

Baal”, but that people will “no longer call Me ‘My Master’ [Baali].” Our Father is accepting what we call him. The commonly used term, “Lord”, means “master”. After the great marriage supper, we will use a word that means “my husband”. This has not been fulfilled yet, as dangers from wild animals and war have not been removed from the earth.

6. Using the right Name is apparently not a significant factor in salvation. People can be serving Messiah and not even know they are serving him (Matt 25:31-40). On the other hand, there were some doing mighty works in His Name, but they are evil doers (Matt 7:22-23). There are many scriptures that talk about how believers will be judged. Almost all of them talk about what we do toward our brother, not what doctrines we believe (Matt 12:36-37; 19:16-22,29; chpt 25; Luke 10:13-16; 10:25-37; 12:1-3; 12:47-48; 19:12-26; Rom 2:2-16; 1Cor 3:10-15; 6:9-10; 2Cor 5:10; Gal 5:19-21 {The word "heresies" in the KJV is much better translated "factions" in most modern translations—this is not referring to "doctrine"}; Eph 5:3-5; Rev 20:12-13; 21:7-8; 22:14-15).

7. Using Hebrew Names sometimes promotes misunderstanding, division and even unbelief. When teaching people with little knowledge of the Bible, the main emphasis should be on repenting of sin, being forgiven, being baptized and living a new life by the power of Jesus Christ. Teaching a new person that their KJV or NIV Bible does not have the right names and therefore does not have the right information for them to be saved is highly discouraging and points people toward a Hebrew Name organization rather than reading their Bibles. Some people have heard a Hebrew Name preacher talking about “Yahweh” and “Yahshuah” without hearing the words “God” and “Jesus” and conclude that the preacher must be either Jewish or pagan, and then went elsewhere to look for spiritual teaching. Among established congregations, divisions usually occur when some of the people begin studying Hebrew Name doctrines and do not end up with all the same conclusions. I have no way of

knowing how many “church leaders” began using a different Hebrew Name just so they could have a few people follow them and start a new group, but our Father certainly knows. Finally, since belief that we must use Hebrew Names today rests on the conclusion that the Greek New Testament that we have today was either incorrectly translated or highly altered, some people who use Hebrew Names eventually completely mistrust the New Testament and conclude that its message about our Messiah and Savior is in error, too.

Conclusion

If you believe that using a specific pronunciation of the Name is essential for your salvation, than you should certainly do it. If you ignore what you believe to be truth, you may well be held accountable (Rom 14:23). However, if you teach that others must pronounce the Name the way you do in order to be saved, you should realize you will be judged in the way you judge others (Matt 7:2): If the Father tells you that you did not get His Name right, what will your judgment be? Please realize, the average believer throughout history did not own a Bible and was lucky to be able to read one once in a while. It was not until this century that the average believer could have access to Hebrew and Greek at all. We can accept each other as brethren, even though we have differences in our personal practices (Rom 14). 

by Norman Edwards, Port Austin Bible Campus,
PO Box 474, Port Austin, Michigan 48467-0474;
Tel: 989-738-7700; e-mail: PABC@portAustin.net

For more information and/or help with your own Bible study, please contact:

SNAMES02

Why We Do Not Use Hebrew Names for the Father and Son

There are numerous Scriptures that speak of not only praising the Creator, but specifically praising “His Name”. Other Scriptures say “His name is *YHVH*” (*YHVH* is the English Equivalent of the Hebrew letters). Most Bible translations render *YHVH* as “LORD”, which essentially means “master” or “boss”, and does not adequately represent either the meaning or the original sound of the Hebrew. Many Bible students believe the meaning of *YHVH* is “the Eternal” or “self-existent one”, so some Bible translations say “the Eternal”.

But other believers feel they can best honor their Creator by pronouncing His Name in the way that they believe the original Hebrew was pronounced. This is an honorable effort, and when this writer is among brethren who use a specific pronunciation of the Eternal’s name, he uses it also. However, when literature is written for a general audience, this writer uses the names that are best understood by most people. Here are some reasons why.

1. The New Testament writings that the Eternal has preserved for us make no effort to

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convey the pronunciation of the Hebrew names. Some insist that the entire New Testament was originally written in Hebrew. As far as we can tell, there is some evidence that Matthew, Hebrews and Revelation were once written in Hebrew. However, the only version of any of these books available today that might be a direct Hebrew copy is Shem Tob's Matthew, which uses only abbreviations for divine names. (The Jews that preserved it would not write out *YHVH* in a book that they do not consider holy.) It seems extremely unlikely that Paul would have written in Hebrew to Gentiles. Arguments about the language in which the New Testament was written will go on until some of the original documents are found. But the manuscripts that the Eternal saw fit to preserve contain *Theos* for "God", *Kurios* for "Lord", and *Iesus* for "Jesus". People in many lands, speaking many languages are mentioned in the New Testament and there is not one verse saying anything similar to "you shall teach them the pronunciation of My Name" or "your incorrect pronunciation has separated Me from you".

2. Both Testaments have numerous instances where the same word is used for both the true and false deities. Some claim that "God", "Jesus", "Lord", "church" and other words are names of "pagan" origin and should not be used by true believers. Some reference books trace these names to "pagan" roots, and some do not. It is sometimes hard to tell who borrowed from whom: did the pagans borrow a general word and assign it to one of their deities, or did the general word come from the pagan deity? In any case, we should not fear to use words that can refer to both true or false deities because both Old and New Testaments do this.

The Hebrew *elohim* (Strong's #430) is used for the Creator about two thousand times, but is also used for Laban's gods (Gen 31:30,32), various idols (Gen 35:4), the gods of Egypt (Ex 12:12), the idols that Aaron made (Ex 32:31), and *many* others. Parts of Ezra and Daniel are written in Aramaic. The Aramaic word corresponding to the He-

brew *elohim* or *elowahh* is *elahh*. It is spelled and sounds differently than the Hebrew, but nevertheless was used by the Eternal's people. It is also used for both the Creator and false gods (Dan 2:11,47; 3:12,14,18,28; 5:4,23). The Hebrew *el* is also used for both the true and false deities.

The New Testament Greek word *kurios* is most often translated "Lord"—usually referring to the Son, but also referring to the Father. When the Old Testament is quoted in the New, the divine name, *YHVH* is usually translated to *kurios* in Greek—therefore "Lord" in English (Mat 4:7,10; 22:37; Mark 12:29, etc.). Yet *kurios* is not used exclusively for the Father and Son, but applies to false gods and human masters as well (Luke 19:33 {owners}; John 12:22 {sir}; Acts 16:16 {masters}; 1Cor 8:5 {lords}; Eph 6:5 {masters}; Col 4:1 {masters}). Also, the word most often translated "God" in the New Testament is the Greek *theos*. It is also used to describe false gods (Acts 7:40; 14:11; 19:26; 28:11; 1Cor 8:5; Gal 4:8).

3. The Greek New Testament includes some Hebrew words, but not divine names. Three times, the word "father" appears in both Hebrew and Greek (Mark 14:36, Rom 8:15, Gal 4:6). Hebrew or Aramaic words (transliterated into Greek) also appear in other places (Mark 15:34; John 5:2; 19:13,17; Acts 1:19; Rom 11:4; Rev 9:11; 16:16). Numerous place and personal names are transliterated from Hebrew/Aramaic to Greek (spelled in Greek so they sound like their Hebrew/Aramaic pronunciation)—you can find them by looking in a Greek dictionary or a lexicon that states which words are Hebrew/Aramaic equivalents. This clearly shows that the New Testament writers were quite able to put Hebrew/Aramaic words into the text when they felt it was important. If one believes that the New Testament was originally written in Hebrew then translated into Greek, then it shows that the translators were able to leave words in the original language when they felt it was necessary. Nearly all historical sources agree that most Jews did not commonly pronounce the Father's Name

(*YHVH*) during the first century, but said *Adonai* (Lord) or *HaShem* (the Name) instead. The Gentiles certainly did not know how to pronounce His Name. If pronouncing the Names of the Father and His Son were very important, we would expect that the New Testament writers would have recorded at least one case of teaching this to others.

4. There is little agreement on the correct pronunciation for the names of the Father and the Son. We have received extensive papers "proving" that the Father's name is Jehovah, Yehovah, Yehowah, Ee-ow-a, Yahweh, Yahvey, Yaohu UI, and other names. We received one paper insisting that "Yahweh" was the name of a pagan deity and a corrupt pronunciation of the true Name. We have also received papers "proving" that the Son's name is Yeshua, Y'shua, Yahshua, Yahoshua, Yashowah Yaohushua, and other names. These papers base their conclusions on an analysis of past Hebrew pronunciation, current Hebrew pronunciation, Hebrew meaning, pronunciation of non-Hebrew writings which included references to Israel's "God", or a combination of these methods. It would take years of study, including great skill in the ancient Hebrew language, to thoroughly prove or disprove these pronunciations. Even if we discovered one that we thought was correct, we would probably not convince all of our readers who use other names.

5. Promises of restoration of His Name are yet for the future. Notice Hosea 2:16-18:

"And it shall be, in that day," Says the Lord, "That you will call Me 'My Husband,' And no longer call Me 'My Master', [Hebrew *Baal*] For I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, And they shall be remembered by their name no more. In that day I will make a covenant for them With the beasts of the field, With the birds of the air, And with the creeping things of the ground. Bow and sword of battle I will shatter from the earth, To make them lie down safely.

It does not say: "you will stop worshiping