

The Early Disciples and the Sacred Name

A careful examination of the records proves that, as with Yahushua the Messiah, his disciples both taught and used the sacred name. They too believed that using the sacred name was a basic doctrine of Scriptures and, like Yahushua, were willing to die for the sake of Yahweh's name. The popular idea believed among most present-day Christians, that the disciples of the messiah cared little whether or not the sacred name was used, is unsound. This opinion is held regardless of what the New Testament has to say on the matter. It also has been partially concealed by the fact that ancient Christian scribes (beginning in the second century C.E.) deliberately substituted the sacred name out of the Greek texts of both the Septuagint and the New Testament.¹

John the Baptist

The words of John the Baptist, the prophet of Yahweh and supporter of Yahushua as the messiah, are an excellent place to start. The New Testament informs us that large crowds of people came to John from Jerusalem and all Judaea as well as from the country around the Jordan river. To this crowd John quotes directly from Isaiah, 40:3-5, which states:²

The voice of him crying in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of אֵלֹהִים; make straight in the desert a highway for our *eloahi*. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the steep ground shall become a level place, and the rough places a plain. And shall be revealed the glory of אֵלֹהִים, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of אֵלֹהִים has spoken."

John, like the messiah, stood in opposition to the religious leaders of Judaea. For example, after reciting the above quote from Isaiah, John chastises the Pharisees and Sadducees, calling them "offspring of vipers."³ John did

¹ For a complete study on the use of the sacred name in ancient Greek texts and then its later substitution out of the ancient Greek LXX and NT see Vol. II.

² Luke, 3:3-6; Matt., 3:1-3; Mark, 1:1-3. That John was quoting Isa., 40:3-5, using the name Yahweh, see SRB, pp. 996, n. i, 1045, ns. d, e, 1075, ns. f, g; AB, NT, pp. 3, 47, 84; NJB, pp. 1612, 1660, 1692.

³ Matt., 3:7; Luke, 3:7.

his teaching in the wilderness on the borders of Judaea, along the Jordan, and “in Aenon near to Salim,” keeping himself outside of Judaea and out of the reach of the Jewish political and religious authorities.⁴ As with Yahushua, the political and religious leaders feared the crowd following John.⁵ It took a command from Herod Antipas, who was upset over John’s condemnation of his marriage to Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, to finally place John in prison.⁶

The Original Apostles

Proof that the original apostles adhered to the sacred name doctrine is found in numerous places in the New Testament. Jacob (called James in the English translations)⁷ shows his respect for the sacred name when he warns the disciples against favoring a rich man over someone poor:⁸

But you dishonoured the poor (man). Do not the rich oppress you, and do (not) they drag you before (the) tribunals? Do not they blaspheme the good name which is called upon you?

As we shall demonstrate in our next chapter, the “good name which is called upon” the followers of the messiah, translated by the Moffatt version as, “the noble name you bear,” is Yahweh.⁹ Jacob (James) also makes the following comment while at Jerusalem among his fellow disciples:¹⁰

And after they (Saul and Barnabas) were silent Jacob answered saying, “Men, brothers, hear me. Simeon related how first יהוה¹¹ visited to take out of the nations a people FOR HIS NAME.”

⁴ Matt., 3:1, 13; Mark, 1:4–5; Luke, 3:2–3; John, 3:22–23, which notes that while Yahushua and his disciples had come into parts of Judaea where they began baptizing (apparently along the Jordan river) John was baptizing “in Aenon, near Salim, because many waters were there.” Aenon, meaning “fountains of water,” was located in the territory of the well-known city of Salim, positioned about 8 miles south of Scythopolis (Beisan) and near the Jordan. Scythopolis was part of the greater region of Decapolis, just north of Samaria (NBD, p. 1125; DB, pp. 22, 581). Josephus tells us that when Herod had John arrested he took him to the city of Machaerus (*Antiq.*, 18:5:2), located on the border between Judaea and Arabia, at the northeast end of the Dead Sea (*Jos.*, *Antiq.*, 18:5:1; *Wars*, 7:6:1).

⁵ Matt., 21:23–26; Mark, 11:27–32. Josephus (*Antiq.*, 18:5:2) reports that it was because of the rather large following of John the Baptist that Herod became alarmed. Feeling that such a mass would led to sedition, Herod had John arrested. Also see Matt., 14:5.

⁶ Mark, 6:14–29; Luke, 3:19–20, 9:7–9; Matt., 4:12, 14:1–12, which adds that Herod “feared the multitude, because as a prophet they held him (John).”

⁷ James in Greek is Ἰακώβος (Yakob-os) and Ἰακώβ (Yakob) (e.g. LXX, Gen., 25:26–34; *Jos.*, *Antiq.*, 1:17:1; Matt., 4:21), the Greek form of the Hebrew name for Jacob (SEC, Gk. #2384, 2385). The English form of “James” is created when the soft “Y” sound became harden to “J”, “k” became silent, “b” was slanged into an “m”, and the Greek ending “os” and “es” were left in the translation.

⁸ James, 2:6–7.

⁹ See Chap. XV, entitled, *Salvation and the Sacred Name*.

¹⁰ Acts, 15:13–14.

¹¹ ROSNB and the BE both correctly restore the name Yahweh at this place.

Jacob continues by saying, “And with this agree the words of the prophets,”¹² which as proof he cites Amos, 9:11–12:

In that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David which has fallen and wall up its breaches. And its ruins will I raise up, and I will rebuild it as an עולם (olam; i.e. age or eternity) of days;¹³ so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations whom is called my name upon them, declares יהוה who is doing this.

The apostle John also used the sacred name. He points out that Yahushua performed many signs before the Jewish crowds yet they would not believe him. This, John notes, was to fulfill the word of the prophet Isaiah (53:1), which he then recites:¹⁴

Who has believed our report? And to whom is the arm of יהוה revealed?

The apostle Keph (called Peter in the Greek and English translations)¹⁵ likewise both taught and healed the sick by using the sacred name. For example, in a speech to the Jews at Jerusalem, Keph quotes the prophet Joel (2:28–32), which in part states:¹⁶

The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of יהוה. For it shall be, (that) all who shall call upon the name יהוה shall be saved.

Within this same discussion, Keph recites Psalm, 16:8–11, which includes the statement, “I have set יהוה before me always,”¹⁷ and Psalm, 110:1, “A statement of יהוה to my *aden* (foundation), Sit at my right hand, until I set

¹² Acts, 15:15–18. That this passage quotes Amos, 9:11f, using the sacred name Yahweh, see SRB, p. 1170, n. c; AB, NT, p. 199; NJB, p. 1824.

¹³ The Hebrew phrase “כִּי־יָמֵי עוֹלָם” literally means “as the days of *olam*.” It does not actually mean “as in the days of old” as sometimes translated. The LXX, for example, renders it, “as the days of the αἰῶνος (‘eternity’ or ‘age’; SEC, Gk. #165–6).” *Olam* (עולם), as we have already demonstrated (Chap. IV), also means “eternity,” “world,” or “age.” Accordingly, we have chosen to translate the verse so that it more correctly suits its intended meaning, “as an *olam* (eternity or an age) of days,” i.e. David’s rebuilt throne will last forever.

¹⁴ John, 12:38. That John is quoting directly from Isa., 53:1, using the sacred name Yahweh, see SRB, p. 1133, ns. v, w; AB, NT, p. 157; NJB, p. 1773.

¹⁵ John, 1:42, “And Yahushua said, You are Simon the son of Jonas; you shall be called Keph—which is interpreted Πέτρος (Petros [Peter]),” a name meaning a “small stone” or “a (piece of) rock” (SEC, Gk. #4074). Keph in Hebrew means “to curve,” i.e. rounded like a “rock” (SEC, Heb. #3720, 3721; cf. Gk. #2786, “rock”).

¹⁶ Acts, 2:17–21. That Keph is quoting from Joel, 2:28–32 (3:1–5 in MT), using the name Yahweh, see SRB, p. 1151, ns. a, d, e, f, g; AB, NT, p. 174; NJB, p. 1800.

¹⁷ Acts, 2:25. That Keph is quoting from Psalm, 16:8–11, using the name Yahweh, see SRB, p. 1151, ns. j, k; AB, NT, p. 174; NJB, p. 1801.

your enemies (as) your footstool.”¹⁸ Keph also quotes Moses from the book of Deuteronomy (18:15), “And 𐤀𐤂𐤁𐤅 your *eloahi* shall raise up to you a prophet from among you, of your brothers, one like me; to him you shall listen.”¹⁹

Later on the apostles healed a man in Jerusalem. Having heard of this feat, the priests and elders had them arrested (the implication being that they had healed the man by using the sacred name since there was no law against healing people per se). When the priests brought the apostles before their court the first thing they asked them was, “In what ability or IN WHAT NAME did you do this (healing).”²⁰ Keph responded by quoting Psalm, 118:22, which refers to Yahweh as the stone that the builders rejected. He then paraphrased Joel, 2:32, by stating:²¹

And there is salvation in no other name, for neither is there another name under heaven which has been given among men, by which we must be saved.

For a comparison, Joel, 2:32, states:

For it will be (that) all who will call upon the name 𐤀𐤂𐤁𐤅 will be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem will be salvation, as 𐤀𐤂𐤁𐤅 has said, and among the saved whom 𐤀𐤂𐤁𐤅 will call.

We will have much more to say on this subject in our next chapter entitled, *Salvation and the Sacred Name*. For now it is only important to notice that the prophet Joel would have men call upon the name “Yahweh” for salvation, while Keph (Peter) says there was no other name given under heaven by which men could be saved, and that it was by this name that he healed the man. The name he used, therefore, had to be “Yahweh.” The priests then tried to stop the spread of this doctrine by reasoning that they could threaten the apostles to desist from its teaching:²²

But that it might not further spread among the people, with a threat let us threaten them to no longer speak in this name to any man. And having called them they charged them not at all to speak nor to teach in the name of Yahushua. But Keph and John answering to them said, “Whether it is right before

¹⁸ Acts, 2:34–35. That Keph is quoting from Psalm, 110:1, using the sacred name, see SRB, p. 1151, n. u (cf. pp. 1031, n. k, 1062, ns., x, y, 1105, ns. j, k; re: Matt., 22:44; Mark, 12:36; and Luke, 20:42f, where the same passage is cited); AB, NT, p. 175; NJB, p. 1802. Both ROSNB and BE restore the name Yahweh to this verse in Acts, 2:34. With regard to the correct Hebrew reading of “*aden* (foundation)” instead of “*adon* (lord),” see App. D.

¹⁹ Acts, 7:37.

²⁰ Acts, 4:7.

²¹ Acts, 4:11–12.

²² Acts, 4:17–21.

אָי אָי²³ to listen to you rather than to אָי אָי²⁴ you judge; for we cannot but speak what we saw and heard." But they having further threatened them let them go, nothing finding as to how they might punish them on account of the people, because all were glorifying אָי אָי,²⁵ for that which has taken place; for the man on whom had taken place this sign of healing was above forty years old.

Many Christian clergy try to make this statement refer only to the name "Jesus (actually 'Yahushua')," but the name of Yahushua was "Yahweh"!²⁶ Many, not understanding what they are reading, miss the fact that when such expressions as "in the name of Christ (the messiah)" and "in the name of Jesus (Yahushua)" are used, they are metonymic and are a direct reference to his true name, the name "Yahweh," not to his earthly name "Yahushua" or his title, "the messiah." It was no crime in Judaism to teach in someone's name, generally that of a rabbi; and Yahushua was often referred to as a rabbi not only by those following him but also by those religious leaders opposing him.²⁷ This procedure was commonly utilized during that period, as demonstrated in the Talmudic writings.²⁸ Use of the sacred name was the only action that concerned the scribes and priests.

After this confrontation, which if it had not been for the crowd the apostles might also have been sentenced to death as the messiah had been, they went back to their own company and told them all that had transpired with the chief priests and the elders. Having heard the news, the entire body of believers, "with one accord lifted up (their) voice to אָי אָי,"²⁹ and as part of their praise to him cited Psalm, 2:1–2:

²³ Both BE and ROSNB correctly restore the name "Yahweh" at this point.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ See Chap. XVII, entitled, *Salvation and the Name of the Messiah*, and Vol. III, *The Two Yahwehs*.

²⁷ The Hebrew words *rabbi* and *rabboni* are defined in the NT by the Greek term διδάσκαλος (teacher; SEC, Gk. #1320), i.e. "*rabbi*, which is to say being interpreted teacher" (John, 1:38, 20:16). That the religious and political leaders and the like among the Jews, both those for and against Yahushua, referred to him as *rabbi* (teacher) see Matt., 8:19, 9:11, 12:38, 17:24, 19:16, 22:15f, 22:35f, (cf. Shem Tob); Mark, 5:35, 10:17–22, 12:14, 12:18–19, 12:32; Luke, 3:12, 8:49, 10:25, 11:45, 18:18–23, 19:39, 20:20–21, 20:28, 20:39; John, 1:49. That the disciples and the crowds following Yahushua referred to him as *rabbi* (teacher) see Matt., 26:25; Mark, 4:38, 9:5, 9:38, 10:35, 13:1; Luke, 7:40, 21:7; John, 1:38, 1:49, 6:25, 11:24–28, 20:16. More importantly, that the messiah referred to himself as *rabbi* (teacher; head of a school) see Mark, 14:14; Luke, 22:11; John, 13:13f.

²⁸ CTM, p. 8f, "The foundation, then, of Rabbinism is the precept Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soul and all thy might. The method is tradition. This is indicated by the names which the Rabbis themselves gave to the mass of religious precepts which they taught, viz., Massoreth (מסורה), and less frequently Qabbala. The same fact is shown by the formula to be found on every page of the Talmud, in which a precept is expressed, 'Rabbi A. says, in the name of Rabbi B,' or 'Rabbi A. says that Rabbi B. says that Rabbi C. says,' etc."

²⁹ Acts, 4:24. ROSNB and BE correctly restore Yahweh to this verse.

Why do the nations swarm, and the peoples meditate on worthlessness? The kings of the earth set themselves; and the rulers have met together against יהוה and his messiah.³⁰

In complete defiance of the religious leaders, the apostles continued to heal people using the sacred name. Angered by their complete disregard for the authority of the priests and seeing “multitudes of both men and women” continuing to join their ranks, the priests again had the apostles arrested.³¹

Though the apostles and other disciples were using the sacred name, as with Yahushua and John the Baptist, the religious leaders feared them because of the people. We are told in the book of Acts, for example, that after healing a certain man, the officers of the priests seized the apostles to bring them before the sanhedrin, placing them in a holding cell. During the night, an angel released the apostles from their prison. When the priests found the men gone they were perplexed. Soon, someone came to them and reported that the apostles were in the Temple teaching. The captain and his officers were sent after them and brought them before the sanhedrin.³² They did so without violence, “for they feared the people, that they might stone them.”³³

After hearing the various statements from the apostles, the priests strongly chastised them, stating:³⁴

Did we not charge you by a charge not to teach in this name? and lo, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and with the purpose of bringing this man’s (Yahushua’s) blood upon us.

Though the apostles had been warned by these leaders not to use the sacred name, they had “filled Jerusalem” with its teaching. Setting the apostles outside of the court, the priests listened to the honored Pharisee and teacher of the Law named Gamaliel, who advised them not to oppose the apostles, believing that they and their followers would be scattered about and their work would be overthrown in a short time, as had happened with other messianic movements. Agreeing to this counsel, the priests called the apostles back in and “having beat them enjoined them not to speak in the name of Yahushua, and released them.”³⁵

They therefore departed rejoicing from the presence of the sanhedrin that for this name of him they were accounted worthy to be dishonoured. And every day

³⁰ Acts., 4:25f. That these people were quoting Ps, 2:1–2, see SRB, p. 1154, ns. k, l; AB, NT, p. 178; NJB, p. 1805.

³¹ Acts, 5:12–18.

³² Acts, 5:17–24.

³³ Acts, 5:25–26.

³⁴ Acts, 5:28.

³⁵ Acts, 5:40f.

in the Temple and in the houses they did not cease teaching and announcing the glad tidings of Yahushua the messiah.

The Early Assemblies

Evidence that others of the early assemblies of Yahushua the messiah used the sacred name occurs when Yahushua made his triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Proceeding into Jerusalem along with Yahushua were a “great crowd” of people who were strewing their garments and palm tree branches on the road in front of him. With a “loud voice” they shouted “**הוֹשַׁע נָא** (*hoseanna*),” called Ὡσαννά (*hosanna*) in the Greek text, a Hebrew word meaning “the deliverer (savior) is now,”³⁶ and were reciting Psalm, 118:26, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of **יְהוָה**.”³⁷

Their reference, of course, is to Yahushua, who himself claimed to have come in his father’s name.³⁸ That these good people had used the sacred name is confirmed by the response of some of the Pharisees who were in the crowd. They came to Yahushua and told him: “Rabbi (teacher), rebuke your disciples!” to which he responded: “I say to you, that if these should be silent the stones will cry out.”³⁹ The Pharisees were enraged at this mass revolt against their prohibition on using the sacred name. They reasoned among themselves, “Do you see that you gain nothing (i.e. by not taking him)? Lo, the world has gone after him.”⁴⁰

The book of Revelation, written by the prophet John the Elder, who was later given the title, “the divine,”⁴¹ also shows that the doctrine of the sacred name was strong among the early assemblies. John records that to the assembly at Sardis the messiah wanted them to know, “I know your works, that you have a name by which you live, but (you) are dead.”⁴² To the assembly at Philadelphia, John writes that Yahushua gave them praise, for they “did not deny my name.”⁴³ The messiah also stated that to those who overcame, he would “write upon him the name of my *el*, and the name of the city of my *el*, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of the heaven from

³⁶ SEC, Gk. #5614, for the Hebrew word **הוֹשַׁע** (Hosea), “deliverer” (Heb. #1954)—itself from Heb. #3467, **שָׁשׂ** (*yasha*), meaning “to be safe, free” or “salvation”—and Heb. #4994, **נָא** (*na*), meaning “I pray, now or then.”

³⁷ Matt., 21:9; Mark, 11:9–10; Luke, 19:37–40; John, 12:12–13. That these people were citing Ps., 118:26, see SRB, pp. 1028, ns. d, e, 1103, n. i, 1132, ns. s, t; AB, NT, pp. 31, 67, 119, 156; NJB, pp. 1643, 1676, 1722. Also see Shem Tob’s Hebrew text of Matt., 21:9, where the circumlocution **יְהוָה**, standing for *ha shem* (the name), is used, signifying that the sacred name was originally in this quote (Howard, *Matt.*, pp. 102, 201f and n. 33).

³⁸ John, 5:43.

³⁹ Luke, 19:38–40. That **διδάσκαλε** (teacher) was the Greek translation for the Hebrew term *rabbi* see above n. 27.

⁴⁰ John, 12:19.

⁴¹ Rev., title. The title “the divine” means to be inspired as a prophet. See App. D for the identification of John the presbyter (Elder) as the author of Revelation.

⁴² Rev., 3:1.

⁴³ Rev., 3:8.

my *el*, and my new name."⁴⁴ According to David, Isaiah, and Ezekiel, the name of new Jerusalem will be "Yahweh."⁴⁵ This name is the name of "my *el*," who is the father of Yahushua, and is the "new name" inherited by Yahushua at his resurrection, his old earthly name being Yahushua.⁴⁶ This fact is further confirmed when John writes:⁴⁷

And I saw, and behold, the lamb (i.e. the messiah) standing upon mount Zion, and with him 144,000, having THE NAME OF THE FATHER WRITTEN UPON THEIR FOREHEADS.⁴⁸

The name that shall be written upon the elect, therefore, is the father's name, not the earthly name given to the messiah, which was actually an expression of prophecy (i.e. "Yahu is salvation or savior").

In still another place John writes that in the day that the father returns and resides here on earth with the lamb (messiah), those who successfully pass through Judgment—being changed and now able to behold the face of the father—shall have the father's "name upon their foreheads," that is, they shall be identified by the father's name.⁴⁹

An excellent example proving that the sacred name was important to the disciples comes with Stephen. Stephen was one of the first seven deacons chosen to serve in the assembly. Against him arose some foreign Jews from the synagogue at Jerusalem who, having been defeated in a debate, began to accuse Stephen of "blasphemous words."⁵⁰ Out of revenge they sent false witness

⁴⁴ Rev., 3:12–14.

⁴⁵ Ps., 101:8; Isa., 60:14; Ezek., 48:34.

⁴⁶ Part of the inheritance granted to Abraham and his seed (i.e. the messiah, see Gal., 3:16) was to possess a "great name" (Gen., 12:1), meaning to obtain the name Yahweh. According to Eph., 3:14–15, "every family in the heavens and on the earth is named" after "the father." This verse and numerous other passages show that we are to receive the sacred name as our own after we have been resurrected and changed into spirit beings, upon which occasion we become joint-heirs in the inheritance. See our next Chapter, *Salvation and the Sacred Name*. The angel Yahweh possessed the father's name before he became a man; but as a man his name also became Yahushua. When Yahushua was dead he had no name at all, for after death the dead possess nothing. Upon his resurrection Yahushua obtained rights to the inheritance granted to Abraham and his "seed." His new name, therefore, was the great name of the inheritance, the name Yahweh.

⁴⁷ Rev., 14:1.

⁴⁸ Variant texts of this verse read, "having his name and the name of his father written upon their foreheads" (ILT, p. 649, n. w). This alternate reading does not mean that there are two different names written. Rather, there is one name shared by both the father and the son, the sacred name Yahweh. Therefore, there is really only one name that is written. This detail is confirmed by the very fact that several texts vary at this point, showing that the ancient scribes saw no difference whether the passage read "having his name and the name of the father" or simply "the name of the father." Further, Rev., 3:1, speaks only of "the name" (not "names") by which one lives; and Rev., 3:12, adds that to those who overcome, the messiah will write "the name" (not "names") of his *el*, which is also the name of New Jerusalem (i.e. Yahweh), upon them. That there is only one name (the sacred name Yahweh) by which we can be saved, and that this name is shared by both the father and the son, see Chap. XVII.

⁴⁹ Rev., 22:3–5.

⁵⁰ Acts, 6:11.

against him to the sanhedrin under the charge of blasphemy, claiming, "This man does not cease speaking blasphemous words against the sacred place and the Torah."⁵¹ In short, they accused Stephen of blasphemy against the law (but by their religious interpretations not by scriptural definition).⁵²

In his defense to the high priest, Stephen gave a dissertation on the history of the Israelites and some prophecies about the messiah. As part of this speech Stephen quoted Deuteronomy, 18:15, and Isaiah, 66:1-2, both which use the sacred name.⁵³ Then at the very end Stephen uttered these words:⁵⁴

Lo, I behold the heavens opened, and the son of man
standing at the right hand of יהוה.⁵⁵

That Stephen said, "at the right hand of Yahweh," the Greek "*theos*" being a gloss, is confirmed by these facts: First, his statement matches almost word for word the one made by Yahushua at his trial, "Henceforth shall be the son of man sitting at the right hand of יהוה."⁵⁶ Second, both the proclamations of Yahushua and Stephen are in fact a restatement of Psalm, 110:1, "A declaration of יהוה to יְהוָה (my foundation), Sit at my right hand until I set your enemies (as) your footstool."⁵⁷ Third, that Stephen used the name Yahweh is proven by what immediately transpired upon uttering these words. The book of Acts tells us:⁵⁸

And crying out with a loud voice they HELD THEIR EARS and rushed with one accord upon him (Stephen), and having cast (him) out of the city, THEY STONED (HIM). And the witnesses laid aside their garments at the feet of a young man called Saul. And they stoned Stephen, (while he was) invoking and saying, "Sovereign Yahushua, receive my spirit." And having bowed the knees he cried with a loud voice, "יהוה,⁵⁹ lay not to them this sin." And this having said he fell asleep. And Saul was consenting to the killing of him.

They "held their ears" because they had heard the sacred name being pronounced, which under Jewish (not scriptural) law was blasphemy. They stoned him to death because stoning was the penalty under Jewish law for blasphemy when the guilty party "exactly pronounces the (sacred) name."

⁵¹ Acts, 6:13.

⁵² See above Chap. XII.

⁵³ Acts, 7:37, 49f. That Stephen was quoting Deut., 18:15, and Isa., 66:1-2, using the sacred name Yahweh, see SRB, p. 1158, ns. f, g, v, w; AB, NT, p. 184; NJB, p. 1810.

⁵⁴ Acts, 7:56.

⁵⁵ Both ROSNB and BE correctly restore the name Yahweh at this point.

⁵⁶ Luke, 22:69.

⁵⁷ Cf. App. E.

⁵⁸ Acts., 7:57-8:1.

⁵⁹ BE correctly restores the name Yahweh at this point.

They laid their garments at the feet of Saul because those who judge in such a crime would “rend their garments, and they may not mend them again.”⁶⁰ They killed Stephen outside the city to side-step the Roman law forbidding the sanhedrin from carrying out the death sentence.

Saul

Our study of the sacred name in the New Testament inevitably brings us to Saul (also called Paul because of the Greek translations), who was present at Stephen’s execution and was consenting to it. Saul was trained as a Pharisee and, in his own words, “was advancing in Judaism beyond any of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more abundantly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.”⁶¹ After the death of Stephen, Saul was converted on the road to Damascus, seeing the resurrected Yahushua in a vision.⁶² Spending three years in Arabia re-examining the Scriptures,⁶³ he came to the truth that the traditions taught by the Pharisees were actually against the Torah. Saul, like eleven of the original disciples, became an apostle, but unlike the eleven, who were primarily sent to the circumcision (i.e. the Israelites), Saul was also sent to the uncircumcised nations of the world.⁶⁴

Faced with unsurmountable evidence that the messiah, his original apostles and other disciples used the sacred name, many Christian theologians, in order to cling to their doctrine that they need not know or use the sacred name, present Saul as their eminent example. The original apostles and the other disciples were all, by nationality, Israelites and were sent primarily to the Israelites; as a result, this reasoning goes, they used the sacred name because they were Israelites and spoke Hebrew. Christians, it is argued, are from all nations and their apostle was Saul. In this scenario, Saul, despite his Israelite ancestry, never taught or used the sacred name. Therefore, they conclude, gentile Christians do not need to know or use it either.

This last-ditch attempt to justify not using the sacred name would be humorous if it were not for the sad fact that so many wish to believe it. The sacred name Yahweh is not just a Hebrew name; but it is the almighty’s personal name by which he has revealed himself to mankind. According to Scriptures, all nations, regardless of what language they speak, will know and call upon the name Yahweh.⁶⁵ Saul does not contradict the Scriptures; indeed, though his motives were at first suspected by the eleven who remained of the original apostles, as well as by the other early members of the assembly, he

⁶⁰ Sanh., 7:5; cf. Acts, 22:19f.

⁶¹ Gal., 1:14.

⁶² Acts., 9:1–25, 22:5–16, 26:10–23; Gal., 1:13–16.

⁶³ Gal., 1:17–19.

⁶⁴ Gal., 2:6–9, (agreed upon by all the apostles some 17 years after Saul was converted: cf. Gal., 1:14–2:9). Also, the messiah specifically commanded that the original twelve apostles, “Go not off onto the road of the nations, and into a city of the Samaritans enter not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (i.e. to the scattered tribes of Israel, being “the circumcision” or descendants of Abraham, Isaak, and Jacob; see Matt., 10:1–6).

⁶⁵ See above Chap. VIII.

was found to be in complete accord with them and a valid apostle.⁶⁶ He was in harmony with Yahushua and the eleven apostles because, like them, he used the sacred name. He not only used it, his Jewish opposition tried to have him killed for that reason.

Proof that Saul used the sacred name begins with his earlier persecutions against the followers of the messiah. Saul, zealous for the traditions of his fathers, blindly followed the Pharisees of his day. He tells us that during this period of his life he actively persecuted the disciples of Yahushua, noting:⁶⁷

I indeed therefore thought in myself I ought many things contrary to the name of Yahushua the Nazaraean to do. Which also I did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prisons, authority from the chief priests having received, and they being put to death, I gave my vote against them.

One must ask the question, "Under what verdict were these saints convicted?" Saul answers this when he continues by saying:⁶⁸

And in all the synagogues often punishing them (by death), I compelled them to blaspheme. And being exceedingly furious against them I persecuted (them) even (pursuing after them) as far as foreign cities.

The book of Acts tells us of Saul's earlier life, stating:⁶⁹

But Saul, still breathing out threatenings and slaughter towards the disciples of the sovereign, having come to the high priest asked from him letters to Damascus, to the synagogues so that if any he found and being on the road, both men and women, having bound them he might bring them to Jerusalem.

Saul, himself, tells the Jews of Jerusalem of his earlier zealous efforts to kill the members of the early assemblies. As part of his conversation with them, we read in Acts:⁷⁰

I indeed am a Jewish man, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, having been instructed according to the exactness of the ancestral law, being a zealous one for *eloahim*, even as all of you are this day; who this way persecuted unto death, binding and delivering up to prison both men and women.

⁶⁶ Acts, 9:26–31. Also see 2 Pet., 3:15–16, where Keph refers to Saul as authoritative.

⁶⁷ Acts, 26:9–10.

⁶⁸ Acts, 26:11.

⁶⁹ Acts, 9:1–2.

⁷⁰ Acts, 22:3–4.

And in Galatians Saul tells his readers:⁷¹

For you have heard of my conduct once in Judaism, that excessively I was persecuting the assembly of יהוה⁷² and was ravaging it; and advancing in Judaism beyond many contemporaries in my own nation; being more abundantly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

After his conversion on the road to Damascus, Saul repented of his former ways. He therefore repented of having killed the followers of the messiah because they blasphemed under a Jewish interpretation of the Torah (the traditions of his fathers). Notice also that Saul had “compelled” the saints to blaspheme. It is implied by the term “saints” that Saul now considered these people innocent of any evil. What then could Saul have forced them to say that, in the eyes of the Jewish rabbis, would be considered worthy of death and persecution? The answer is that Saul had forced them to utter the sacred name. As a result—since Saul himself makes an issue out of this type of blasphemy and the fact that he had killed innocent people because of it—it is clear that after reconsideration he now believed that the accusation of blasphemy for merely uttering the sacred name was itself evil. Appropriate use of the sacred name was, in fact, a saintly act.

The initial indication that Saul taught the sacred name is found in a conversation between Yahushua and Ananias, which took place shortly after Saul’s conversion. Ananias openly wondered why Yahushua asked him to accept Saul into his house:⁷³

And answered Ananias, Sovereign, I heard from many concerning this man, how he did many evils to the saints in Jerusalem; and he has authority here from the chief priests to bind ALL WHO CALL UPON YOUR NAME. And the sovereign said to him, Go, for a vessel of election to me is this man, to bear my name before the nations and kings, and the sons of Israel: FOR I WILL SHOW HIM HOW MUCH IT BEHOOVES HIM TO SUFFER FOR MY NAME.

The name being proclaimed was Yahushua’s higher name, the name he shared with his father, not his earthly name Yahushua.⁷⁴ It was for the sacred name “Yahweh” that both the messiah and those following him were persecuted.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Gal., 1:13f.

⁷² BE and ROSNB both restore the name Yahweh at this point.

⁷³ Acts, 9:13–16.

⁷⁴ See Chap. XVII.

⁷⁵ For the persecution of the messiah see above Chap. XIII; for the persecution of the elect see below Chap. XVIII.

The fact that Saul taught and used the sacred name after he became an apostle is best revealed in the history about Saul being brought before Gallio, the Roman proconsul of Achaia, Greece. This record shows that the Jews of Corinth tried to have Saul convicted before a Roman court for using the sacred name. The book of Acts reports the following:⁷⁶

But Gallio, being proconsul of Achaia, the Jews rose with one accord against Paul (Saul) and led him to the judgment seat, saying that contrary to the law this (man) persuades men to worship *eloahim*. And Saul being about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews: "If indeed therefore it was some unrighteousness or some wicked criminality, O Jews, according to reason I should have borne with you; but if it be a question about a λόγου (WORD) and NAMES and a law which is among you, see to it yourselves; for I do not wish to be a judge of these things." And he drove them from the judgment seat.

Notice first that the legal question at hand was based solely upon a "law" among the Jews. This law dealt with the use of a "λόγου (word) and names." Only one Jewish law from this period dealt with a word (singular) that would create an argument over the use of "names" between orthodox Jewry and the disciples of Yahushua: the Jewish prohibition against using the sacred name Yahweh. The Jews of Corinth were holding that Saul was teaching a doctrine that "persuades men to worship *eloahim*" in a fashion that was "contrary to the law," at least to Jewish Talmudic law based upon the Jewish interpretation of Leviticus, 24:16. This statement can only mean that Saul was teaching men to use the sacred name. The Jews, on the other hand, taught that the sacred name should be substituted with other names (generic and titles) like *adonai*, *el*, and *eloah* (*eloahi*, *eloahim*). Saul was on the verge of responding when Gallio dismissed the whole case as irrelevant in his court.

That Saul was teaching and using the sacred name is also shown in his letters. Besides an assortment of direct quotes from the Old Testament that contain the sacred name,⁷⁷ several of his citations have direct bearing upon its use. For example, the sacred name is emphasized in the book of Romans. In the tenth chapter Saul is explaining that there is one Yahweh for both Greeks and Jews. He states:⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Acts, 18:12–16. Afterwards the Hellenes or Greek-speaking Jews laid hold of "Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue" at Corinth—who had joined with Saul and the early assemblies (1 Cor., 1:1)—and "beat (him) before the judgment seat" because he had agreed with Saul in the dispute over the issue of the "word and names." Gallio took no concern over this fight either (Acts, 18:17).

⁷⁷ For example see Rom., 2:24 (Isa. 52:5); Rom., 4:6–8 (Ps., 32:1–2); Rom., 10:13 (Joel, 2:28–32); Rom., 15:11 (Ps., 117:1); 1 Cor., 1:31 (Jer., 9:24); 1 Cor., 3:20 (Ps., 94:11); Heb., 10:16–18 (Jer., 31:33–34); Heb., 10:30 (Deut., 32:35–36); Heb., 13:6 (Ps., 118:7).

⁷⁸ Rom., 10:12.

For there is not a difference (between) Judahites and Hellenes; for the same sovereign of all is rich towards all that call upon him.

He justifies his statement by adding a paraphrase of the prophet Joel, stating:⁷⁹

For everyone, whosoever may call upon the name of יהוה shall be saved.⁸⁰

Joel, 2:32, upon which his claim is made,⁸¹ states that “all who shall call upon the name of יהוה shall be saved.” The Greek word κύριου (*kuriou*) which is used by the Greek text in the above verse from Romans, is clearly a gloss for Yahweh.⁸² Saul then carries his discussion about the sacred name into a rhetorical question:⁸³

How then shall they call on (him) whom they have not trusted? and how shall they trust on (him) about whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear apart from one proclaiming? and how shall they proclaim unless they are sent?

In short, one cannot trust in an *eloah* if he has never heard about him, and how can anyone hear of him unless someone is sent to proclaim who he is? And to know him is to know his name. And this is exactly what Yahushua did, as he stated when he reported back to his father, “I manifested your name to the men whom you have given me out of the world,” and “I made known to them your name,”⁸⁴ or again, when he told the Jews that opposed him, “I have come in the name of my father, and you receive me not.”⁸⁵

In the fourteenth chapter of Romans, Saul quotes Isaiah, 45:23, “that to me (Yahweh) every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear; he shall say, Only in יהוה do I have righteousness and strength.”⁸⁶ Also in the fifteenth chapter of Romans, Saul quotes Psalm, 18:49:

Therefore I will extol you, יהוה, among the nations, and to your name I will sing praises.⁸⁷

To this quote he attaches another from Psalm, 117:1:

Praise יהוה all nations; praise him, all peoples.⁸⁸

⁷⁹ Rom., 10:13.

⁸⁰ Both ROSNB and BE restore the name Yahweh to Rom., 10:13.

⁸¹ That Rom., 10:13, is from Joel, 2:32 (3:5 in MT), where the name Yahweh is used, see SRB, p. 1204, n. 1; AB, NT, p. 238; NJB, p. 1882.

⁸² See above ns. 80 and 81.

⁸³ Acts, 10:14–15.

⁸⁴ John, 17:6, 26.

⁸⁵ John, 5:43.

⁸⁶ Rom., 14:11. That this is a quote from Isa., 45:23, see SRB, p. 1208, n. f; AB, NT, p. 243; NJB, p. 1887.

⁸⁷ Rom., 15:9. That this is a quote from Ps., 18:49, see SRB, p. 1208, n. f; AB, NT, p. 244; NJB, p. 1888.

⁸⁸ Rom., 15:11. That this is a quote from Ps., 117:1, using the name Yahweh see SRB, p. 1208, n. i; AB, p. 244; NJB, p. 1888.

With these above quotes given by Saul we should add one more from 1 Corinthians, which cites Jeremiah, 9:24:

For in this let glory him who glories, (that) he understands and knows me, that I am אֵלֹהִים.⁸⁹

In each of these above quotes no sense is attainable unless both Saul and his readers knew the sacred name. How can one call upon, praise, or sing praises to a name he has not heard? How can one understand or know *eloahim*, that he has said, "I am אֵלֹהִים," if this knowledge is not imparted? Yet this is precisely the message brought by Saul. Yahushua, sent by the father, proclaimed the father's name to his apostles, and his apostles, in turn, were sent to proclaim that name to those who wished to be saved.

The book of Hebrews, most probably written by Barnabas under the direction of Saul, informs us, "By him (Yahushua), therefore, we should offer (the) sacrifice of praise continually to אֵלֹהִים,⁹⁰ that is, fruit of (the) lips confessing to his (Yahweh's) name."⁹¹ Earlier in this text we read that one of the proofs that Yahushua was the messiah was a quote from Psalm, 22:22, addressed to the father, which states:⁹²

I will declare your name to my brothers; I will praise you in the midst of the assembly.

This quote is in direct reference to the fact that Yahushua had revealed the father's name to his disciples.⁹³ Therefore, the book of Hebrews states that Yahushua was not ashamed to call his disciples "brothers."⁹⁴ Finally, Saul, through Timothy, after warning of the error of falling away from the truth, commends the assembly addressed in his letter to the Hebrews with these important words:⁹⁵

But we are persuaded concerning you, beloved, better things, and (things) connected with salvation, even if thus we speak. For אֵלֹהִים⁹⁶ is not unrighteous as to forget your work and YOUR LABOUR OF LOVE WHICH YOU DID SHOW TO HIS NAME, having served to the saints and are (still) serving. But we desire each of you to show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; that you not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through trust and long patience inherit the promises.

⁸⁹ 1 Cor., 1:31. That this is a quote from Jer., 9:24 (9:23 in MT), using the name Yahweh, see SRB, p. 1213, n. f; AB, NT, p. 248; NJB, p. 1892.

⁹⁰ Both BE and ROSNB correctly restore the name Yahweh to this verse.

⁹¹ Heb., 13:15.

⁹² Heb., 2:12. That this is a quote from Ps., 22:22, see SRB, p. 1293; AB, NT, p. 341; NJB, p. 1976.

⁹³ John, 5:43, 17:6, 26.

⁹⁴ Heb., 2:11-12.

⁹⁵ Heb., 6:9-12.

⁹⁶ The name Yahweh is correctly restored to this verse in ROSNB and BE.

The early assembly, therefore, was to continue “to show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end” as they had up until now towards the sacred name. Saul, rather than casting aside the sacred name, here gives us proof that he highly praised those who, with a labour of love, adhered to the sacred name doctrine.

That the disciples and the early assemblies knew the sacred name is further supported by the great body of existing evidence which shows that until well beyond the time of Saul’s writings, all of the main Greek (Septuagint) texts of the Old Testament retained the sacred name—either in Hebrew or Aramaic characters or with a transliteration retaining its correct pronunciation.⁹⁷ Therefore, even if all of Saul’s writings had originally been in Greek, as many Christian theologians would have us believe, the sacred name itself remained in the readers’ grasp. At no time would they check their Bibles (which then consisted only of the Old Testament) and find the substitutes “*theos*” or “*kurios*.”⁹⁸ Even more important, the very fact that Saul emphasized these passages dealing with the sacred name shows that it was part of the basic doctrine taught in the early assemblies: whether to the circumcised or uncircumcised.

Indeed, throughout the texts of the New Testament one can find numerous quotes from the Old Testament that used the sacred name.⁹⁹ Further, ancient records demonstrate that in the earliest editions of the New Testament (latter half of the first century C.E.) the sacred name was retained.¹⁰⁰ These details prove that all the authors of the New Testament, like those of the Old Testament, both knew and used the name Yahweh. Not until the mid-second century C.E. did the ineffable name doctrine seize the throat of the early assemblies and begin to choke the sacred name from use.¹⁰¹

Conclusion

The combination of all of this evidence demonstrates conclusively that Yahushua and the disciples of the early assemblies who followed him all knew and used the sacred name. The fact that these people were willing to die for the sacred name, as had many of the prophets before them, also shows that they did not consider the sacred name a light or trivial thing, as did the Christian churches of later centuries.

⁹⁷ See Vol. II, Chaps. V, VI.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ For some examples see Matt., 4:4–10; Luke, 4:4–12 (citing Deut., 8:3, 6:13, 16). Matt., 5:33 (Deut., 23:21–24). Matt., 22:44; Mark, 12:36; Luke, 20:42f; Acts, 2:35 (Ps., 110:1). Matt., 23:39; Luke, 13:35 (Ps., 118:26). Mark, 12:10–11; Acts, 4:11 (Ps., 118:22f). Mark, 12:29f (Deut., 6:4–5). Luke, 4:17–19 (Isa., 61:1–2). Acts, 2:17–21, 39; Acts, 2:25 (Ps., 16:8–11). Acts, 4:25–26 (Isa., 51:12–13). Acts, 7:37 (Deut., 18:15). Acts, 7:49 (Isa., 66:1–2). Acts, 15:15–17 (Amos, 9:11–12). 1 Pet., 3:12 (Ps., 34:15–16). Also see above n. 77.

¹⁰⁰ See Vol. II.

¹⁰¹ See below, Chap. XVII, ns. 5, 8.