

# The Legal Context of the Name

# What is a “name”?

- Have you ever stopped and considered what a name is and why it is important?
- Have you ever wondered why God has different names and why certain names are used in certain situations?
- Have you ever considered the legal context of the usage of a name?
- Let’s investigate some interesting usages of names...

# Investigating of the term “name”

- Exodus 6.2-3 God did not make Himself known as YHVH to the patriarchs...
- 2 Samuel 14.7
- Ruth 4.5, 10
- Genesis 11.4
- Genesis 32:27-30
- Isaiah 56:5

So we can see that “Name/Shem” can have a spectrum of usages.

H8034 – שֵׁם (shem)

Strong's

...a mark or memorial of individuality; by implication *honor, authority, character...*

*BDB*

Name, reputation, fame, glory, memorial, monument

# “Name” tied to inheritance

- Laws concerning the Levirate marriage – Deuteronomy 25:5-10
  - Functions to ensure a man’s “name” is not blotted out in Yisrael
- Examples of Levirate marriage in Scripture
  - Judah – Er – Tamar: Genesis 38
  - Boaz – Machlon – Ruth: Book of Ruth (4:5, 10, 12, 17-22)
- Names associated with inheritance
  - Gen 17 – Renaming Abraham associated with giving the land as an inheritance
  - Gen 48.5-6
  - Jeremiah 51.19

# “Name” tied to ownership

- Jeremiah 7:10-14, 30 -> God’s “name” on the temple signifies ownership
- Isaiah 43:7
  - We are purchased with a price (redemption) and become the servants of YHVH -> we call him Adonai
- Rev 14:1 – (remember, forehead isn’t thoughts, it is ownership)
- Daniel 9:19 -> act for Your sake...reminding that the people and city are “called by your name”, i.e. act because you own us...
- 2 Sam 6:2 -> Ark of God is owned by Him as his throne.
- Acts 15:14

# “Name” as a requirement for existence

- The “name” is a “distinguishing mark”; A “distinguishing mark” makes it possible to differentiate, to structure, and to order.
- In this respect “to name” or “to designate” belongs to the ordering of creation; thus primordial time preceded naming in the Babylonian epic of creation *Enūma elisû* (1.1 [[ANET, 60](#)] “when on high the heaven had not been named ..., when no gods whatever had been brought into being, uncalled by name ...”). The bestowal of names initiates the human ordering of creation in [Gen 2:19](#) (“so out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field ... and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name”)

# “Name” as authority/power

- Acts 4.7
- Mark 16:16-17
  - Compare to Acts 19:13
  - The one who knows the name of a god or a human can appeal to them. The knowledge of the name can thereby have effective power. Magic and incantations attempt to use this knowledge through techniques which exploit the influence of the name. Thereby free communication degenerates into a manipulative attempt to dominate.
- John 5.43 – Come in the Father’s name...NOT that he has the Father’s name, that he comes in the authority as the Legal Messenger of the Great King
  - This does not mean that Yeshua’s name has to contain his Father’s name, otherwise the 2<sup>nd</sup> half would mean that the other person’s name had to contain their own name...
- Matthew 7.22



# To “call on the Name”

- Romans 10:13-15 – Prerequisite is belief, i.e. He’emin to swear an oath of allegiance and to live according to the covenant (Book of Ya’akov)
- Zeph 3:9 – Functions to facilitate an act of servitude
- Psalms 116:4 - denotes a Master-servant relationship.

# YHVH vs. Elohim – Exodus 6:2-3

- Why is Elohim used in Gen 1 and YHVH used in Gen 2?
- Did the Patriarchs really not know of the name YHVH?
- Evidence from Theophoric name usages (no 'Yah' names prior to Exodus)

# Names of God

- Elohim – Mighty Judge
- YHVH – Covenant Loyalty
- El Shaddai – the Mighty Provider
- Adonai – My Master (the antonym of *ebed*)
- El Rafi – Mighty Healer