greek (Torrey, 245). In his work, Lamsa tries to tell us that the preserved words of Jesus are better in the Peshetti Gospels, but Bruce says this is quite wrong (Bruce, 189). One fact is certain: The Aramaic version does not preserve the Sacred Name. As far as language is concerned, Greek was the international language during the time of Christ and the Apostles. The vast majority of the Dispersion could not speak Hebrew or Aramaic. Neither of these two languages was suited for the universal spread of the Gospel. By comparison to Greek, Hebrew was abbreviated and elementary, not suitable for expressing abstract concepts. Christ made it plain that the Gospel should be preached to all nations. The Apostolic Church was certainly familiar with the Greek language. Acts 6 reveals that the Jerusalem Church consisted of both Greek and Aramaic-speaking Jews. In fact, the seven chosen as deacons all had Greek names. Obviously, the widows that were being neglected were Greek-speaking.

That the Jews were well acquainted with Greek is demonstrated by the use of the Septuagint-the Greek translation of the Old Testament Scriptures. While Dr. F. C. Burkitt said that there is nothing to suggest that Christ and His first disciples were acquainted

with the Septuagint, the Encyclopedic Dictionary states that Jesus and His disciples frequently quoted from the Septuagint. Not until the Messianic passages began to be used effectively by the disciples did the Jews call for a fast to mourn the fact that the Septuagint was ever translated. As noted, what the Jewish translators of the Septuagint did was to change the Hebrew names for God into the Greek equivalents. In his epistles the Apostle Paul used the Greek names for God. There is no substantiation from Paul's epistles or anywhere else in the New Testament that the Apostles used the Hebrew names exclusively when speaking to the Greeks. Because of the popularity of the Septuagint among the Jews, the New Testament writers did not have to invent a Greek vocabulary of theological terms. This was already found in the Septuagint.

Sacred Name Advocates make much ado about Bruce's statement that the general religious vocabulary of the Greek language was pagan in character, and that elements of it were used as equivalents for significant words of the Old Testament. When applied by Sacred Name Advocates, this statement refers to the names used for God. But these Advocates fail to mention the remainder of Bruce's statement. Bruce says that in Greek-speaking Jewish circles these words did not bear their original pagan significance, but took on the new significance that had been acquired from the Hebrew vocabulary they represented. This was applied in such words as righteousness, mercy, truth, sin, and atonement, as well as the names and titles of divine beings. So, the understanding of these words was in the New Testament sense, not in their original pagan sense. Bruce goes on to say that the Septuagint played an important role in this by preparing the Gospel for the world (Bruce, pages 152-153). It was a kind of "Authorized Version" of the Old Testament for Greek-speaking Jews and Christians, and, as such, exercised a strong influence on the writing style of the New Testament. The Septuagint was not written in magnificent Greek, as its construction was in Hebrew, while the words were in Greek. Some copies of the Septuagint did use the YHWH, but this was not the normal usage, the majority using the word Kurios for YHWH.

What words did Jesus use when referring to Himself? He used such expressions as "the son of God," but never YHWH. There is no example or evidence that he ever used or pronounced the Tetragrammaton. To do so was a violation of Jewish law. His name was to be El, if anything. Matthew specifically states that He was to be called Emmanuel-"God with us," not Yahweh with us. The High Priest asked Him if He was the "Son of the Blessed." He did not ask if He was the "Son of Yahweh." Matthew's account uses the Greek equivalent-"the Son of God." R. Laird Harris tells us that Jesus avoided the pronunciation of the Name. To do so would have opened Him up to a technical charge of blasphemy, which would have justified the Jewish charges against Him. Further examples of the refusal to use the Sacred Name are seen in such expressions as "kingdom of heaven," and "kingdom of God." These were substitute names for "the kingdom of Jehovah." The words "Holy Spirit" were used in the same manner as a substitute for "Spirit of Jehovah" (The Law and the Prophets, pages 216-217). All these examples clearly demonstrate that the use of the Sacred Name is not a requirement.

## **What is Behind the Obsession to Use the Name?**

It would be an understatement to say that Names Advocates are obsessed with the necessity of using the Sacred Name.

Here are some examples:

Before this you have seen nothing compared to what you will see in the days ahead in the lives of the true saints who witness the name of Yahshua. Now is the time for you to begin to know and use and understand the Sacred Name if you wish to be in the select group of people who will do exploits at the end times. Great and wonderful things are promised to the believers who are in the Name of Yahshua. There are great and wonderful things to be done in the closing days of this age. A blessing is pronounced upon those who think on His name. Thinking on the name will allow the believer to not only come to know Him better but will help him to come to define and understand his own position better. Those who declare that position will secure a special blessing from the deity. It is by this means that victory over Satan can be gained. There is only one Name given whereby the human race can be saved. That name is exclusive, holding salvation within itself. You will not be spared or protected during the coming tribulation unless you call upon the Name of Yahweh and Yahshua. This is the only way to salvation. Unless one calls upon the Sacred Name he cannot be saved. There is only one Name under heaven that offers salvation. Those who accept this name, which means “everlasting” or “eternal life,” make it a part of themselves. No other name holds the quality of everlasting life within itself. To trust in another name will not save you. In order to be saved you will have to be in the body of the Messiah bearing the name “Assemblies of Yahweh.” Phinahas Ben Jair, a learned Rabbi of the second century, said that the reason the Jews do not receive answers to their prayers is because they do not know the Sacred Name. When they call upon a substitute name during a time of tribulation He will not listen because, among other things, they have abandoned His covenant. The way we can be sure we will be delivered from the power of Satan and his demons is by using the correct name of the Supreme God. While the charge is hurled against us that we ascribe some kind of mystical or magical power to the Sacred Name, this is not the case. There is no magic to be found in any name. However, Semitic culture has always understood the importance of a person’s name, that in some way the one who pronounced it had a special avenue of communication with the individual spoken to.

According to this last remark, there is no magic to be found in any name. What is the ancient belief? Some primitive societies refused to name a child for a considerable time period after birth. The “real name” was kept secret because it was believed that any enemy who knew the name could gain power over the one who possessed it. The “real name” had to be kept secret because the ordinary name could not be used in working magic. It was considered intolerably dangerous to reveal the “real name.” People,

animals, gods, spirits, sacred places, as well as all objects possessed “real names.” The one who found out any of these names would have power over the one possessing the name (Man, Myth, & Magic, edited by Richard Cavendish, article, “Names”).

By incantations, magicians tapped divine power by the use of biblical names and titles of God. Such names as El, Elohim, Eloah, Adonai, Sabaoth, and Shaddai were used. But the one name that came closer to the inner reality of the God of the Old Testament was the Tetragrammaton. Held in profound awe, it was rarely pronounced for fear of profaning it, or possibly for fear that enemies would discover the pronunciation. But this created a problem. If God could be coerced by the use of His name, then He was not omnipotent. The problem was solved by a magical explanation. The use of God’s Name does not oblige Him to do the will of the invoker, and He cannot be coerced by the recital of His name. Rather, the Name itself is invested with power to fulfill the desires of the man who pronounces it (Cavendish, article, “Names”). The Tetragrammaton was considered connected with awesome mysteries. “Miracle workers” of the Middle Ages, and even later, were believed to have known how to pronounce the Name. One wonderworker was named “Baal Shem,” meaning “Master of the Name.” See the Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, Volume 10, article “Tetragrammaton”. In the Cabala (a system of esoteric philosophy developed by the rabbis during the Middle Ages, based on a mystical interpretation of the Scriptures), the creation of the universe was viewed as the unfolding of God’s name and the ten Sefiroth (emanations of God or aspects of the divine personality) were regarded as features of His identity that comprise the Sacred Name. The letters of the Hebrew alphabet were considered as extremely powerful objects in meditation and magic. The object of Jewish mystical contemplation was the Name of God because it reflects the hidden meaning and totality of existence. Through the Name of God everything acquires meaning. Therefore, the way to true mystical ecstasy is successfully making God’s name the object of meditation. One who knows the name when he goes out of the material body will not be hurt by smoke, darkness, archon (a chief magistrate), angel, or archangel (Cavendish, article, “Names”).

The one common denominator in all magic is that words, names, and sounds have special powers when applied particularly to gods, angels, and demons. These powers could be employed if one knew the name and how to pronounce it. The ancient widespread belief was that a secret name can have power over the universe, and this belief was especially held by the Jews who frequently used the name of God in practicing magic. This was why the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton was so important. The correct pronunciation was absolutely required for working magic (The Supernatural-Magic, Words, Numbers, Editorial Consultants: Colin Wilson and Uri Geller, page 68).

The Talmud does not hesitate to state the importance of magic in the names of God. All who knew their combinations could perform miracles (The Jewish Encyclopedia, article, “Names of God”). The various feats of power, might, and accomplishments in the Bible were attributed to the use of the divine name. If one pronounced the name of God correctly, even prayer was regarded as more effective (The Jewish Encyclopedia, article “Shem ha-Meforash”). Even physicians tried to learn the pronunciation of the Name (ibid, article, “Tetragrammaton”). The famous Magus Eliphaz Levi said that the YHWH

was the key to divine power and that all magical science consists in the knowledge of this name (Transcendental Magic, by Eliphaz Levi, pages 17, 55). The magic circle is a must in sorcery, and the names of Hebrew divinities were often inscribed within this circle, including the Tetragrammaton (Witchcraft, Magic, and Alchemy, by Grillo De Givry, page 104). Albert Pike, the famous freemason, said that when a person wore the Name, it was regarded as an amulet that could protect against danger, sickness, and evil spirits (Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, page 204). The real history of the use of Hebrew amulets came from the Cabala, not the Bible (Amulets and Talismans, by Sir E. A. Wallis Budge, pages 217-219). The Samaritans had similar beliefs as the Jews; they did not pronounce the YHWH and used Elohim in its place. The mystical tradition of the Samaritans is identical to that of the Cabalists. The Syrian, Arabic, Samaritan, Christian, Egyptian, and Abyssinian concepts of power follow this same tradition (ibid, pages 260-261, 268, 272-273).

The way the Talmud explained the miracles of Jesus was that He had studied the profane mysteries while in Egypt (A History of Magic, by Eliphaz Levi, page 17). Jesus had acquired power by stealing the secret name from the sanctuary, as the Name was engraved on the stone that Jacob had anointed with oil, and this was where it was located. Two fierce dogs guarded the sanctuary. They generated such fear that anyone learning the letters would forget them. But Jesus outsmarted them. He wrote the letters down on a parchment and inserted it into a hole He had cut in His thigh. When he pronounced the Name, the wound was healed (The Talmud Unmasked, by I. B. Pranaitis, pages 34-35).

Since the Jews were upholding monotheism, they chose to recognize one proper name for God. The name YHWH was chosen. This concept came from Babylonian influence because even a teacher was never called by his name. Forty years before the destruction of the Temple, the priests ceased pronouncing the Name and it was declared that anyone who used it would forfeit his place in the future world. Wherever the YHWH was found in the Scriptures, Adonai was substituted, and where Adonai and YHWH were found together the YHWH was pronounced as Elohim. The name YHWH came to be regarded as the proper name for God because all other names were common to human beings. It was considered blasphemy to pronounce the Tetragrammaton, and some hold the idea that it was revered to avoid placing it on par with pagan deities. Not until after the Babylonian captivity did the Tetragrammaton begin to hold a special reverence. After the destruction of the Temple no trace of the knowledge of the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton could be found. (The Jewish Encyclopedia, article, "Names of God"). A later factor in the use of the divine name was that Medieval Jewish teachers also had such a fixation on monotheism that they began to forbid any expression that implied God was not absolute unity. This eliminated any suggestion of plurality in God's Being. They reduced the multiple names for God into a common meaning and said that one name alone was the proper and exclusive name for God-the Tetragrammaton. They held the view that only the Tetragrammaton gives a clear and unequivocal indication of His essence (Ency. Judaica, Vol. 1, article, "God, Names of").

Some authorities believe the refusal to pronounce the YHWH occurred during the last decades of the Babylonian captivity (The Jewish Encyclopedia, article,

“Tetragrammaton”). So, we can conclude that foreign influence was at least partially responsible for the Jewish refusal to pronounce the Tetragrammaton. In Babylon, one Jewish amora (reader of the law) taught that the YHWH should not be pronounced because the word “forever” in Exodus 3:15 means “concealed,” that is, God’s name is to be concealed (ibid, article, “Shem ha-Meforash”). While a number of ideas were advanced for the motive of suppressing the pronunciation of the Name, a most significant reason was the desire to prevent the abuse of the Name in magic. If this was the case, the suppression failed because one of the great names in both Jewish and Gentile magic was the Tetragrammaton (Ency. Brit., 11th edition, article, “Jehovah”).

The Jewish Encyclopedia adds that at least as early as the third century BC, the YHWH seems to have been regarded as ineffable. Various Bible justifications were proffered (e.g. Ex. 20:7, Lev. 24:11), and the name was written only in consonant form, the true pronunciation forgotten (Jewish Ency., article, “Names of God”). Some of the reasons given for this proscription are found in Sacred Name literature today. One major reason given for suppressing the Name was that its use should be limited to those with “consecrated lips and ears.” In addition, The Jewish Encyclopedia says that Adonai was substituted because of fear, not because of a misapplication of the third commandment (Jewish Ency., article, “Adonai”). The fact is: Today there is no authentic information as to how the Sacred Name should be pronounced.

It certainly could be argued that the Cabala played an important role in the obsession with the Name. Pico della Mirandola introduced the Cabala into Renaissance thought in the fifteenth century. His belief was that the truth of Christianity could be confirmed by means of the Cabala, and thus began the various schools of Christian Cabalists. Pico held that it was possible to prove the correct name for the Messiah was Jesus. This was done by Cabalistic manipulation of letters and names. He wrote 72 Cabalistic conclusions confirming that Christianity’s foundation was based on “Hebrew wisdom.” This “Hebrew wisdom,” of course, included Hermetic, Platonic, and Neoplatonic texts, as well as Orphic hymns, and Chaldean oracles. Christian Cabalism became a religious movement that was believed to be compatible with Christianity. Pico was convinced that Jesus’ name was YHWH, but this view was not new. The Church Father, Jerome (fourth century), maintained the same thing. Christian Cabalism began to be employed by Christians, and the end result was that occult philosophy became acceptable. Christians now began to use the sources of “spiritual power” made known to them by the Cabala (The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age, by Francis Yates, pages 17-22).

A later Christian Cabalist, Johannes Reuchlin, extolled the Hebrew language because the true names of God and angels are expressed in it. Reuchlin’s writings demonstrate that he was preoccupied with the wonderworking power of the Hebrew language. He held that Cabalistic magic erased the fear of operative magic because Cabalistic magic involved the names of God and angels. Reuchlin devoted much of his time to names, especially the name of Jesus as the Messiah (Yates, pages 23-25). He even went so far as to assert that the name of Jesus exceeded the YHWH in power when the letter “S” was added. The letter “S” was regarded as very powerful because of its numerical value (Cavendish, article, “Names”). Also, another Cabalist, Francesco Giorgi, formulated a process that by

means of manipulating the Hebrew letters it could be demonstrated that Jesus was the true name of the Messiah. All later Cabalists agreed that the Tetragrammaton is the root and foundation of the divine names (A History of Magic, page 99, fn).

The supreme Magus, Henry Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535), said that the name Jesus contained all the power of the Tetragrammaton and that he had drawn close to the Creator Himself and knew how to call upon the names of God. He accepted the name Jesus as the chief of the wonderworking names (Yates, pages 37, 46). Cabalism was also instrumental in supplying the mystical formulas of the occult and the divine names that became a part of magic and sorcery. Astrological charms were coupled with Bible verses, Hebrew divine names, and formulas taken from the Cabala (De Givry, pages 206, 339-340)

Sacred Names Advocates inform us that the spoken name of a divine being is equivalent to the presence, power, or glory of that being. We are told that in the original Hebrew the meaning of the name is the same as the reality of the person represented by that particular name. Therefore, when the true name of the Messiah was corrupted and lost, man lost contact with the reality of that name. Sacred Name Advocates are probably not aware of the occult attachment when they say there is a blessing pronounced upon those who think on His name. We are told that by thinking on the correct name, believers in the deity can come to better know the deity and are able to define and understand their own position better. One who can declare that position before others secures a special blessing from the deity, and those who give their attention to the name of the deity shall receive the richest blessing. Victory over Satan can be achieved by inquiry into the true meaning of the name of the deity. Great and wonderful things are promised to those who are in the name of Yahshua. There is power in the Name and unlimited power promised to the flock. Those who refuse to repent and call upon the Name of Yah through Yeshua will face the tribulation.

What is generally overlooked by Name Advocates is that God named Himself. His names, therefore, are one of His creations. In reality, Sacred Name Advocates ascribe power to what was created, rather than to the Creator. According to the Apostle Paul, this is idolatry (Rom. 1:25). The word "creature" in this text means, "created thing." Sacred Name Advocates may say they are not advocating such a thing, but the end result attests otherwise.

Many knowledgeable people are aware of the history of the Sacred Name movement. Paul Penn, a Jewish believer, and John Briggs were the first to pronounce and use the name Yashua. Israel Klar, another Jewish believer who knew Hebrew, was also instrumental in the beginning of the movement. But John Briggs and Paul Penn should be given the honor of having started people to thinking on the name Yahshua. So, what we see is that the same ancient ideas about the power and magic of a name have been carried down in the Sacred Name movement. While many of them would not like to admit it, this is the perpetuation of an occult practice that goes back many centuries.

## Forcing or Misinterpreting Scripture

Anyone who has read much Sacred Name literature becomes aware of one thing- Scriptures are forced and misinterpreted in order to substantiate the Sacred Name doctrine. Sacred Name Advocates are convinced that the word “Name” can mean only one thing-the correct pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. An examination of the word “Name” would be profitable, but this must wait until later.

We are told in Psalm 68:4 that we are to extol God by His name, Yah. But if the Almighty has only one name, and that is Yahweh, what is the name Yah doing here? If the Tetragrammaton can be used in the short form-Yah-then God does have more than one name.

Ezekiel 39:7 is quoted to prove that the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton has not been lost, but the context shows this event-making His name known-will not take place until after the return of Christ. If anything, the text shows that at the present time His name is being polluted.

Psalm 111:9 is quoted to prove that the holy name must be called upon and revered if we are to receive salvation. The text merely says that His name is holy and reverend. It does not say it must be pronounced, nor does it indicate how it should be pronounced. Nor does it say eternal life is promised to those who use it.

Hebrews 13:15-16 is cited to show it is required to use the Sacred Name in worship. Note again, the text does not say which name to use, nor does it say that any other name except YHWH displeases Him.

Jeremiah 8:8-9 is used to show how the Sacred Name was removed from the Scriptures. The text says nothing about the Sacred Name; it simply states that the wise men have rejected the word of the Lord, not His name. And it does not state that the Sacred Name was removed from the text.

Exodus 23:13, Joshua 23:7, and Psalm 16:4 are utilized to prove that it is wrong to use any other title for “the true Mighty One” except Yahweh. The Hebrew word for “mention” means to infix or penetrate into the mind, to preserve in memory. It does not prohibit merely citing the names of other gods, as the prophets often did. Nor does it state that the use of any other name than Yahweh is forbidden.

Exodus 20:7 and Leviticus 19:12 supposedly condemn the substitution of any name in the place of Yahweh. According to Sacred Name Advocates, this is because the word “vain” means, “to falsify,” “to bring God’s name to naught,” “to substitute.” The Hebrew authority Gesenius says that the word “vain” means “utter not the name of Jehovah upon a falsehood,” “do not swear falsely.” So, the word “vain” is not referring to a substitute name for God.

Psalm 138:2, which reads: “. . . for thou hast magnified thy word above all they name” has had the punctuation shifted around by Sacred Name Advocates, so that it reads: “. . . for thou hast magnified thy word, above all thy name.” The Hebrew text does not contain punctuation, so this added comma is completely out of place. The literal text actually reads: “. . . You have magnified above all Your name your word.” It does not state that God’s name is magnified above everything else.

Malachi 1:6 is presumed to indict the priests who despise God’s name, which is interpreted to mean God condemns those ministers who are not using the Sacred Name. Sacred Name Advocates fail to read the following verses, which show how the priests despised His name (vv. 7-8).

According to Sacred Name Advocates, John the Baptist used the Sacred Name (Matthew 17:11). The text makes no mention of the Sacred Name, and we should not assume it does.

John 17:6, 26 are used to support the argument that Jesus revealed the Sacred Name to His followers. Luke 11:52 is quoted to prove that Jesus attacked the Pharisees for deleting the Name from the Bible. Bible scholars state that there is no evidence that Jesus used the Sacred Name. The argument behind the interpretation above is based on the idea that the word “name” refers to the correct pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton only. The same can be said about the statement “Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord,” which according to Sacred Name Advocates means that the Sacred Name was known.

Supposedly the Jews executed Stephen because he used the Sacred Name (Acts 7). They stopped their ears and rushed upon him when they heard the Name. There is nothing in the account that indicates that Stephen used the Sacred Name. In fact, what he did use was the expression “Son of man,” rather than the Tetragrammaton.

According to Names Advocates, the Jews used the Sacred Name in Acts 18:15. They take the word “names” in this verse to mean the disciples insisted on using the specific name of the Almighty. But there is not the slightest indication here that the word “names” refers to the Tetragrammaton.

Acts 26:11 is interpreted to mean that Paul caused the Christians to blaspheme by making them use substitute words in the place of the Sacred Name. Blasphemy can occur in many ways, so it is an assumption that this text speaks of the Tetragrammaton.

In Exodus 3:14 God told Moses that His name was “I AM,” yet Sacred Name Advocates ignore this name insisting that it is Yahweh, as verse 15 indicates. The name “I AM” cannot be disregarded for the sake of supporting the idea that Yahweh is the only name, as we have already seen that Yahweh applies to both the Father and the Son.

Isaiah 9:6 lists five separate names for God-”Wonderful,” “Counselor,” “The Mighty God,” “[The Father of Eternity],” “The Prince of Peace.” The One who became the

Christ was the God of the Old Testament (1 Cor. 10:1-4). He will function as God in every one of the above capacities. For Sacred Name Advocates to say His name is limited to Yahweh places a limit on God's power and capabilities.

Sacred Name Advocates paraphrase Isaiah 42:8, which reads: "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." The paraphrase goes as follows: "I am Yahweh, that is my Name and my Glory I will not give to another name or my praise to any graven image." The word "name" is inserted to support the Sacred Name argument, but it is not in the Hebrew text.

According to Isaiah 52:5, Sacred Name Advocates say that Yahweh's name is blasphemed by substituting names other than YHWH. Gesenius, the Hebrew authority, shows that the word for "blasphemy" does not include the meaning of "substitute."

Psalm 83:18 is used to prove that the name YHWH is the only name for God. The Sacred Name paraphrase is: "That men may know that thou whose name alone is Yahweh art the Most High over the whole earth." This paraphrase violates the Hebrew text, which reads: "And let them know that your name is Yahweh-that you alone the Most High over all the earth." Notice also that the Hebrew text does not say that the only name for the Most High is Yahweh. And it states that He alone rules over all the earth. Even the Authorized Version has the word order incorrect in this verse.

Psalm 138:2 states that God has magnified His word above all His name. Sacred Name Advocates paraphrase the text to read: "For thou has enlarged or uplifted thy Name, Thy Word of Promise." By this means the Name is uplifted above all His creation. The Hebrew text states: ". . . and give thanks to your name for your mercy and for your truth for You have magnified above all Your name." The meaning is that His mercy and Truth are magnified above His name.

Amos 4:13 is given to prove that God has only one name. The interpretation given the text is that the word "LORD" (Yahweh) is the name, but "the God of hosts," is a title. Since the Hebrew text does not contain punctuation, there are no commas. It simply reads: "Yahweh the God of hosts His name." The original text does not differentiate between a name and a title.

A similar example of an interpretation is placed on Amos 5:27 which states: "Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith the LORD, whose name is The God of hosts." Sacred Name Advocates paraphrase the text as follows: ". . . the Elohim of Hosts, whose name is Yahweh." The original Hebrew text clearly states: ". . . says Jehovah the God of hosts is His name." In this text His name is "God of hosts," not Yahweh.

In the New Testament, Sacred Name Advocates say that Jesus came with His Father's name-Yah. Combining Yah with "shua," the name of the Messiah should be Yashua. John 5:43 and 14:26 are given for proof. Neither of these texts says that Jesus came with

His Father's name. They state He came in His Father's name. There is a difference between the two, which we will examine shortly.

Sacred Name Advocates postulate an answer for the miracle that many heard God's Word in different languages, as recorded in Acts 2. Their answer is that even though they heard the works of God in many languages on the Day of Pentecost, they heard Peter quote Joel 2:28-32. Peter used the name Yahweh when quoting this text and not some substitute. But other statements Peter made on the same day included the name Jesus, and since Peter spoke Aramaic the form would have been Jeshua. So, there is no proof that Peter used the name Yahweh in an exclusive manner.

The Sacred Name argument that the name "Jesus" is a corruption and should be translated "Joshua," (according to Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8), does not take into consideration that the Aramaic name for Joshua was Jeshua. Since Aramaic was the spoken language at the time, He would have been called Jeshua. The name "Jesus" is the Greek equivalent of Jeshua. This Greek transliteration is as close to the Aramaic as the Greek language would allow.

Finally, Proverbs 30:4 needs a brief comment. Sacred Name Advocates inform us that the text reveals both a Father and a Son in the Old Testament. As we have seen, the Spiritual Father of Israel was the One who became the Christ. But notice the text does not use a name at all. The name for both the Father and the Son in the Old Testament was the Tetragrammaton. So, nothing we have covered in all the Scriptures listed in this section gives an indication how the Name was pronounced or that it should be used exclusively.

## **Are "God," "Jesus," "Christ," and "Lord" Pagan Names?**

Sacred Name literature says much about the names and titles of God, Jesus, Christ, and Lord. They are firmly convinced these names are pagan in origin.

Names and titles commonly employed in worship are not acceptable because they were once attached to pagan idols. The name God, for example, was originally the name of an idol once worshipped in ancient Babylon. The word "Lord" actually means Baal since Baals were lords over particular regions. God says He will take the names of the "Baals" out of the mouth of His people. All the "mighty ones" worshipped in the world today by any name other than Yahweh are derived from a heathen background. By using a Greek or Latin substitute for the Messiah's true name, people are denying His name. Instead of worshipping the Name of the Heavenly Father, people today are worshipping the names of mythological deities such as "god," and "lord" which are not even names but titles of office. Those who say they are worshipping "the Lord" are confused because they do not

know which lord they are worshipping. Paul said there are many lords and many gods, so the same applies to the word “god.” “Lord” and “God” are pagan deities. All the names of the national deities of the heathen such as Pan, Zeus, Theos, Deus, Dio, Dieu, and Dios were formerly applied to heathen idols and should not be substitute names for the Almighty. Since multitudes of mighty ones are worshipped in the nations of the world, there is only one logical way to be certain that we are calling on the true Mighty One. We must use the Name He originally placed in His word. We must come out of Babylon which includes the use of names of the mighty ones of the worldly nations. Yahweh says all who continue to use pagan names in worship are guilty of idolatry.

The refusal to recognize that the word “God” is the equivalent to the Hebrew Elohim is the absolute stand taken by Names Advocates. They believe that the name “God” comes from the Hebrew GD and was applied to the Assyrian deity of “Good Luck.” Admitting that the name Elohim is applied to both the true God and false gods in the Scriptures, they consider Elohim as a title, not a name. They add that what the Bible condemns is the use of false deities being applied to God. The use of the word “God” is forbidden in Exodus 23:13 where it states it is a sin to pronounce it or substitute it in the place of Yahweh or Elohim.

They go on to say:

We object to the use of Adonai in referring to the Heavenly Father, even though it does mean Lord or Ruler, because it is the name of a pagan deity as well as the name of a heathen king (Josh. 10:1, 3) who was named after his pagan deity. Yahweh objects to being classified with pagan deities.

The word “god” is a common noun of pagan origin and was applied to heathen deities. Later, when the Teutonic people were converted to Christianity the word God was elevated to the Christian sense. So until the sixth century AD, the Most High never heard Himself called “God,” so there was no “Church of God” by that name. The Encyclopedia Britannica traces the word “god” to a molten image. Gad (God) was the Chaldean sun-deity and Meni was the moon-goddess according to Isaiah 65:11.

According to Greek and Roman Mythology, Appendix 1, page 312, the god Zeus continues to live under the title “Theos.” It is . . . a title so conveniently equivocal that the Christian can use it without heresy and at the same time square perfectly with the ancient pagan belief.

Any man who teaches the Bible and uses these names is either ignorant, dishonest, or willfully disregards the instructions regarding the “sanctification of the Name” by which the Creator revealed Himself.

Are the above assertions true?

The reference work, Greek and Roman Mythology, cited above, simply states that “theos” (God) in some form is the equivalent of Zeus. It does not state that “theos” is etymologically connected with Zeus. Also, the attempt to prove that such names or titles

as “God,” “Jesus,” “Christ,” and “Lord” are the personal names of heathen deities cannot be substantiated historically. Hebrew names for God, on the other hand, can be.

Take the word “god” for example. It is a class name for things worshipped whether real or imaginary. While not the specific name of the Heavenly Father, this usage has come to be accepted. The word “god” is common to all the Teutonic languages, of which there are many derivatives, but it is not identified outside of Teutonic. Upon the conversion of the Teutonic people, it was elevated to the Christian sense and applies to the true God. The word has several meanings: (1) the one Supreme or Absolute Being, (2) in mythology, as being superior to nature; a deity, as gods of the heathen, (3) figuratively, a person or thing that is made an object of extreme devotion, (4) an image or idol, and (5) one of the audience in the upper gallery of a theatre, so called from the elevated position in allusion to the gods of Olympus (The Century Dictionary, under “god”).

The question that needs to be answered here is: Does the use of English titles for the Tetragrammaton lead to the worship of other gods?

The answer, of course, is no!

In fact, Bible usage discloses that it was not the word used for God in the Hebrew language that was a sin, but whether or not the object to which the name or title was applied was worshipped in the place of the true God. Before and during the time of Christ, Greek-speaking Jews used the Septuagint, or according to some authorities, a similar Greek translation of the Old Testament. In either case, the Greek translation included the Greek titles for Deity. Not even the original Hebrew writings of most of the Old Testament were extant during the time of Christ. Bible examples that illustrate what has just been stated—that it is not wrong to use the English word “god” because our pagan ancestors did—are found in many places. For example, the word “Elohim,” which was applied to YHWH, is used in reference to false gods of one type or another 240 times in the Old Testament. This is probably the reason some Names people refuse to use the word “Elohim,” preferring to say “Mighty Ones.” The word “El” is applied to false gods 16 times, the word “Eloah” five times, and the word “Elah” which is the Aramaic form, is used 16 times. What do these inspired examples tell us? They tell us that it is not the misuse of these words that is sinful, but whether or not the people were worshipping the objects the words represented. The idea that Exodus 23:13 forbids the mentioning of the names of false gods overlooks three things: (1) “to make mention” means to inscribe in memory for the purpose of worship, (2) the prohibition is against the names of these false gods, not the general word “god,” and (3) God’s prophets commonly mentioned these names in their denunciations against idolatry. Keep in mind, Paul said the heathen once knew God but turned away from Him. His name was then applied to heathen gods of all kinds.

The title or name “god” appeared many years after the time of Christ. Names Advocates substitute words such as “Creator,” “Savior,” etc., but these also originated many years after the time of Christ. Can we assume these names were also applied to pagan gods? More than likely, yes. The word “Jesus” is more Hebrew than Creator or Savior because

“Jesus” is the Latin form of the Greek transliteration of the Aramaic Jeshua. The Greek form-Iesous-resulted from the difference between the Aramaic and Greek alphabets.

The origin of the English word “god” is disputed. The Oxford-English Dictionary, states that apart from the unlikely hypothesis of adoption from some foreign tongue, there are two Aryan roots of the word “gheu” which are believed to be the root of the English word “god.” These are: (1) to invoke, and (2) to pour, to offer sacrifice. The most obvious definition that is deductible from the actual use of the word “gheu” is that it is an object of worship. Some scholars accept the derivation of the root “gheu” to mean “to pour” and suppose the etymological sense is “molten image,” but this assumed development of meaning seems very unlikely. As the use of “God,” as a proper name, has throughout the literary period of English predominated, it is only natural that the heathen usage should be sometimes understood as transferred to this use. A “god” in this sense is a supposed being put in the place of God, or an imperfect conception of God in some of His attributes and relations. The meaning of the word God has been modified by the influence of Christian use. In the original pre-Christian sense, God referred to a superhuman worshipped as having power over nature and the fortunes of mankind; a deity, chiefly of heathen divinities. When applied to the One Supreme Being, this sense becomes more or less modified (The Oxford-English Dictionary, Vol. 4, word “God”). What we see by this is that there is no substantiation to the idea that the word “god” was derived from a molten image, and that it is not the word itself, but the usage that makes it good or bad. Keep in mind Paul’s statement that after turning from God, the heathen began to apply His names and titles to false gods.

The notion that the English word “god” came from the word “Gad,” the Semitic god of fortune, has no historical basis. Sacred Name Advocates tell us that the English word “god” comes from the Syrian deity Gad, mentioned in Isaiah 65:11 (margin) in conjunction with “Meni.” Alexander Hislop tells us that these were names that were applied to Nimrod and Cush, the first great apostates in the post-Flood period (The Two Babylons, pages 94-95). Many names of heathen deities originated in the early post-Flood period beginning with the rebellion against God by Cush and Nimrod. There is no more authority for the belief that “god” is a derivative of Gad any more than we could say that the Polish word “bog” comes from the English word “bog,” or vice versa. God in the Teutonic language is akin to the Greek theos and the Latin deus which was applied to the deities of heathen mythologies. But, as the Bible demonstrates, it is the use to which the word is put, not the word itself that is forbidden by God’s word, as these words were applied to the true God as well.

Sacred Name Advocates tell us that Iesous is a foreign word that should not apply to the Messiah. They have to repudiate the inspired Greek text to do this. But this view, along with many others of Sacred Name Advocates, is not based on real scholarly or historical proof.

Sacred Name Advocates relate the following:

The name Jesus comes from Ie and Sous. In the trinity of the Babylonian gods, the God of healing was named Ie (Ea). Zeus was the Greek savior, so Ie coupled with Sous, (the Greek terminal) gives us Ie-sous, or Iesous, the healing Zeus. Jesus was for many years called Joshua and it was the Septuagint which covered up the Sacred Name of Yahweh. The Alexandrian Jews translated Joshua as Iesous. Hislop tells us that the Greeks worshipped the supreme deity under the title Zeus the Savior. Iesous or Jesus was the name of a pagan deity worshipped many years before the time of the Savior as Ie-Sous or Ie-Zeus. According to the famous Liddell and Scott Greek Lexicon, Iesous is the Ionic masculine form of the name Iaso-the Greek goddess of healing. What we are opposed to is the substitution of man-made titles, or any title for the true name of the Creator.

Sacred Name Advocates insist on using the name Yashua for the Messiah. They tell us that Yahshua is the compound of Yah and Hoshua and that shua is the Hebrew word for salvation. (Comment: The Hebrew word for "salvation" is not shua, but yshua. The only other word with the same consonants as shua means "cry for help," but is vowel pointed differently and cannot be pronounced as shua.) What is the truth about this assertion? Yahshua is a concoction and, as such, is not a name. To repeat, Jesus is the Greek transliteration of Jeshua and it did not originate with the Greeks. It originated with the Greek-speaking Jews who translated the Septuagint. The assertion that Jesus is derived from Ie-Sous is pure speculation. Name Advocates rely on the Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology and The Two Babylons. Their reasoning is as follows: The pagan deity Dionysus is etymologically the Zeus of Nysa. D'ion-nuso-s means, "sin bearer." The sus in Dionysus is then linked with the sus in Jesus. When the Bible was translated into the Greek language, the Savior was regarded as Zeus. According to them, we should shake all vestiges of the pagan name Jesus.

Some Sacred Name Advocates admit that all the paganism of Hebrew true worship is traceable to Nimrod and his wife, Semiramis. They fail, however, to pay careful attention to what Hislop really says regarding "Zeus the Savior." Hislop points out that this title was applied to Dionysus. Dionysus was another name for Bacchus. Bacchus is identified with the Egyptian Osiris. And who was Osiris? He was none other than Nimrod (Hislop, pages 71-73, 46, 22-23). The fact is: There is no relationship between the name Jesus and Zeus, or any other pagan god mentioned by Sacred Name Advocates. Zeus and Iesous (Greek form of Jeshua) are not cognates. Keep in mind that when Paul preached to the Greeks in Athens, they said he was a "setter forth of strange gods" (Acts 17:18, 31). Paul specifically mentioned Jesus, but they did not connect what Paul said with Zeus. Also, Pilate wrote the name Jesus on the placard on the cross. He was well aware of the name and wrote it in Greek, as well as Hebrew and Latin (John 19:19-20).

Another idea presented by Names Advocates is that there is a connection between the name Jesus and the god Yes. The name Yes was another name for Bacchus. Adding the sus to the Yes, the name becomes Yessus. Their conclusion is that the name Iesous is a pagan name. This alternate name for Bacchus is not connected with the name Jesus regardless of what some may say. We may recall that Sacred Name Advocates state that Iaso-the Greek god of healing-is the Ionic masculine form of Iesous, according to A Greek-English Lexicon, by Liddell and Scott. This work does not substantiate this

statement. Both the abridged and unabridged editions of A Greek-English Lexicon, by Liddell and Scott, show no such word connected with Iaso. They tell us that Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua. So, it is in no way related to Iaso-the Greek god of healing.

What about the title “Christ”? Sacred Name Advocates believe the word “Christ” is derived from the Indian deity, Khrishna. They refer to the Two Babylons, page 60, for proof. This page contains an illustration of the slain serpent Calyia, slain by Vishnu who appears in the reincarnated form of Khrishna. This illustration pictures Khrishna as the serpent-crusher of India. According to Hislop, the origin of this is traced to the Bible (Gen. 3:15). Sacred Name Advocates add that a Dr. Ignaz Goldhier, in his book entitled Mythology Among the Hebrews, links the deities of India and Greece together. So, the conclusion is that the title “Christ” is associated closely with pagan worship.

Many, both those for and against the Sacred Name doctrine, admit that the title “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word “Messiah.” In time the word Christ ceased to be a title and became the name “Jesus Christ. But keep in mind that Sacred Name Advocates are not always in agreement.

Some Sacred Name Advocates tell us:

The Greeks not only corrupted the pronunciation of the Names of the Bible but also corrupted the meaning and we should rid ourselves of pagan influence. Christ is a substitute word for “Savior” and is derived from the Hindu savior Krishna. The Greeks used the word “Christos” (Christ) for this Indian god. Christ also comes from the Greek “krisma” (Chrisma) which also means “to anoint” but not in any sacred sense. Chrisma closely resembles Krishna of the Sanscrit. So, the origin of the name “Christ” comes from sun-worship as Khrisna was the Hindu Sun-god named after Kris, the sun. Christ is the modern English form of the ancient name of the Sun-god Messiah-Khrisna. As such, the Greek word Christ is not the equivalent of the Hebrew word “Savior.” The Greek equivalent would be Yah-Soter, meaning “God Savior.” Even the name “Christian” is not legitimate. It was a name used contemptuously for the followers of the Messiah and was not applied by the disciples themselves. The phrase that “the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch” is a rank interpolation placed in the Bible by the Nicolaitans when they took over the Assembly of Yahweh at the Council of Nicaea. Acts 26:28 is another interpolation added by these Greek heretics.

The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, Volume 3, article, “Christ, The” informs us that the Greek Christos (Christ) is the equivalent of the Hebrew Mashiah (anointed) and that the English word Messiah is derived from this. But this does not upset Names Advocates. What upsets them is why so many Christians use the title “Christ” when it is supposedly derived from the Indian god Krishna.

**Does the title Christ come from the Indian god Krishna?**

An attempt was made to prove this by Robert Taylor in his work entitled: *The Diegesis; Being a Discovery of the Origin, Evidence, and Early History of Christianity*, pages 168-179. Taylor asserts that Chrisna was the first Christ and that Jesus Christ is the imitation. This assumption has confused many Names Advocates—a result of the failure to grasp what Hislop really says about Nimrod and Semiramis. The consequence has led to many of the false concepts Sacred Names people hold.

Historians versed in ancient history attest to the apostasy of Nimrod and his success in breaking down the Patriarchal faith by delivering men from the awe of God and fear of His judgments (Hislop, page 52). Nimrod, the first post-Flood despot, was well aware of God's promise to provide a coming Savior (Gen. 3:15). Early pagans knew of the penalty of death for sin and the promise of eternal life (Rom. 1:18-32). Nimrod's success depended on convincing his subjects that he or his offspring would be the promised savior. After Nimrod's untimely death, his wife-Semiramis-devised "the Mysteries," a system of worship that represented one of her illegitimate offspring, Tammuz, as the promised savior. The people were told that this "savior" was "miraculously conceived" by God, the one the world awaited. Semiramis was successful in this deception and Nimrod, in the new form of Tammuz, continued to liberate the world from God's distasteful ways.

Nimrod, depicted as a powerful black, was known for his prodigious exploits. He had conquered the known world of his day—from Egypt to the straits of Gibraltar. Robert Taylor tells us that according to Plutarch, Osiris traveled to India where he established a religion and a civilization, and was worshipped there as the sun (Taylor, page 180). We are already aware that Osiris was the Egyptian name for Nimrod. After his death, "the Mysteries" that Semiramis had contrived caught on, and soon the world was carried away by this deception. When the confusion of the languages at the Tower of Babel took place, the religious deception continued. The names of Nimrod, Semiramis, and Tammuz were preserved in many different forms, and they were worshipped as gods. Hislop demonstrates the connection between the Indian Khrishna and Nimrod (Hislop, 60-61, 238). In brief, Khrishna was simply the Indian name for Nimrod or Tammuz.

Many of the aspects in the life and mission of Christ were counterfeited long before His advent. Of eleven main deities in seven countries, all or nearly all were born on or near Christmas of a virgin mother, in a cave underground. They led a life of toil, were light-bringers, healers, mediators, and saviors. Vanquished by the powers of darkness, they descended into the underworld, were resurrected and became the pioneers of mankind to a heavenly world. One of these saviors, Krishna, the god of India, closely paralleled the life of Christ (*Pagan and Christian Creeds*, by Edward Carpenter, pages 21-23). By means of Satanic influence, this counterfeit began with Nimrod, Semiramis, and Tammuz (Gen. 10:8-10, Jer. 44:17-19,25, Ezek. 8:14). The confusion of the languages dispersed these deified mortals under different names worldwide. This counterfeit parallel is what has confused Sacred Name Advocates into believing that the name Christ is a derivative of Khrishna.

There is no scholarly support for the belief that Acts 11:26 and Acts 26:28 are interpolations. The Apostle Peter uses the appellation “Christian” to specifically refer to the brotherhood (1 Pet. 4:16), as a name befitting the followers of Christ and the character it represented. Bible commentators tell us that the Greek word for “called” in Acts 11:26 means “appoint” or “nominate” by Divine direction. A Christian had, therefore, received a “divine appointment.” There is no reason to assume the usage of the word “Christian” in Acts 11:26 and Acts 26:28 is derogatory.

Sacred Name Advocates have this to say about the word “lord”:

“Lord” is a contraction of “lawerd” or “laverd” which is in turn derived from the word “hlafwerd” or “hlafwyrd.” Hlafwerd is a compound word made up of “hlaf,” meaning “lady” and “werd,” the Old English name for the heathen supreme deity, a female controlling the fates of both gods and men of the past, present, and future. The word “loaf” is also associated with hlaf (lady) since the lady usually did the cooking and baking. “Hlafwyrd” was Lady Fate and “laverd” (lord) is a modern contraction of hlafwyrd. Lord is a substitute word for Yahweh and should not be used. Hlafwerd is the equivalent of the Babylonian Baal and the Phoenician Adonay. The use of these three names is prohibited in the Bible. Hlafwyrd means “loafkeeper,” a keeper of bread, and, as such, is a word meaning “god.” Lord is merely a title. It is not the name of the Creator. Like “god” the word “lord” is the name of a pagan deity. The gods of the heathen are getting praise rather than Yahweh. The substitute names are the personal names of pagan gods.

The word “lord” is actually a translation of Baal, according to Sacred Name Advocates. “Baal” or “Adonai,” was the name and title of the ancient Canaanite “mighty one,” the word the Jews used to replace the name Yahweh. By using the word “lord” we are following this forbidden practice. This is demonstrated by Hosea 2:16 (margin), which proves that the English word “lord” is the equivalent of Baal.

We are told the following:

We have been calling our Heavenly Father Baal by using the term “Lord.” Baal (Bel), meaning Lord, was the title of the supreme “mighty one” among the Canaanite peoples. Other titles were attached to this. The usual designation for Baal was Baal-Shemaim (Lord of the heaven). This title is equivalent to Zeus. The true believer must not be guilty of using such pagan names. We must worship in the Name of Almighty Yahweh exclusively.

Before we consider the immediate paragraph above, which we will examine later, let us notice a number of facts about the English word “lord.” Sacred Name Advocates refer to Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary, where it supposedly states the word “lord” is derived from the ancient pagan deity Lord, whose image was placed in the bakeshops to guard the making of bread. This deity was a goddess called Lord, the keeper of the loaf. A look at Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language, the most formidable of the unabridged dictionaries, as well as Webster’s New International

Dictionary of the English Language (unabridged); Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English language (unabridged); Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language (College edition); Webster's Dictionary of Proper Names; Webster's Biographical Dictionary (First edition); and Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary do not indicate such a derivation for the word "lord." The Oxford Dictionary (12 volumes) lists no such meaning or derivation for the word "Lord." The Oxford Dictionary, Volume IV, under the word "lord" says that in its primary sense Lord denotes the head of a household in his relation to the servants and dependents who "eat his bread." Etymologically, Lord means "bread-lord," or employer of labor. Other definitions include: (1) a master, ruler, master of servants; the male head of a household who has dominion over others as his subjects to whom service and obedience are due; chief, prince, sovereign; one who has the preeminence; a feudal superior, the proprietor of a manor or lord of the manor; (2) a husband; (3) The Lord (God); as a title of Jesus Christ, commonly our Lord; (5) as a designation of rank or official dignity, the modern equivalent to Nobleman in its current sense; (6) the peers, temporal and spiritual, as constituting the higher of the two bodies composing the legislature (of England, Scotland, and Ireland); (7) applied with subjoined defining word or phrase, to the individual members of a Board appointed to perform the duties of some high office of state that has been put in commission; in ceremonies prefixed to the titles of bishops whether peers of Parliament or not; sometimes prefixed to the title of nobility; (8) the usual form of address in courts of law to two or more of the superior judges sitting together.

The problem that besets Names Advocates by the use of the word "lord" is that it is used identically with the word "god." The word itself is not intrinsically evil, but what the person means who uses it, or to whom it is being addressed. Sacred Name Advocates refuse to use the word "lord" even though the inspired writers of the Old Testament repeatedly used the word Adonai (lord), which is identical in meaning with the modern usage of the word. In one prayer alone, Daniel, one of the three most righteous men in the Bible (Ezek. 14:14), used the word Elohim ten times, Adonai ten times, but Yahweh only four times. Sacred Name Advocates readily substitute the title "Father" in place of Elohim or Adonai, yet the word "Father" is constantly used in reference to pagan gods throughout history.

Sacred Name Advocates are also dead set against the use of the Greek words theos and kurios, which are translated "God" and "Lord" in the English Bible. These are the words the Greek translators of the Septuagint used when rendering the Greek from the Hebrew text. While Names Advocates claim that the present Greek manuscripts are only versions of the original Aramaic Scriptures and do not reflect the inspired Sacred Name, the reason they oppose the use of theos and kurios is based on the premise that these words are derived from Zeus and Horus. They insist these names are not the equivalent of Yahweh but of the Phoenician Adonai and the Egyptian Horus, as well as the Babylonian Tammuz and Persian Kuros. The fact is: Both these words-theos and kurios-apply to the true God as well as to pagan divinities. It is the use of these words, not the words themselves, which make them sinful.

## **God's Names, Titles, and Tetragrammaton Applied to Pagan Gods!**

We commented earlier that the Names and Titles of God apply to pagan gods. This is one of the major reasons Names Advocates refuse to use such names or titles as El, Eloah, Elohim, and Adonai, when referring to God. They reason that since the nations worshipped idols by these names, how could these same names apply to the Creator. They tell us that Yahweh, the Heavenly Father, has never accepted worship in any other name. It may come as a shock to Names Advocates that the name Yahweh is also used to apply to pagan deities. In fact, the entire argument that all names for God are forbidden except Yahweh since other titles and names apply to pagan deities, falls flat when it is realized that the name Yahweh is no exception. There is a reason the Apostle Paul implied that pagans had taken God's names and applied them to their idols (Rom. 1:21-23).

The title or name Yahweh is identical with Elohim, as seen by the joint usage of the name Jehovah-Elohim (A Dictionary of the Bible, edited by William Smith, article "Jehovah"). El, "the supreme deity" common to all Semitic languages, presided over the pantheon of the ancient city of Ugarit (Ras Shamra) (Larousse World Mythology, edited by Pierre Grimal, page 87). The pagans appropriated this name. Elohim, which can be translated "Godhead" was also appropriated. In the Bible it is used 240 times to refer to pagan deities, in two places as goddesses, and in one place it is rendered "idol." Elohim, when used with the definite article (ha), always refers to the true God. According to Philo of Byblos, El Elyon (Most High), one of the ancient names for God, was used as the name of a Phoenician deity. The name Yahweh was known as early as the second generation after Adam (The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. 7, article, "God"). Elah, the Aramaic name for God, is used sixteen times to apply to heathen gods, and Eloah is used five times. If it is wrong to use the word "God" because our pagan ancestors did so, then it is wrong to use El, Elohim, Elah, and Eloah. But the inspired Old Testament Scriptures show that these words were applied to pagan deities in the same manner they were applied to the true God. This demonstrates that it is not wrong to use the word "God" today. The name alone does not identify the true God, as the same Semitic words were used for pagan gods, especially El, which was used in one form or another all over that part of the world. One of the names for Nimrod was "El-Bar," or God the Son (Hislop, page 73).

The name Yahweh was applied to a pagan deity in Judges 17:1-5, as the word "Lord" in verse three is Yahweh. But a more telling text is found in Exodus 32:1-5. Notice, the calf was called Yahweh. Compare verses 4 and 5. Based on what we have already seen, this should come as no surprise. The oldest Semitic name for God is El, which corresponds to the Akkadian Ilu, the Canaanite El or Il and the Arabian El. El Elyon is never used with the definite article, which means it is a proper noun, a name for God. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries BC, the Canaanites called El Elyon "the lord of the

gods.” The combined form El Elyon is found in inscriptions of the eighth century BC, as well as in later Greek inscriptions of Zeus Hypsistos. But when used in Israel, it referred to the one true God. The heathen used it to apply to the “supreme god,” the one over all the other gods.

“El Berith” (God of the Covenant) is another example. It is found only in Judges 9:46. The sanctuary in verse four is called the “house of Baal Berith.” The correlation between the name Baal (verse 4) and El in seen in verse 46, as it appears both verses refer to the same sanctuary. In the early times of Israel, Baal was more or less a synonym of Adon, which was used as a legitimate title for Yahweh. Not until after the time of Solomon was the name Baal regarded as a specific title for the Canaanite storm-god Hadad, and ceased to be used as a title for Yahweh. Eloah, later (Dan. 11:37) also came to be used in reference to a pagan god (Ency. Judaica, Vol. 1, article “God, Names of”). Agrotos, was one of the greatest gods at Gebal. It meant “the Hunter” and was also applied to the Sun-god El (The Mythology of all Races, edited by Canon John Arnott MacCulloch, Vol. V, pages 39, 54). The reader may recall that Nimrod was known as “the mighty hunter.”

Now, let us get back to the name or title Baal. In spite of all the objections voiced by Sacred Name Advocates regarding the name Baal, it is translated only two times as “lord” in the Old Testament, and in both cases refers to men (Num. 21:28, Isa. 16:8). Its primary meaning is “possessor,” making secondary any application by whomever to a deity. For a considerable period of time, Baal was a title that was applied to Yahweh (The International Standard Encyclopedia, article “Baal”). Not until the time of Ahab did its usage become a problem due to the influence of Jezebel. This “Baal” or Lord was Melkart (Bruce, page 34). When Baal was applied to men, it meant possessor. When applied to gods, it meant owner or possessor of the land. Baal meant the divine owner or landlord of the particular district under consideration. Different Baals were possessors of differing districts. Baals were credited with being the producers of fertility and providing corn, wine, and oil. It is commonly believed that Baal, the supreme deity, is identified with the sun, but the evidence is far from convincing. The most that can be demonstrated is that the sun was sometimes regarded as Baal.

Even the view that Baal was the name of the supreme divinity of the Canaanites has serious objections. The word Baal cannot be found as a proper name standing by itself on monuments. Bible usage, apart from a place or quality, shows it should be translated “the Baal,” as the definite article ha is always found with it. Upon entering Canaan, the Israelites referred to Yahweh as Baal, and there was no stigmatism attached to the name, since it was an appellative. All that the word signified was that Yahweh was the divine owner of the Israelites and the land. In time, the usage did create confusion and tended to make it easier to lapse into idolatry. As noted, a new phase began with the reign of Ahab. He made Melkart, the god of Tyre (the home of his wife, Jezebel), the Baal of Israel (A Dictionary of the Bible, edited by James Hastings, Vol. I, article “Baal”). Earlier, Saul had named one of his sons, “Yahweh Gives,” and another “Man of Baal” (The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. II, article “Baal”). David named one of his sons Eliada (Baal is known), as seen in 2 Samuel 5:16, and in 1 Chronicles 3:8 where the marginal rendering is Beeliada. This shows that El was the equivalent of Baal. The name

Be'aliaha, which combines Baal with Yah means "Yahweh is Baal." (Fausset's Bible Dictionary, "Bealiah"). So, Baal was originally a title, and not a proper name (Ency. Brit., 11th edition, article, "Baal"). During the time of Elijah the assimilation process of Baal worship began to be attacked by God's prophets. Under Ahab, Baal worship had become an independent and aggressive movement within Israel (The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. 2, article "Baal").

The similarity between the English word "Lord" and "Baal" is that the meaning is identical. The word Lord, however, is not the only equivalent. So are "Master" and "Ruler." Sacred Name Advocates do not mind using these names, so they are not consistent. Even the word "Father" is used in the practice of idolatry (Judges 17:10; 18:14, 19). Jesus said to call God in heaven, Father (Matt. 23:9). So, the misapplication of a name does not exclude its usage for Christians. Lord, as an equivalent of Baal, does not mean that the word Lord is evil. All titles are proper which show respect to the true God, but their use in idol worship is another matter. If it is a requirement for us not to use the word Lord, then we also must not use Master, Ruler, Husband, Possessor, and Owner. It is the wrong application of a word, not the word itself that is prohibited. It would be an endless task to delete from usage every word that is the equivalent to some pagan deity. Names Advocates should not stop with the words Lord and God. They should be consistent. In the Bible even the word "king" is from the Hebrew word melech. Melech is the Ammonite form for Moloch. Therefore, according to the Sacred Name line of reasoning, we must never use the word king. Yet, the words, "King of Kings" is a Babylonian appellation and was used by Daniel in referring to God (Dan. 2:37). It is applied to Jesus Christ (Rev.19:16), who was the Yahweh of the Old Testament (1 Cor. 10:1-4).

Sacred Name Advocates interpret Hosea 2:16 to mean that God is going to remove all titles such as "Lord" and "God" from the mouths of His people. Does this text really say this? Notice the context. Beginning in verse 14, we read of Christ's return, the ratifying of the New Covenant, and the marriage of Christ to His people. At that time Israel will call Him, "my husband," and no longer "my Lord." Why? Under the terms of the Old Covenant YHWH was their Lord and Master. Under the New Covenant He will marry them and be their husband. This text has no prohibition about using the titles "Lord" and "Christ." It simply points out the beginning of an entirely new relationship.

That the title "Adonai" is the equivalent of the English word Lord is well-known among Sacred Name Advocates. But they say the Greeks borrowed it from the Phoenicians, and changed the name to "Adonis." They also say that the Hebrews took it from the Phoenicians but left the name intact. Yet, the Bible shows the title Adonai was used long before the time of the Greeks. Both Abraham and Lot used it when speaking to God (Gen. 15:2, 8; 18:3; 19:18). And in Genesis 18:12, the word Adonai is applied to Abraham. Adon is frequently used in apposition to Yahweh or as a substitute. Furthermore, there is no mythological connection between Adonis and the Hebrew Deity Yah (The Mythology of all Races, Vol. 5, page 77). The title Adon is used by Yahweh Himself when He says His name is ha-Adon YHWH (Ex. 34:1,10,23). Compare verses one and ten, where God is speaking, with verse 23.

According to Canon John Arnott MacCulloch, it is not understood why the original name of God-Yah-was extended into verbal form-Yahweh or some similar sounding word. Any attempt to derive it from a trilateral root is misleading because Yahweh was not the original name (The Mythology of all Races, Vol. V, page 43). Mythological references to the God of Israel indicate He was identical with the Amorite and Aramaean deity Hadad, or Adad, or Ilumarru, and to the Sumerian Mer. The Aramaic deity of Yah occurs in the name of a king of Hamath-Ya-u-bi-'di (God Yah is my help)-captured by the Assyrians in 729 BC. One theory is that Yahweh (or some variation of Yahu or Yahu) was worshipped throughout the vast majority of the Semitic world. Tablets connected with the first dynasty of Babylon shows the name Ya-a'-ve-ilu, Ya-ve-ilu, and Ya-u-um, and it is believed that the name Yahweh was known in Babylonia before 2000 BC. This, of course, is shown in Genesis 4:26. Scholars agree that so far as Yahu or Yah are found in Babylonian texts, is the name of a foreign god (Ency. Brit, 11th edition, article "Jehovah"). The occurrence of Jehovah as the compound form of a proper name among many people who were not Hebrew, has made scholars believe that it can be traced to Phoenician or Canaanitish tribes. The view is that the name must have been known and used among heathen people (A Dictionary of the Bible, edited by William Smith, word, "Jehovah"). A letter found in a mound, written in the fifth century BC, uses the name Yah and proves that Yah was a deity of the Canaanites. The name is associated with the Canaanitish Mother-goddess Ashtart-Anat. At Gaza, Yah is represented as a Sun-god on a coin (The Mythology of all Races, Vol. V, page 44). Yah was also identified with the Aramaic Thunder-god Adad (op. cit., pages 42-43). Manuscripts from the Jewish colony at Elephantine show the compound word Anath-Yahu, which demonstrates the syncretism that was occurring following the Israelitish conquest of Canaan. Anath was an ancient Canaanitish goddess, the sister of Baal (Bruce, 53).

The Greek god Ie was derived from the divine name Yah. Ie was inscribed at the temple of Apollo at Delphi (Taylor, page 183). Iao was a variant of the Tetragrammaton and was applied to the god Harpocrates or Horus (Cavendish, article "Horus"). The ancient Greeks used an expression similar to Hallelujah (Praise ye Yah). The expression-Hallulujee-was employed at the beginning and ending of their hymns in honor of Apollo (Taylor, p. 183). From earliest times, the heathen applied appellations such as "Savior," "Redeemer," and "Physician of souls" to their various gods, demigods, and heroes. "Our Savior" was customarily applied to Aesculapius, Bacchus, Jupiter, and Hercules. The heathen were quite familiar with such expressions as "Son of God" and "Savior of the world." The title "Logos" or "The Word" was applied to the god Mercury (Taylor, pages 8, 153, 156, 183). Long before the time of Christ, the heathen nations copied and used these titles and names.

Taylor states that Orpheus, the earliest poet in Greek legend, said that Bacchus was a lawgiver, and called him Moses, the one who gave the two tables of law. Taylor says that the name JHWH-Nissi (Yahweh my banner) was adopted by the Greeks to form the name Dionysius (Taylor, pp. 188-189). This is a candid admission that the heathen took the names of the true God and applied them to their deities. At the bottom of much of the confusion among Sacred Name Advocates is the notion that the Hebrews appropriated the name of pagan gods and attached them to the true God. History and the Bible

demonstrate otherwise. This is clearly seen in the Aramaean account of the Flood. When Deucalion (Noah) entered the Ark, all the beasts came with him because Zeus had ordered it (Mythology of all Races, Vol. V, page 38). Informed Bible students are well aware that the names of the Greek “Zeus” and the Roman “Jove” are derived from the Hebrew YHWH. The Apostle Paul was absolutely correct when he said the heathen did not like to retain God in their knowledge.

## **What Does “Name” and “Come in the Name,” Mean?**

The “Name” is the all-important thing to Sacred Name Advocates.

Here is what they tell us, either quoted or paraphrased:

Healing, protection, and eternal life are all attributes employed in the Savior’s name. By trusting in the majestic Name there is eternal life according to 1 John 5:13. Salvation is offered in one name only-Yahweh. People who tell us we cannot call upon His Name because we do not have a pure language are saying that no one can call upon His true name and, therefore, no one can be saved when He returns.

When Sacred Name Advocates refer to the Name, they mean the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. The Hebrew authority Gesenius says the word “Name” (Heb. shem) has several different meanings, and is not limited to the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. He lists these meanings as: “in the name of Jehovah”; “by His authority”; “a celebrated name;” “fame”; “good reputation”; “the celebrated name of God-glorify of God, for My name’s sake lest the glory of the divine name should suffer”; “Jehovah, as being called upon and praised by men”; “the Deity as being present with mortals, for example, ‘for My name is in him’ (the angel) and applied to the aid which God at present vouchsafes to men. . . .’ (Ps. 54:1).”

New Testament usage of the word “Name” (onoma) is as varied as Old Testament usage. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament translated and edited by W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich lists five categories: “name, of proper names”; “title, category”; “person;” “the (well-known) name, reputation, fame”; and “office.” Of these meanings, the Lexicon tells us that the name is practically inseparable from the Being that bears it and appears nearly as the representative of the Godhead, as a tangible manifestation of His nature. Also, it means “thinking on,” as in the case where two or three are (gathered in His name). With God or Jesus, Name, in the great majority of places means, “with mention of the name,” “while calling on the name,” “using the name.” In addition, it means “at the command (of),” “commissioned by” (in this case granting the power of attorney).

Sacred Name Advocates, aware of these definitions, tell us:

It is true that the name can mean a reputation, but when it does the reputation points specifically to one certain individual or a certain group of individuals and cannot be applied indiscriminately to just any person or group of people. Name can mean conspicuous position, an appellation, a mark or memorial of individuality, honor, authority, character, fame, renown or report. Only conspicuous position or a mark or memorial of individuality can pinpoint a definite individual. All others can be applied to anyone at any time.

The purpose of a name is to positively identify a certain individual. Those blind guides who say that the Hebrew word *shem* can be used in a manner which would include the whole character and reputation of a particular being and not the pronunciation need to realize that we cannot refer to anyone having a good name unless we pronounce his name. The Creator of the universe has many titles but only one name and that is Yahweh.

The above means, of course, that Sacred Name Advocates refuse to accept the fact that the word “name,” as used in both the Old and New Testaments, does not refer to the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. So, what does the Bible reveal about the use of the word “name”?

(1) It is used as a label: Genesis 2:19; 26:33, 1 Samuel 25:25

(2) It refers to fame, renown, reputation: Genesis 6:4; 11:4; 12:2, Numbers 16:2, Deuteronomy 22:14, 19, Ruth 4:10, 2 Samuel 7:9; 8:13; 23:18, 22, 1 Chronicles 5:24; 11:20, 24; 12:30, Nehemiah 6:13, Job 18:17; 30:8, Proverbs 10:7; 22:1, Ecclesiastes 7:1, Ezekiel 16:14; 22:5; 34:29, Zephaniah 3:19-20.

(3) It represents authority and power: 1 Kings 21:8, Esther 3:12; 8:8,10, Jeremiah 29:25.

(4) It is used in a representative manner: 1 Samuel 25:5, 9, Esther 2:22.

(5) It refers to attributes: Proverbs 21:24.

(6) It is employed as a memorial: Isaiah 55:13; 56:5.

(7) As a byword: Ezekiel 23:10.

(8) It refers to a person: Deuteronomy 7:24; 9:14, Joshua 7:9; 1 Samuel 24:21.

(9) It applies to ownership: Deuteronomy 28:10, 2 Samuel 12:28, Psalm 49:11, Isaiah 4:1.

In the New Testament we find the following examples:

(1) It is used as a name or label: Luke 1:26, Acts 10:1.

- (2) It refers to reputation: Mark 6:14, Revelation 3:1.
- (3) To authority and power: Matthew 10:41-42, Ephesians 1:21.
- (4) It is applied to person and people: Acts 1:15, Revelation 3:4-5; 11:13.
- (5) In reference to character: Luke 6:22.
- (6) As a title or category: Matthew 10:40-41, Mark 9:41.

In brief, Sacred Name Advocates refuse to accept the plain Bible usage for the word "Name." Consider this: Sacred Name Advocates tell us that one must be baptized in the name of Yashua in order to be saved. Without the use of this name, there can be no salvation. Yet, the forgiveness of sin is not an act of man. It is an act of God. It is what He does; what we do is secondary. The "Name" does not save us. This is why the Bible shows that in most cases the Bible usage of the word "Name" refers to the entire person, to his individuality and power. Salvation is the result, among other things, of believing in the Person of Christ. The pronunciation of His name is not of primary importance. To believe in His name means we believe in the entire person and for what He stands. Knowing a person's name is no guarantee that one knows the person the name represents. The real significance of a name is what that name represents.

When we worship God we worship a Being, not a name. Attributing power to what is created rather than to the Creator is what Sacred Name Advocates champion. Since a name serves to identify, it has no significance or meaning without the person. The names and titles applied to God describe His Being, character, and attributes. For example, believing in the name of Jesus entails a comprehension of all that is required for salvation. Matthew 7:21-22 and Luke 6:46 show the futility of calling on the name of Jesus or giving Him a title, as a means of salvation, without understanding what is really involved in worshipping Him. In the Bible the "Name of YHWH" and "YHWH" are used interchangeably. This is because the word "name" can come to have a reputation, fame, renown, or glory all its own. The Name of YHWH often functions almost like the appearance of YHWH Himself (Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, Vol. IV, article "Name"). The word "name" and the personality it represents are the closest meaning of the Hebrew word for "name." It represents the total picture of the man-his internal and external pattern of behavior. Changing one's name in the Bible meant changing the character and mission of the individual. In many texts both the Hebrew and Greek words for "name" actually mean the word "person." See, for example, Numbers 1:2, 18, 20, 42; 26:53, Acts 1:15; 18:15, and Revelation 3:12 (Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, Vol. IV, article, "Name"). In addition, with respect to God, the word "name," such as to "come in His name," means to come by His authority in much the same way an officer says, "Halt in the name of the law."

Examples in the Bible show that the name of God is used to denote the whole system of divine Truth and doctrine revealed in the Scriptures (Compare Ps. 22:22 and Heb. 2:12, with John 17:6, 26). The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia, Volume IV, article, "Name,"

states these texts demonstrate that the use of the word “name” refers to the declaration of the doctrine of God. Examples of ownership exemplified in the word “name,” such as “cause His name to dwell,” “place his name there,” “put his name there,” and “my name shall be there” are found in the following verses: Deuteronomy 12:11; 14:23; 16:2, 6, 11; 12:5, 21; 14:24; 26:2, 1 Kings 8:16, 18-20, 29, 43-44, 48; 9:3, 2 Kings 23:27). God places His name on what He openly possesses. See *Toward an Old Testament Theology*, by Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., pages 134, 196-197. It is believed the pledge of God’s presence is represented by such concepts as Ark, Angel, the face and glory of God, as well as the name of God. This is seen in both the Old and New Testaments. Belief “in His name” means accepting or receiving the Person and mission of Christ. There is no magic in the name. God’s glory and power are manifested in the individual when the believer exercises faith in all that the name represents (*Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia*, Vol. 4, article “Name”)

The fact is: If we must call upon the “Sacred Name” to be saved, then many of the names people are not saved. Why? Because they cannot agree among themselves how the name should be pronounced. How many years has it been since no one has known the name, since they are the ones who in modern times have supposedly restored it? If what they say about the Name is true, how many years has it been in which no one has been saved? Names Advocates are quick to tell us that Acts 4:12 proves we must use the name Yashua in order to be saved. But Acts 4:12 refers to the Person of Christ, not to the pronunciation of His name. Salvation does not result from pronouncing a name; it comes by repentance and faith in the sacrifice of the Person of Christ. During the Old Testament period, false prophets obviously knew how to pronounce the Tetragrammaton, yet they were continually condemned.

Further use of the word “name” in the Old Testament reveals the following:

In Exodus 23:13 we are instructed to make no mention of the name of other gods. Obviously then, these gods have specific names. This tells us the word “god” is a noun, not a proper name.

Exodus 23:20-21 states that His name is in the Angel. Since the Angel is not named, this text means the Angel was sent by the authority of God.

Observe that in Exodus 5:23, Moses spoke in God’s name, not of His name.

See Genesis 32:28, Numbers 6:27, and Deuteronomy 28:10 which state that God’s name was placed on the children of Israel. The El in the name “Israel” is God’s name, so El is a name, not a title.

One of God’s names is YHWH (Isa. 42:8), but it is not the only one.

In Psalm 68:4, His name is also Yah.

His name is also “The Lord of hosts” (Isa. 47:4; 51:15; 54:5).

Isaiah 57:15 says that He is the lofty One and that His name is Holy.

Psalm 69:30 states that His name is Elohim. The Hebrew word is Elohim, so it is a name.

Isaiah 9:6, His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God (El), the everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Exodus 34:14 declares that the Lord's name is Jealous.

God's name is taken in vain by the act of theft, not by failing to correctly pronounce the Tetragrammaton (Prov. 30:9).

God's name is polluted, defiled, profaned, and despised by breaking promises, by practicing idolatry, by committing abominations, by sexual misconduct, and by offering polluted sacrifices (Jer. 34:16, Ezek. 20:39; 43:8, Amos 2:7, Mal. 1:6).

The above section clearly demonstrates that the word "name" has many applications, none of them referring to how the "Name" should be pronounced. Furthermore, it shows that what is important is how we conduct our lives in obedience to God's way of life, not how we pronounce the Sacred Name. The fact is: The fixation with the pronunciation of the Name has no Bible credence.

## **Result of the Sacred Name Doctrine**

By now the reader should recognize that the various arguments promoted by Sacred Name Advocates-that Yahweh is the exclusive divine name that must be used in order to be saved-cannot be substantiated by the Scriptures. There is no valid tradition that verifies the proper pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. Neither is Yahweh an exclusive name that was applied only to the Heavenly Father. This confusion arises because of the inability to distinguish who the God of the Old Testament really was. The God of the Old Testament was none other than the One who became Jesus Christ. During His ministry He never once emphasized the importance of how to pronounce the Sacred Name. The name Yahweh, or some similar form, is much like the word Elohim. It is a name that was applied to both the Father and the Son and, as such, can be considered a family name. Furthermore, the Bible nowhere commands the use of the Sacred Name as a requisite for salvation. Scriptures used for proof by Sacred Name Advocates are forced or privately interpreted. In addition, there is no biblical or historical support to uphold the idea that Hebrew/Aramaic is a sacred language, and that the New Testament was originally written in Aramaic, so that what we have today are faulty Greek translations of the Aramaic. No real historical or scholarly proof for this view exists.

What Sacred Name Advocates are loathe to admitting, even in the face of historical evidence, is that the roots of the Sacred Name doctrine go back to occultism and witchcraft. They are obsessed with the notion that the word “name,” in reference to God, can mean only the proper pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton. So did the so-called miracle workers of the medieval period. Also, there is no biblical or historical support for the notion that names or titles such as “God,” “Lord,” “Christ,” or “Jesus” are of pagan origin. What really took place historically is that pagans appropriated the names or titles of the true God and applied them to their pagan deities. And this included the Tetragrammaton.

What is the attitude and frame of mind of those promoting the exclusive use of the Sacred Name? What do Sacred Name Advocates tell us?

We Yahwists know that we have met Yahweh’s standard of righteousness. We have seen that we were worshipping in the pagan names and have acknowledged our sins and have forsaken the names of Baalim, such names as Lord, Adonai, God, Theos, Zeus, Deus, Kurios, Pan, Dios and what other false idols there are. It is the use of these pagan names that makes the King James Version of the Bible a false translation.

We the Assemblies of Yahweh are preaching the kingdom message to the nations of the world. It is imperative that we preach whose kingdom it will be. The name is that of the Almighty Heavenly Father and Yashua the Messiah. Right now you are reading the last warning message to go out to the world just before the Savior returns. The saving message of the Sacred Name will be heralded to all the earth as a witness. We must begin to call upon the Sacred Name if we wish to find salvation. Our purpose and goal of life is to declare the Name of Yahweh as a witness to all the world in these last days. Now are the closing days of this age when the Name must be restored. It is obvious that the Savior’s Name will be of vital importance. This is why the Sacred Name message is being preached once again at the close of this age. There is a great work to be done, “My people shall know my name.” It is our duty to preach this witness. It is so vital that prophecy cannot be fulfilled until it is done. The Name was the issue in the days of the Messiah, and it will be the issue as this age comes to a close. We are the modern extension of the pure worship offered by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to Yahweh.

What is the answer to these assertions? God is the One responsible for the various languages found in the world today. All prophecies relating to a pure language and the correct pronunciation of God’s name, relate to the Millennium when Christ has returned and is ruling over this earth. According to Sacred Name Advocates, righteousness comes by knowing and using the Sacred Name. The Sacred Name view is that only those who know the Sacred Name are the true people of God, and they alone will be saved. The material presented in this work clearly disproves such a view. The entire concept that the Sacred Name movement is fulfilling the prophecies of preaching the end-time message is an assumption. In the final analysis those who preach such things will be sorely disappointed. The fact is: There is no divine command or instruction for the belief that the Sacred Name must be used exclusively in worship. The specific personal name of the Son has not yet been revealed to mankind (Revelation 19:12). As far as God is concerned, His word is far more important than His name (Ps. 138:2).

Unless one accepts the argument that the New Testament was written in Aramaic, the rest of the Sacred Name line of reasoning is of little significance. The real damage of the Sacred Name doctrine is that it fosters the belief that there are no inspired Scriptures for the New Testament. Supposedly only faulty Greek translations of the Aramaic now exist. This idea depicts God as insipid, incapable of preserving His word as He claims: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). In effect, Satan is more powerful than God because he was able to subvert the inspired Word of God with faulty Greek translations. Sacred Name Advocates have no confidence in the New Testament-the spiritual magnification of God's mind and Law. While many Sacred Name Advocates rely on the Old Testament for their faith, they do not really believe it either. If they did they would quickly agree that there is no basis for advocating that the Name is exclusive, as demonstrated earlier in this work. Salvation to Sacred Name Advocates results from what they say, not what Christ has done. The fact is: The Sacred name doctrine is a dangerous deception. Those caught up in it will be sorely disappointed when they find that the pronunciation of the Name does not bring salvation. Faith in the sacrifice of Christ and obedience to God's Law is what counts (Acts 2:38, Rom. 2:13). The pronunciation of the "Sacred Name" makes little difference as far as salvation is concerned.