

Holy Name Bible

PREFACE

If you were planning a trip through a strange country, would you knowingly choose an inaccurate map which shows non-existent roads and bridges? Of course not. You would get the most accurate map available.

The Holy Name Version provides a more nearly accurate map of the Kingdom of Heaven and the roads and paths leading to and through it, and more clearly marks the pitfalls and dangers awaiting the traveller than any other version now available.

To the extent that a person's beliefs and conduct are based upon doctrinal misinformation supported by mistranslation, he follows a distorted map of spiritual territory.

The Holy Name Version is an improvement over other versions—a better map—simply because it makes use of data which have been known for a long time but which generally have been confined to footnotes, commentaries, encyclopedias and technical publications.

The efforts at producing a more understandable translation of Holy Scriptures have resulted in a legion of versions by many learned men with more of the same scheduled in the immediate future, including a plan for a Catholic-Protestant Bible.

The question may be asked, Why so many translations? The answer is simply that men continue translating the Bible because none of their versions satisfy the hunger for spiritual food which Yahweh has placed in the hearts of His people.

Thus far these extant translations have failed to bring out the true message of the Scriptures because of the following reasons:

(1) THE MASORITES. The Jewish scholars of the Great Synagogue in closing the canon of the Old Testament Text, which is known as the Masoretic Text, made changes and modifications of many passages to conform to their traditional teachings. Thus they established a fixed doctrine for the Jewish dispersion.

These same scholars, in their attempt to safeguard the unity of divine worship at Jerusalem, changed the passage in Isaiah 19:18 to read, "On that day there shall be five cities in the land of Egypt, speaking the language of Canaan and swearing by Yahweh of Hosts, and one shall be called, the city of the sun". The King James translators translated this last phrase, "the city of destruction", but the original was, "the city of righteousness".

The Masorites, in safeguarding the Tetragrammaton (the four letter Holy Name of the Most High), substituted in over 130 places in the Hebrew Text, the name of the Canaanitish deity, Adonay, and in some places, Elohim, wherever anthropomorphism (ascribing the physical attributes of man to Yahweh) was implied. Wherever they left the Tetragrammaton intact, they placed diacritical marks beneath it to indicate pronunciation of *the word to be spoken*, Adonay, *not the word written*, Yahweh, which the Jews considered too sacred to be spoken aloud.

The chapters of the Prophetic Books were so put together, regardless of their historic or prophetic sequence, that the ordinary reader is at a loss to know which comes first. An extreme illustration of this is the book of the prophet Daniel, which throws the prophetic student into a confusion of date setting that has made Daniel and its companion apocalyptic book of Revelation difficult to understand.

Also, in their effort to divert their people from the apostolic New Testament, the Masorites altered many texts in opposing the Messianic teachings.

(2) CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIANS. Christian theologians have translated the Scriptures from a non-Israelitish approach to both the Old and New Testaments, thus losing sight of what the Great Apostle said in the ninth chapter of Romans, verses 1 through 11 and 22 through 29, that the Scriptures were written for Israel, and to them the oracles of Yahweh were committed.¹ Israel, in turn, was to transmit the message to other nations that they also might obtain the same promises through faith (Genesis 9:27, Isaiah 56:6-7, and Ephesians 3:5-6).

Definite promises made to Israel, and to non-Israelites through Israel, have been made to appear of non-effect by religious teachers through spiritualization, so that the believer is left without hope of receiving the gracious assurances so plainly delineated in the Holy Scriptures.

(3) HEBREW TRANSLATION. Some have tried to translate the Bible in what they call a *literal translation*, but the Hebrew language cannot be literally translated into a classical language. Hebrew is an idiomatic language, and one Hebrew word may have from three to ten different meanings depending on the context. Sometimes it has opposing meanings. In the Bible *whole thoughts, not words*, must therefore be translated.

(4) THE SACRED NAMES. Another common error among most of the translators is their elimination of heaven's revealed Name of the Most High, *Yahweh*, and the Name of His Son, *Yahshua* the Messiah, and substituting the names of the local deities of the nations among whom they dwelt (Psalms 96:5), expressly transgressing Yahweh's commandments as given in Exodus 20:7 and 23:13.

For *Yahweh* they have substituted *Baal*, the Babylonian deity, and *Adonay*, the Canaanitish deity of the Phoenicians, both corresponding to the English word *Lord*.

The characteristic appellation of the Most High, *Elohim*, has been substituted by the Assyrian deity *Gawd*, or *God* in English, and is repudiated by Yahweh in Isaiah 65:11 which reads as follows, "But ye are they that forsake Yahweh, that forget My holy mountain, and furnish a table for God, and furnish a drink offering to Meni". No wonder the people of Scotland and some parts of northern England celebrate their *Hogmanay*, which in Hebrew means the feast of the god *Meni*, on New Year's Eve with a fellowship drink for good luck!

The name of the Son, *Yahshua*, has been substituted by *Jesus*, *Iesus*, and *Ea-zeus* (Healing Zeus). Webster says that Zeus is the sky god and is also known as Deus (Latin), Dio (Italian), Dios (Spanish), Dayus (Sanskrit), and Zeus Soter meaning Zeus the Saviour. Even in the French Bible they have substituted Dieu. Isaiah 65:11 truly expresses what Yahweh thinks of Christian worship.

The substitution of the Names of Yahweh and Yahshua by the names of the pagan deities of the nations has brought immeasurable harm. Such names as Lord, God, Jesus, and Christ in no way represent the meaning of the Name revealed by the Most High to Moses and the ancient Hebrew leaders. By employing these names the people unknowingly turn the worship of Yahweh into that of idols and actually ascribe the benevolent characteristics of the Mighty One of Israel to the pagan deities (Hosea 2:8).

¹The Caucasian people are Israel. Reference is made to: *Treasure In The Field and Union Now*, A. B. Traima, (Scripture Research Association); and *Before the Bible: The Common Background of Greek and Hebrew Civilizations*, Dr. Cyrus H. Gordon, (New York: Harper and Brothers).

In the original the Sacred Names have deep literal and symbolic meaning which have been almost entirely lost by the substitution of the names of the local gods. From time-to-time attempts have been made at partial restoration as in the case of the Abbé Crampon text:

"Mais vous qui avez abandonné Yahweh oublie Ma montagne sainte, qui dressez une table a Gad et remplissez une coupe pour Meni Je Vous destine au glaive et vous vous courberez tous pour être ergorges."²

Moffatt in his Introduction makes the following statement concerning the Name,

"Strictly speaking this ought to be rendered 'Yahweh' which is familiar to modern readers in the erroneous form of 'Jehovah'. Were this version intended for students of the original, there would be no hesitation whatever in printing 'Yahweh'."³

Although Moffatt substitutes "the Eternal" in place of Yahweh, he fully admits a distinct loss of meaning in this.⁴

The disadvantages of substitution have been recognized for a long time. The 1872 edition of Smith's Bible Dictionary states,

"The substitution of the word Lord is most unhappy; for, while it in no way represents the meaning of the sacred name, the mind has constantly to guard against a confusion with its lower uses, and, above all, the direct personal bearing of the name on the revelation of God . . . is kept injuriously out of sight."⁵

Rotherham devotes a chapter of his Introduction⁶ to explanation of "The Name," the reasons for and consequences of its suppression and the need for its restoration. Regarding its suppression he says, in I, Ch. IV, 22-29.

"It is therefore the most natural presumption that the suppression of The Name has entailed upon the reader, and especially upon the hearer, irreparable loss."

Restoration of the Name, Yahweh, is necessary, he says,

"Because its suppression was a mistake. So grave a mistake cannot be corrected too soon. An unwarrantable liberty has been taken; the path of humility is to retrace our steps."

The Sacred Name of the Creator, Yahweh or its short form, Yah⁷, is the one and only Name by which He is known in the entire Scriptures.

"That men may know that Thou, Whose Name alone is Yahweh, art the Most High over all the earth"⁸

The word, Yahweh, is composed of parts of the verb, "to be," and signifies "Self-Existent." While He has many titles such as Eloah, El-Elyon, and Elohim; and while He is characterized as Yahweh nissi⁹, Yahweh-rapha¹⁰,

² Crampon, L'Abbe A., *La Sainte Bible* n. 565 (Paris: Desclée et Cie, 1923), Livre D'Isaie Chap. LXV, 11. Used by permission.

³ From *The Bible: A New Translation*, by James Moffatt. Copyright 1935 by Harper & Bros. Used by permission.

⁴ Loc. cit.

⁵ Smith, William, *A Smaller Dictionary of the Bible* (London: John Murray, 1872), pp. 195-196.

⁶ Rotherham, Joseph Bryant, *The Emphasized Bible: A New Translation* (Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Co., 1902).

⁷ See KJV Psalm 68:4.

⁸ Psalm 83:18.

⁹ Yahweh, our banner. Ex. 17:8-15.

¹⁰ Yahweh, healer. Ex. 15:26.

Yahweh-ra-ah¹¹, Yahweh tsidkenu¹², Yahweh shalom¹³, Yahweh sabaoth¹⁴, and Yahweh jireh¹⁵, the Name in each case is Yahweh, coupled with a distinctive characteristic. The Scriptures are specific and leave no doubt about the importance of His Name and our responsibilities concerning it.

"I am Yahweh: that is My Name, and My glory will I not give to another (*name*) neither My praise to graven images".¹⁶

"Oh Yahweh, Thy Name abideth for ages; Oh Yahweh, Thy memorial is to generation after generation"¹⁷

"If Yahweh be Elohim, follow Him; And if Baal (*the Lord*) then follow Him"¹⁸

"How long shall it be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? Yea they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart, which think to cause My people to forget My Name—as their fathers have forgotten My Name for Baal (*the Lord*)"¹⁹

"I will take the names of Baalim (*Lords*) out of her mouth and they shall no more be remembered by their name"²⁰

"I will declare Thy Name unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I sing praise unto Thee"²¹

"And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the Name of Yahweh shall be saved"²²

"And they that know Thy Name will put their trust in Thee"²³

"Thus saith Yahweh, the maker thereof, Yahweh that formed it, Yahweh is the Name; Call unto Me and I will answer thee and show thee great and hidden things which thou knowest not".²⁴

"I have manifested Thy Name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world"²⁵

"And I have declared unto them Thy Name and will declare it"²⁶

"Hallowed be Thy Name"²⁷

The Sacred Name of the Messiah, Yahshua, is the only Name by which He was known to His disciples, though He has several titles such as Rabbi, Son of Man, Saviour, Anointed, and King of Kings.

"What is His Name and what is His Son's Name, if thou canst tell?"²⁸

His Name is composed of two parts: Yah—Hoshua (Saviour). Thus, the contraction Yahshua signifies Yahweh-Saviour and strikingly bears out the logic of Matthew 1:21,

"And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His Name YAHSHUA: for He shall save His people from their sins."

"I am come in My Father's Name and ye receive Me not—"²⁹

¹¹ Yahweh, my shepherd. Psalm 23.

¹² Yahweh, our righteousness. Jer. 23:6.

¹³ Yahweh, our peace. Jud. 6:24.

¹⁴ Yahweh of hosts.

¹⁵ Yahweh that provideth. Gen. 22:13, 14.

¹⁶ Isaiah 42:8.

¹⁷ Psalm 135:13.

¹⁸ I Kings 18:21; Heb. Baal=Lord, a Phoenician deity.

¹⁹ Jeremiah 23:26-27.

²⁰ Hosea 2:17; Heb. plural of Baal, i.e., Lords.

²¹ Hebrews 2:12 and Psalm 22:22.

²² Acts 2:21 and Joel 2:32.

²³ Psalm 9:10.

²⁴ Jeremiah 33:3.

²⁵ John 17:6.

²⁶ John 17:26.

²⁷ Matthew 6:9.

²⁸ Proverbs 30:4.

²⁹ John 5:43.

"Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the Name of Yahweh"³⁰

"And whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye ask anything in My Name I will do it".³¹

"—for there is none other Name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved".³²

"And I looked and Lo, a Lamb stood on Mount Zion, and with Him an hundred and forty and four thousand having His Name and His Father's Name written in their foreheads."³³

The combined result of the four reasons mentioned in the foregoing has brought into the New Testament many pagan elements of varying degrees, so that the original prophetic and apostolic teachings on the Holy Scriptures have reverted to the apostate Baalism of Jezebel (Revelation 2:20). No wonder then the Scriptures call this system Babylon.

Misleading ideas and beliefs were implanted during the process of carrying the Hebrew ideas and ideals into the context of a pagan Greek and Roman world. The Hellenizing of the original books of the Bible brought about distortions which still plague earnest Scripture students. An illustration of this occurs in the use of the Greek word *hades* (with all its mythological connotations as a place of endless torture to which the Greek gods relegated those who displeased them), as a purported equivalent of the Hebrew *sheol* and *gehenna*, neither of which conveyed any such notion. The doctrine that the Messiah 'descended into hell' was thus an outgrowth of adopting the Greek context of *hades* in place of the Hebrew connotation of *sheol* (the tomb).

Many of the errors of literal translation which crept into the New Testament after the first century have been kept alive and intact because of the belief by numerous excellent scholars that the New Testament originals were written in, nay inspired in, the Greek language. Such a state of mind made it seem sacrilegious to question the authenticity of the Greek text even though portions of it seemed unintelligible. In recent years, however, much light has been shed on this hitherto taboo subject. The eminent Dr. Charles Cutler, Torrey, Professor of Semitic Languages at Yale University, states in *Our Translated Gospels*,³⁴

"At the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis in New York City in December 1934, I challenged my New Testament colleagues to designate even *one* passage, from any of the Four Gospels, giving clear evidence of a date later than 50 A.D., or of origin outside Palestine. The challenge was not met, nor will it be, for there is no such passage."

Dr. Torrey then proceeds to cite hundreds of instances of Greek mis-translation from the Aramaic, which the Christian community has rather indiscriminately accepted as gospel.

The process of substitution continued in various lands and languages, so that much of the original meaning of the New Testament has been obscured. Consider the distortion involved in changing the names of the prophets, the Messiah, and the Creator. Hosea became "Osee"; Elisha, "Eliseus"; Isaiah, "Esaias"; Miriam, "Mary"; Yahshua, "Jesus" and Yahweh,

³⁰ John 12:13.

³¹ John 14:13-14.

³² Acts 4:12.

³³ Revelation 14:1. Revised Version.

³⁴ Torrey, Charles Cutler, *Our Translated Gospels* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1936). Used by permission.

"Lord", "God", "Gott", "Dios", "Manitou" or whatever happened to be the name of the local idol.

Now you may inquire why these distortions are so vitally important to us. They are of utmost importance because they obscure our instructions for spiritual survival and because they introduce seeming contradictions which in turn raise conscious or subconscious doubts in the minds of sincere individuals: The pagan elements today found in Christianity have made it appear falsely similar to other religions and have thus cast stumbling blocks before those who recognize this heathenism for what it is. By correcting the known distortions and purging the pseudo-Christian beliefs which have resulted, doctrinal integrity and consistency can be restored, thus making possible the wholeheartedness which the first-century brethren demonstrated but which is so sadly lacking among so-called Christians today.

Lack of wholeheartedness in belief and conduct is taken for granted by our society. Ours is an era of "lip service," notorious for the hiatus between avowed ideals and sordid performance. Its symptoms are found in all walks of life, from interpersonal relationships to international diplomacy. Socially-minded writers, including members of the clergy, frequently deplore this condition but seem unable to recognize that it is a symptom of the *underlying conceptual malaise*: the theological neurosis of modern Christianity so pointedly described in Revelation,

"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou were cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of My mouth, because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked".³⁵

This ailment is lamented by our contemporaries as "secularism," "illness of the spirit," and "death of the heart"; but whatever it is labeled, the condition is caused by failure to integrate that which professed believers do with that which they *profess to believe*. It amounts to an unconscious outward manifestation of a mass of unresolved internal conflicts and a kind of unconscious rebellion against further self-deception and confusion of values.

Since church hierarchies so unanimously complain about the symptoms of the disease why have they not long ago taken the steps essential to removing its cause? Why do they in fact display such astonishing ingenuity in avoiding recognition of their own share in the ideological confusion? Perhaps the answer may be found in the well-known phenomenon of neurosis wherein its possessor blinds himself to its very existence and resists any efforts to effect a cure. This explanation appears to be borne out by the verses quoted above and by verse 18 which counsels the application of "eyesalve." Is this not strikingly reminiscent of the condition described in Isaiah 6:9-10:

"—lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and change and be healed?"

What then, may twentieth century believers do to become more open-eyed and wholehearted in their belief—genuine doers of the Word? How can they attain deep and enduring faith comparable to that of the first century brethren? One prerequisite is a degree of doctrinal coherence comparable to that of the first century; another is recognition of unsubstantiated scientific dogma as such.

The popular *a priori* theories concerning the origin and antiquity of man and of the universe are examples of such generally-accepted assumptions

³⁵ Rev. Chapter 3, vs 15-17.

about which there remain extremely large gaps in scientific knowledge. Our immediate objective concerns the first of these essentials: the elimination of doctrinal incoherence supported by the common versions.

The Holy Name Bible is a comprehensive effort to bring to twentieth century believers that integrity of concept which was present in the Hebrew and Aramaic originals—to make possible in the twentieth century the whole-hearted integration of doctrine, belief, and conduct characteristic of Yahweh's congregation from its inception in the wilderness (I Corinthians 10:1-4) through the apostolic phase of the first century. The church of the Old Testament cannot be separated from that of the New, except that the former looked forward by faith to Yahshua's sacrifice. The victorious congregation is the one which adheres to all of Yahweh's eternal truths; it sings the song of *Moses* and *the Lamb* (Revelation 15:3).

METHOD

Why have we retained so much of the text of the King James Version? Why have we not chosen to use "modern" language entirely? The reverent style of the King James language makes it appropriate for its hallowed purpose. Our chief concern is to convey the original meanings as faithfully as possible. Therefore changes have been made in the King James Version only where necessary to clarify meanings. This policy has additional features, also. The popularity of the King James Version with Bible readers is generally recognized. The Holy Name Version is intended for use by many of these same Bible readers. Comparison of the two texts provides a convenient method of identifying the corrections which have been made in the Holy Name Version. Further, the Scripture verses which many of us have memorized, or with which we have long been familiar, are especially precious to us and we would not, except for excellent reasons, alter them.

The instances where corrections have been made may be generally classified in the following categories:

1. Where it seemed that archaic language would obscure the meaning for the average reader, modern equivalents have been employed.
2. Where literal translation of Hebrew idioms into English, or Aramaic idioms into Greek and thence into English has resulted in loss of the initial meaning.
3. In certain instances, where substitution of any English word would be misleading, the original Aramaic or Hebrew has been restored. That is, words are left untranslated where no satisfactory English equivalent exists.
4. Where there had been an addition, generally recognized by scholars as spurious, such added material has been omitted.³⁰
5. Where the New Testament Text quotes directly from the Old Testament, quotation marks and citations have usually been employed.
6. Where Hellenized proper names have been carried over in the King James New Testament, most of the original forms have been restored.
7. Special attention has been given to restoration of the Sacred Names. Their profound significance has been generally overlooked by Christian students.

³⁰ To illustrate, see marginal note regarding I John 5:7 in the *Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1917), p. 1325.

The extensive yet careful research and analysis of source material which has been necessary in the preparation of the Holy Name Version has, because of our rather limited resources, required some twenty years. Our gratitude must be expressed, not only to members of the Association who during this period have contributed to the various labors of research, clerical work, typing and proof-reading, but also to friends throughout the country who have given encouragement in various ways to the execution of the task, by making books and documents available, and by critical discussions which have been both stimulating and fruitful.

Special acknowledgement is made of the help received from the works of Burney³⁷, Cureton³⁸, Gibson³⁹, Gwynn⁴⁰, Lewis⁴¹, Schonfield⁴² and Torrey⁴³ and from the Oracles ascribed to Matthew by Papias of Hierapolis. Thanks must go to the Zion Research Library of Brookline, Massachusetts, for permitting the use of numerous valuable books and documents, and to various publishing houses for permission to quote from their publications.

We believe in the principle that dogmatic rejection of Scriptural enlightenment leads to spiritual barrenness and rigidity, whereas its acceptance, after proper investigation, brings continued spiritual growth. With this thought in mind, we prayerfully and hopefully present this Holy Name Bible.

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

Irvington, New Jersey

³⁷ Burney, C. F., *Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel*: 1922.

³⁸ Cureton, W., *Remains of a very antient [sic] recension of the four Gospels in Syriac, hitherto unknown in Europe*: 1858.

³⁹ Gibson, M. D., *Isho'dad of Merv. Commentaries (c. 850 A.D.) in Syriac and English 4 c.*; edited and translated 1911-13.

⁴⁰ Gwynn, J., *On a Syriac manuscript of the New Testament belonging to the Earl of Crawford and Bukares and on an unedited [sic] version of the Apoclypse therein contained*: 1893.

⁴¹ Lewis, A. S., *Some pages of the four Gospels re-transcribed from the Sinaitic palimpsest with a translation of the whole text*: 1896.

⁴² Schonfield, H. J., *An old Hebrew text of St. Matthew's Gospel, translated with an introduction, notes, and appendices (Edinburgh: 1927)*.

⁴³ Torrey, Charles C., *The Four Gospels* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1933); *Our Translated Gospels* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1936); *Documents of the Primitive Church* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941).