The Names of Jesus
Christmas 2019

Most of the people in Grace Doctrine Church have names that are commonly drawn from Anglo-Saxon culture. The general custom of naming a person is for there to be a given name, followed by a family name, either some relatives given name or surname, and finally the surname of the father.

It is not commonly realized but many proper names have meaning. Christian names taken from the Old and New Testaments are good examples:

> **Christians, who belonged to social classes that were not particularly concerned with the habits of the Roman higher class and who preferred names connected with their own religion; e.g., from its founders (Petrus, Paulus, Johannes, Maria, Timotheus) or from the new martyrs, frequently persons with simple Latin or Greek surname-like names, such as Stephanos "wreath" (modern Stephen), Laurentius "laurel" (modern Lawrence), and Sidonius "coming from Sidon [in Phoenicia]." Simple names like these were sometimes called *signum*. The Christians, however, soon started creating their own names; e.g., Benedictus "blessed," "Desiderius "desiring salvation." Renatus "reborn [by baptism]."**

> **Family names came into use in the later Middle Ages (beginning roughly in the 11th century); the process was completed by the end of the 16th century. The use of family names seems to have originated in aristocratic families and in big cities, where they developed from original individual surnames when the latter became hereditary.[1]**

This is true for most of the names recorded in the Old and New Testaments and to some extent for descripting titles. Today we are going to research the names and titles that distinctively identify a specific person.

Today's subject will be those names and titles assigned to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. All four of these will be included in today's lesson along with three others. We will begin with a name or title in the Old Testament and then its cognate recorded in the New. Let's start with the words for "God":

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[1] Ladislav Zgusta, "Names," in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Macropaedia*, 15th ed. (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2010), 24:736.

God: אֱלֹהִים (*’Elohim*); Θεός (*Theós*):

1. This is the name the Bible assigns to God. However, you will note the Hebrew noun's "*-im*" ending which indicates it is a plural noun.

2. This plural surname informs the reader from the fourth word found in Scripture is that the God of Israel Who is one in essence while being three in personality.

3. God the Father is the first Person of the Trinity; God the Son is the second Person of the Trinity, and God the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity.

4. Each has a specific relationship with the plan of God: God the Father exclaimed the plan, God the Son executed the plan, and the Holy Spirit explains the plan.

5. All three Persons possess the same attributes of divine essence.

6. The unique Person of the Trinity is the second. He is unique in that His function before the Divine Court of Appeals is to suppress the attributes of His deity so that He could take on the form of humanity.

7. This means that, at once, beginning with the virgin birth and ending with His physical death, Jesus Christ was both God and Man.

8. During the course of the Appeal, Scripture assigns various titles and names to Jesus Christ. He is always known by the names, *’Elohim* and *Theós*: God.

9. However, He is consistently referred to the Old Testament and the New by other names, each one indicating that He is God, or God and Man in hypostatic union.

10. As we go through the following five references to Him, we will note with each his Hebrew name in the Old Testament and its representation in the Koiné Greek of the New Testament.

11. Along the way we will make appropriate references of each.

Lord: יְהֹוָה (*Jehovah*); אֲדֹנָי (*’Athonai*); κύριος (*Kúrios*)

1. The Hebrew proper noun represented above in red, when without the vowel points is referred to as the Tetragrammaton. The prefix "tetra" means "having four parts." When followed by "gramma" it refers to a letter or letters. Here it refers to the name of God which is unpronounceable.

2. This Tetragrammaton is defined as follows:

> **The four letters (written, without vowel points, *YHWH*) forming a Hebrew tribal name of the Supreme Being transliterated by modern scholars *Yahweh*, which the Jews about three centuries B.C. ceased to pronounce as too sacred and for fear of desecration, substituting for it in reading the word *Adonai*, My Lord, or *Elohim*, God. The three vowel points of *Adonai* often written with the Tetragrammaton as a direction to read it *Adonai*, being misrepresented, gave rise to the Christian form *Jehovah*.[2]**

3. *Jehovah*, like *Elohim*, became Israel's distinctive name for the Deity. This designation was given by God to Moses in Exodus 3 when he inquired of God how to identify Him to the people of Israel:

> **Exodus 3:13** "Behold, I [**Moses**] am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?" (NASB)

4. God's response to Moses is in the form of a paronomasia:

> **Exodus 3:14** God said to Moses, "I AM that I AM." And he said, "You must say this to the Israelites, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (NET)

5. Within this verse, the editors of the NET Bible reference two "translator's and study notes" that explain the uniqueness of God's "I AM" response:

> **The verb form used here is אֶהְיֶה (*'ehyeh*), the Qal imperfect, first person common singular, of the verb הָיָה (*haya*, "to be."). It forms an excellent paronomasia with the name. So when God used the verb to express His name, He used this form saying, "I AM." When his people refer to Him as Yahweh, which is the third person masculine singular form of the same verb, they say "He is." The idea of the verb would certainly indicate that God is not bound by time, and while He is present ("I AM") He will always be present, even in the future, and so "I AM" would embrace that as well. The Greek translation of the Old Testament used a participle to capture the idea, and several times in the Gospels Jesus used the powerful "I am" with this significance.[3] The point is that Yahweh is sovereignly independent of all creation and that His presence guarantees the fulfillment of the covenant.[4]**

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[2] *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, 2d ed. (Springfield: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1953), s.v. "Tetragrammaton."
[3] John 8:58, Jesus said to them [the Jews of Jerusalem], "I tell you the solemn truth (ἀμήν, ἀμήν [*amḗn*, [*amḗn*]), before Abraham was born, I am" (progressive, durative, present tense of the verb, εἰμί (*εἰμί*), i.e., "I have always existed). (*The NET Bible* (Dallas: Biblical Studies Press, 1996–2005), 2054sn62.
[4] Ibid., Exodus 3:14, 123 tn1.

6.   Therefore, Jesus confirms in the New Testament that He is "I AM," also known by the Jews as יְהֹוָה (*Jehovah*), or better, יהוה (**YHWH**), or Israelite approved, אֲדֹנָי (*'Athonai*).

7.   The Koiné Greek synonym for the word "Lord" is κύριος (*Kúrios*). This word was in general use in the Roman Empire and Palestine as, "lord, master, owner, husband, teachers, et al."

8.   When making references to Jesus Christ, the title used was *Kúrios*. The New Testament Epistles flourish with references assigning the noun, *Kúrios*, to Jesus Christ with the noun, "Lord." We'll illustrate with three of these:

> **Romans 14:8**   If we live we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.
>
> **2 Corinthians 5:6**   Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord—
>
> **2 Corinthians 5:8**   we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.
>
> **James 5:7**   Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains.
>
> **v. 8**   You to be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. (NASB)

9.   So far, we have observed the names of deity: **(1)** God in Hebrew, אֱלֹהִים *'Elohim* and **(2)** in Koiné Greek, Θεός (*Theós*).

Next, we examine the words referring to "savior," starting with:

savior: יָשַׁע (*yasha'*); σωτήρ (*sōtḗr*):

1.   The word is a masculine noun from the verb, **σώζω (*sṓzō*)**, which has three major applications; **(1)** deliverance from disease or demon possession, **(2)** rescue of physical life from impending peril or instant death, or **(3)** spiritual salvation of the soul. We address the latter.

2.   Salvation of the soul is completely unattainable by any form of human thought, ability, or action. It is accomplished only by making a personal decision to place one's personal faith in the working object of Jesus Christ for deliverance from the lake of fire and the divine imputation of eternal life.

3.   The Lord is the One Who ranks highest on this roster of heroes having consistently, over the entire course of human history, rescued the souls of heathen from the dangers of cosmos diabolicus.

4.   In human history the sovereignty of God and the free will of man coexist by divine decree. When any person expresses his personal faith in Jesus Christ as the working object for salvation, that person is delivered from the lake of fire and enrolled into the Book of Life.

5.   Since the only way a person can acquire eternal life is by the intervention of a savior, it turns out that only one Person in all of human history holds that title as His given name.

6.   This introduces two sets of words that amplify this reality.

Immanuel: עִמָּנוּאֵל (*'Immanu'el*); Ἐμμανουήλ (*Emmanouḗl*):

1.   The Hebrew noun, *'Immanu'el*, means "**God with us**," and is only noted in the prophecy of Isaiah:

> **Isaiah 7:11**   "Ahaz, ask for a confirming sign from the Lord your God. You can even ask for something miraculous."**[5]**
>
> **v. 12**   But Ahaz responded, "I don't want to ask; I don't want to put the Lord to a test."
>
> **v. 13**   So Isaiah replied, "Pay attention, family of David **[A reminder of the Davidic Covenant]**. Do you consider it too insignificant to try the patience of men? Is that why you are also trying the patience of my God?"
>
> **v. 14**   For this reason the sovereign master himself will give you a confirming sign. Look, this young woman [עַלְמָה (*'almah*)] is about to conceive and will give birth to a son. You, young woman, will name him Immanuel [עִמָּנוּאֵל (*'Immanu'el*)]." (NET)

2.   The NET Bible's translation, "this young woman" is a precise translation from the Hebrew. The word can mean "virgin" but can also mean "young woman." To translate the word with the noun "virgin" requires research into other passages of Scripture that would support the liberal use of the Hebrew term "young woman." The NET Bible provides this research in the following "translator's note":

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[5] "Make it deep as Sheol or make it high upwards" (See NASB at Isaiah 7:11*b*)." These words suggest that Ahaz can feel free to go beyond the bounds of ordinary human experience (Isaiah 7:11 in *The NET Bible*, 1276tn2).

> **Traditionally, "virgin." Because the verse from Isaiah is quoted in Matthew 1:23 in connection with Jesus' birth, the Isaiah passage has been regarded since the earliest Christian times as a prophecy of Christ's virgin birth. The LXX [Septuagint] translators who later translated the Book of Isaiah into Greek sometimes between the second and first century B.C., however, rendered the Hebrew term by the more specific Greek word παρθένος (*parthénos*), which does mean "virgin" in a technical sense. This is the Greek term that also appears in the citation of Isaiah 7:14 in Matthew 1:23. Therefore, regardless of the meaning of the term in the Old Testament context, in the New Testament Mathew's usage of the Greek term παρθένος clearly indicates that from his perspective a virgin birth has taken place.[6]**

> **Matthew 1:23**   "Look! The <u>virgin</u> [παρθένος (*parthénos*)] will conceive and bear a son, and they will call him <u>Emmanuel</u> [Ἐμμανουήλ (*Emmanouḗl*): quotation from Isaiah 7:14], which means "God with us."

3.   The translation of both nouns, the Hebrew *'Immanu'el* and the Greek *Emmanouḗl*, is "God with us." When God is literally with us it refers to Jesus as our Savior.

Savior: יְהוֹשׁוּעַ (*Yehōshua'*) and the Greek, Ἰησοῦς (*'Iēsoús*).

1.   These two proper nouns that refer to the person who is a type for The Savior, namely Joshua, and the Person who is the Savior, namely Jesus.

2.   *Yehōshua'* is Joshua's name which means, "the Lord delivers." Joshua will deliver the Jews into the Promised Land. His leadership skills accomplished the objective as the Jews, post Jordan-River conquests, later moved up Mount Moriah and took the city of Jerusalem.

3.   Joshua displayed the personality required to lead the people of Israel into the Promised Land. This required a military strategy that would take down the walled city of Jericho and its people.

3.   Here is a synopsis of Joshua's appointment to succeed Moses and his leadership of the Jewish military and the people:

> **Moses formally ordained Joshua in the presence of Eleazar the priest and the whole community. Moses commanded Joshua before the entire nation to be strong and to lead Israel across the Jordan in order to possess the land promised to the patriarchs [Deuteronomy 31:1–8].**

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[6] Ibid., 1276tn10.

> Joshua was humble enough to recognize that he was *not* gifted and educated man that Moses was. Joshua accepted himself and thus leaned all the more heavily upon the Lord. Second, he was a man of strong faith and faithful to his calling. Third, he saturated his mind and heart with the word of God. Forth, he displayed sound military strategy.
>
> As seen in the similarity of their names, Joshua is a type of Christ as our conquering commander, Joshua was an agent both of grace (e.g., in the case of Rahab) and of damnation in the holy war of Yahweh against the seven wicked nations in the Promised Land, just as Jesus is both Savior and Judge of all men, who metes out death as well as life.[7]

4.   Ἰησοῦς (*Iēsoús*) means "Savior." This is the Greek masculine proper noun transliterated from the Hebrew יְהוֹשֻׁעַ (*Yehōshua'*). The Greek rendering is transliterated *Iēsoús* which is translated into English as **Jesus**.

5.   Jesus' name means "Savior." He is the Anointed One of God, the long-awaited Messiah:

מָשִׁיחַ (*Mashiyach*); Μεσσίας (*Messías*): "the Anointed One;" and Χριστός (*Christós*): "Messiah."

6.   Daniel is the writer who first identified the Savior as מָשִׁיחַ (*Mashiyach*) or Messiah. John uses the Greek rendition, Μεσσίας (*Messías*) in John 1:41 and 4:25.

> **John 1:41**   He [Andrew] found first his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ). (NASB)

We have followed all the various titles and proper names assigned to the Man we worship Who is Jesus. His arrived on the scene in hypostatic union: undiminished deity and true humanity in one Person.

The birthplace of His true humanity was Bethlehem which event was proclaimed by a Seraph angel, most likely Gabriel:

> **Luke 2:9**   And the angel of the Lord suddenly stood over the shepherds, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terribly frightened.
>
> **v. 10**   But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all people;

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[7] John Rea, "Joshua," in *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, gen. ed. Merrill C. Tenney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), 3:698, 700.

> **Luke 2:11**   for today in the city of David there has been born for you a <u>Savior</u> [Ἰησοῦς   (*’Iēsoús*): **Jesus**], who is <u>Christ</u> [Χριστός   *Christós*: **Messiah**] the <u>Lord</u> [κύριος (*Kúrios*): **"Jehovah or** *’Athonai*"].

Here's a rhyme I wrote back in 2011 which summarizes the events of Luke 2:1–14:

The Sign

The Lord entered this world prepared
On a cross of wood to die,
While He, wrapped in burial cloths,
In a feeding trough did lie.

From David's line He entered time—
The Lion of Judah's roar—
As Heir apparent to the crown
That Herod in arrogance wore.

Where shepherds watched, attending flocks,
An angel appeared o'erhead;
His message did assuage their fear
With good news that quickly spread.

He spoke to them of Bethlehem,
 Which Micah did prophesy,
"The Savior, Christ the Lord, is born
In David's city nearby."

And then he gave to them a sign
By which to identify
The One who would be sacrificed
For man's sins and then to die.

Then on high, in rank and file,
Heavenly armies did appear,
Flying through to pass in review
Before the symbolic bier.

Filing by, the angelic throng
Saluted Him with this creed:
"Glory to God in the highest;
His peace to whom He's well-pleased."

The prototype system in place,
God's perfect plan went in motion;
Each person's volition must choose
His redemption solution.

Oh, what must one do to avail
This eternal salvation?
Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ:
Sin's only absolution.[8]

(End CS19-01: "The Names of Jesus.")

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