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Significance

in

the

Name

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In considering the subject of names in Holy Scripture, two unmistakable facts emerge. The first of these concerns the *author* of the name given while the second embraces the *reason* for the particular name chosen. At the outset, it will be noted that God said: "Let us make *man* in our image, after our likeness . . ." — the Hebrew *aw-dawm* (Adam) here translated 'man' being a generic rather than a patronymic term. It is descriptive of a *type of man* who possesses the inherent ability to 'blush' thus presenting a 'ruddy countenance'. While the name *aw-dawm* is used in a descriptive manner in the opening of the historical record, in Genesis 2 an *aw-dawm* is 'formed' from the dust of the earth (not out of the sea, viz. the evolutionary theory) and placed in a 'garden' — a fenced place — in the earth and it is very noticeable that the phrase 'the man' with the definite article 'the' is gradually displaced by the English family name Adam. From the nineteenth verse of the second chapter of Genesis the article 'the' is dropped and the name 'Adam' takes over.

Apart from the above record, there is very little to indicate the authority for the mandate to call the descendants of 'the man' by the name Adam. However, as one passes on, it will be seen that the Adam, being given an 'help meet' by the Lord, named her Eve "... because she was the mother of

all living" (Gen. 3:20). There is obviously much more to the story than meets the eye for if one examines the phraseology used by God, it will be seen that Eve, so named by Adam, was not the 'female' created in Genesis 1:27. Here, the Hebrew word recorded is *neqebah* which means one of the feminine gender while the 'woman' made as a 'help meet' for Adam is recorded as *ishshah*, literally a 'wife'. The Hebrew name translated 'Eve' in English is 'Chava' which means 'to show'. If she was the 'mother of all living human beings' to whom would she show and what? The key, of course, is to be found in the fact that the Lord breathed into Adam's nostrils 'the breath of life and he became a living soul' (Gen. 2:7). This was that which Eve would show forth — the progeny who had the potential of spiritual perception and thus spiritual life.

In passing on, one finds that Eve's first-born is suddenly introduced by name and was called 'Cain'. This name is the direct result of Eve's contribution to the disastrous events recorded in the third chapter. Because of her part in these, the Lord said: "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Gen. 3:16). Eve indeed brought forth her first-born in sorrow for the name 'Cain' (Hebrew: *quwn*) means 'a wail', 'Lament' — 'a mourning woman'.

Thus far and apart from the brief record in which God said "Let us make 'aw-dawm' in our image, etc." it would appear that names were given as a result of circumstances. 'Seth', the third son born to Eve was so named because 'God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew' (Gen. 4:25). It was only when God's Plan for world rehabilitation began to crystallise in one particular section of the Adamic family, that one finds God taking a hand in deliberately giving names. 'Abram' the name given by Terah to his first-born, meant 'lofty father' — a name which was changed by God

when the fifth letter in the Hebrew alphabet was added to make it 'Abraham' — the 'father of a multitude'. Sarai, Abram's wife, too, had her name changed which, when one considers subsequent events, shows more than a superficial interest by God in this family. Abraham's first-born by Hagar and through the consent of Sarah (Gen. 16:2) was named by the angel of the Lord — "... and thou shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction" (Gen. 16:11).

However well-intentioned were the motives behind both Abraham's and Sarah's endeavours, it was clearly the Lord's intention that Sarah should be the mother of the promised multiplicity of seed through which God had determined to accomplish His world purposes. "And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him" (Gen. 17:19). There was nothing ambiguous about this statement. Sarah was to be the mother and the child of promise was to be named 'Isaac' (Hebrew: *yitschaq*) meaning 'laughter'. Laughter is synonymous with happiness and joy and while it is not intended to disparage the notion that this name was given because Sarah laughed at the thought of an aged woman bearing a son (Gen. 18:13-15), the name 'Isaac' had a more far-reaching implication abounding in the hope of the ineffable joy of God's Kingdom functioning on the earth. This circumstance was not transferable for the Lord specifically stated in rejecting others born to Abraham: "... in Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Gen. 21:12).

Twin sons were born to Isaac by Rebekah and it is rather significant that in the naming of the twins, the Lord was singularly silent. It is perfectly true that the Lord responded to the entreaty of Rebekah by stating: "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger

than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger" (Gen. 25:23), but He refrained from naming the, as yet, unborn children. Thus, at birth, the twins were named by those attending Rebekah — Esau being given because the first-born was 'red all over like an hairy garment' and Jacob because of the fact that the second twin was born holding the heel of his brother, implying, in the custom of the day, a restraining and supplanting action. It has been thought by many that the name 'Jacob' — literally 'the heel catcher' — was a prophetic name arising out of the stolen blessing when the blind Isaac was induced to bestow the blessing on Jacob instead of Esau. However, in terms of God's reaction to all this, He had nothing to do with the naming of Jacob and the circumstances arose purely out of the 'heel catching' episode at birth.

It is strange when one considers that the Lord had a hand in the transposition of Abram's name and the specific command in respect of Abraham's son Isaac — and yet, in the matter of the name of Isaac's heir, He should be so quiet! Jacob was fast approaching the age of sixty when the Lord took a hand in changing his name, the circumstances of which are recorded in the thirty-second chapter of Genesis. "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed" (Gen. 32:28).

Here is a Divine rejection of the name bestowed by man for while the name change evident in the case of Abram and Sarai still retained elements of the original name, Jacob's name bore no resemblance to 'Israel' either in meaning or pronunciation. While 'heel catcher' is the literal meaning of 'Jacob', a precise definition of 'Israel' is more involved. Some Hebrew authorities translate it as 'Ruling with God'; 'Ruling as God'; 'Commanded by God' and 'Prevailing with God'. If one examines the overall context, it would appear that the latter definition is the nearest to which the English language may come in expressing a meaning which meets with all the

requirements. Jacob, it will be recalled, had contended for the birthright and had succeeded — he had contended for the blessing and had succeeded — he had contended with Laban and succeeded — he had contended with ‘men’ and had succeeded and now he had contended with God refusing to break off the encounter. “. . . I will not let thee go, except thou bless me” (Gen. 32:26). The blessing came in the title ‘Israel’ — he who prevaieth with God.

Whichever way one may look at this name and whatever conclusions one may arrive at, it is one which denotes an intimate relationship not realised by or in any other people. By the express Command of the Lord, His Name was placed upon the children of Israel (Num. 6:27) and Moses, projecting this into the experience of the people of the earth, said: “And all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord (Jehovah) . . .” (Deut. 28:10).

Moses was instructed by the Lord to tell the children of Israel that if they obeyed His Commands and kept His covenant which required implicit obedience, then they would be a peculiar treasure unto Him, indeed a kingdom of priests and an holy nation (Ex. 18:5-6). The condition here laid down was removed when the Law became written on the heart and mind of Israel in terms of the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31 and Heb. 8:8) and which was ratified when the Lord Jesus Christ completed the Calvary Act (Matt. 26:28). This fact gave Peter the authority to say of Israel: “*But ye are a chosen generation (race), a royal priesthood, an holy nation . . .*” (1 Peter 2:9).

Generally in the New Testament, the word ‘priesthood’ is translated from the Greek *hierosune* which carries the meaning as generally understood pertaining to the priesthood. However, Peter uses the word *hierateuma* which is the same Greek word found in the Septuagint when the record of Exodus 19 is recorded. It means literally ‘fellowship’

or ‘brotherhood’. The root of this word is *hieros*, the meaning of which broadens one’s understanding of the name ‘Israel’. It is literally translated ‘filled with, or manifesting divine power’.

Notwithstanding the facts as they have been presented above, and the student is asked to check what has been written, there will no doubt be those who might object to this illustrious and unique relationship associated with the name Israel. To those of this persuasion, attention is drawn to the words of the Lord Who, through Moses, established a ‘father-son’ relationship between Himself and Israel. “Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn . . .” (Ex. 4:22). At a much later stage, this unique relationship was again confirmed when, through Jeremiah the prophet, He said: “. . . for I am a father to Israel and Ephraim is my firstborn” (Jer. 31:9).

This double witness expunges any notion that the appearance of the covenanted progeny of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob on the stage of world history was an opportune accident upon which God capitalised to further His Plans in the earth. He, in the Wisdom of His Understanding and in His foreknowledge of the requirements for world rehabilitation deliberately created a new entity within the Adamic people which not only had the ‘breath of life’ as an integral part of it, but would have an additional ‘something’ which would bind it to its ‘Father’ for use in His world purposes. Note how the Lord draws attention to the creation of Israel. “Yet now hear, O Jacob, my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen: Thus saith the Lord *that made thee, and formed thee from the womb . . .*” (Isa. 44:1-2). Israel was thus formed in the womb and not created when Jacob’s name was changed at Peniel. It is thus not a matter of speculation to assume that God involved Himself in the matter of genetics where Sarah, Rebekah, Leah and Rachel are concerned — it is asserted by the facts and the Lord’s claim recorded by Isaiah the prophet

“Thus saith the Lord that *created thee O Jacob*, and he that *formed thee O Israel*, Fear not; for I have *redeemed thee*, I have *called thee by thy name*; *thou art mine*” (Isa. 43:1).

In the light of this, one is able to understand why miscegenation was prohibited. The command to ‘Honour thy father and thy mother’ has more to it than the superficial interpretation usually associated with it. In Isaiah 51:1-2 the command is: ‘... look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto *Abraham your father*, and unto *Sarah that bare you* . . .’ What honour is done to the literal parents of Israel when the genetic ‘seed’ is polluted through contamination with others which do not possess the potential with which God endowed the covenanted line? Come what may, the Lord has determined that His creation and formation of Israel will not suffer pollution for He has assured that so long as the sun, moon and stars endure, the ‘seed of Israel’ would be a nation before Him for ever (Jer. 31:35).

It is of course a matter of Biblical history that the name ‘Israel’ would be taken away from the sons of Jacob. Because of the national departure from the Commands of the Lord and the nation being led into following man’s appreciation for the requirements of government, the Lord specifically commanded that two new names be given. They were Lo-ruhamah (not receiving mercy) and Lo-ammí (not my people). However, it is ludicrous to suggest that all the careful preparation in forming the Israel nation and all that it meant, was now to be scrubbed out as a thing of no worth. This is not only unworthy of God but a slight on His Character and a repudiation of His Omniscience. One should not stop reading when one comes to such portions as those referred to above when God commanded a name-change in Israel for immediately after this, He relates a time, when the children of Israel had reached multitudinous proportions that they would be called the ‘sons of the living God’ (Hos.

1:10).

While many are tempted to interpret this as meaning that they would be found as ‘Christians’ there is another meaning which throws one back into the Old Testament and God’s claim to Israel. “Israel is my son, even my firstborn” (Ex. 4:22). Remembering that the name ‘Israel’ carried with it a unique relationship with God in terms of His world purposes, until those purposes are completed, the name and status of Israel remains. Indeed, the Lord assures: “For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, *so shall your seed and your name remain*” (Isa. 66:22).

Thus while Israel was to be known by a new name, the promise remained that ‘Israel’ and all that it implies would again be given to the covenanted progeny of the patriarchs. However, before this happened, Israel would lose its name and be called ‘Lo-ammi’ – not my people (Hos. 1:9). Where, in any portion of the Holy Scripture, does it state that they would be called Jews? Search as one may, nowhere in any Concordance or authoritative Hebrew or Greek Lexicon will one find the slightest affinity between Lo-ammi and Jew. This being so, it would again serve a useful purpose to find the precise meaning of the word Jew.

In the first instance it is an English not Hebrew word coined in the middle of the eighteenth century by the English playwright Sheridan. For some considerable time, translators of the Scriptures had been at a loss to give an adequate translation to the Greek *Ioudaios* and the Hebrew *Yehuwdiy*. The Hebrew word implied a member of the tribe of Judah but the Greek word carried a geographical meaning, i.e. a person living within the confines of a land called Judaea. *The Jewish Encyclopaedia*, under the word ‘Jew’ states: “Up to the seventeenth century this word was spelled in Middle English in various ways: ‘Gyu’; ‘Giu’; ‘Gyw’; ‘Iu’; ‘Iuu’, etc. All these forms were derived from the old French ‘Giu’

which was earlier written 'Juieu' derived from the Latin accusative 'Judaicum'.

While it is scripturally correct to apply the Hebrew word *Yehuwdiy* to a portion of the remnant which returned from the Babylonian captivity, i.e. those of the tribe of Judah which returned, it would not be correct to give this name to the Benjamites, the priests or the Levites. It would be a complete misnomer to give this name to the 'adversaries' (Ezra 4:1) who sought to hinder the work of reconstruction as it would bestow it on the Canaanite, Moabite and Egyptian element which comprised the general population of the land (Ezra 9:1). In the four centuries which elapsed between the return of the remnant from Babylon and the First Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ, the population underwent such a radical change that it was no longer possible to identify tribal origins and the Scriptures accommodate this situation by referring to the people as Judaeans, i.e. persons living within the boundary of the territory known as Ioudaia. It is of singular interest to note that the Lord Jesus Christ did not live in Ioudaia but in Nazareth and thus could not be called a Judaeans nor its modern equivalent of 'Jew'. The inscription which was placed over the Crucified Body of the Lord, whether in Greek, Hebrew or Latin, indicated that the Lord was not a Judaeans but a 'Nazarene' by reason of domicile. The literal translation was 'Jesus the Nazarene Ruler of the Judaeans' being Pilate's response to the argument put up by the chief priests (John 19:21-22) who would "not have this man to reign over them".

By way of amplification of the argument presented by the Pharisees, it should be noted that it was written in the prophets that the Word, the Son of God, would be called a 'Nazarene' (Matt. 2:23) and as the devil knows and believes Scripture, he had created an expression which became a doctrine of the Pharisees in that they taught that 'no good thing could come out of Nazareth' (John 1:46). It

was this doctrine which prompted Pilate to write: 'Jesus the Nazarene Ruler of the Judaeans'.

In His general discourse with the Judaeans (Jews), the Lord made several very pointed remarks which cannot be equated with the claim that the word 'Jew' is synonymous with 'Israel'. Apart from calling them of their father the devil (John 8:44) — Israel is ever referred to by God as 'my son' (Ex. 4:22) — He made a statement which, when contrasted with the scriptural facts presented earlier in respect of God's acknowledged creation and formation of Israel, makes any pretension of 'Jewish' identity with Israel utterly spurious. He said: "He that is of God heareth God's words (this could only be in terms of the special creation of Israel): ye (the Jews) therefore hear them not, *because ye are not of God*" (John 8:74). Early in His Ministry, the Lord had stated categorically that His main Commission was to the 'lost sheep of the house of Israel' (Matt. 15:24) to which 'sheep' He had sent His disciples (Matt. 10:6). In His 'Good Shepherd' discourse, the Lord repudiated any association of the Jews with 'His sheep' for He said: "... ye believe not, *because ye are not my sheep*, as I said unto you" (John 10:26). The Lord did not say that because they did not believe they were not His sheep *but* that they could not believe *because* their identity was not that of the sheep of His pasture.

The Lord continued with His discourse by saying: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Here indeed is the answer to those who insist on transposing the name Israel into Jew for the sheep (Israel, Ezek. 34:30-31) were to identify themselves with the Christ of God which the Jews, to this day, will not do. More, one finds a direct contradiction to the assurance of the Lord to the effect that the 'seed of Israel' would be a nation before Him. Notwithstanding the nationhood currently being forged by the Israeli State in Palestine, the phrase 'the seed of Israel' cannot be fulfilled by the heterogeneous population of modern

Jewry. Today there are Semitic Jews so-called who are of Arabian, Canaanitish or Edomite extractions; there are Oriental Jews, Khazar Jews, Sephardic Jews and Negro Jews none of whom can, by any gymnastics of the imagination, measure up to the Israel of Holy Scripture.

All this, of course, evokes the question: "Where are the people so meticulously created and formed — where are the people of God's Covenant in their modern identity?" Apart from the marks of identity which depend entirely upon the faithfulness of God to His Promises which could be and have been subject to a wide variety of interpretation, there is a positive direction given by the Lord Himself. This Direction is not popular today in that it does not conform to the theory of universalism and the equality of man. Today, discrimination is considered the most heinous of sins and yet it is within this context that one finds the clue whereby true modern Israel may be found.

On the occasion of the birth of Isaac, Sarah found life intolerable with the incessant mocking of the Egyptian handmaid and her son Ishmael and consequently demanded that Abraham evict the bondwoman and her son. "Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even Isaac" (Gen. 21:10). The reference to the 'bondwoman' — Hagar was not even named — is an indication of status which did not measure up to that of the rightful wife and heir.

The response of God to Sarah's demand for discrimination is most interesting. "And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; *for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.*" Without commenting further on the implications here, attention is drawn to the fact that 'in Isaac shall thy seed be called'. The Hebrew word translated 'called' is *qara* which has quite a variety of

meanings not the least of which is 'named'. All the other meanings are variations of this and it is consistent with the word to say that the Lord positively identified the covenanted progeny of Isaac with his name. And it should be noted the word 'Jew' has absolutely no affinity with 'Isaac'.

The statement by the Lord throws one into the field of etymology, i.e. the branch of linguistic science which deals with words and word origins. However, it is not intended to deal with this here save to mention that early geographers, from the time of Ptolemy, have equated the name of 'Saxon' or variations of this, with the people who were freed from captivity where the house of Israel were last mentioned in the Bible. *Pliny* made this remarkable observation: "*Ultra sunt Scytharum populi, Persoe illos Sacas in universum appellavere a proxime gente; antiqui Arameos. Celeberrimi eorum Sacae...*" The English translation of this is: "Beyond are the people of Scythia. The Persians called them altogether Sakai, from a neighbouring nation; the ancients more frequently called them Aramei, the most celebrated of them Sakai..."

Sharon Turner, the great English historian (1840) provides enough evidence to support the claim that Israel's grave was the Anglo-Saxon's birthplace. Is it merely a quirk of fate that the Anglo-Saxon people have borne all the marks of God's faithfulness to His Covenant Promises? Is it merely a coincidence that the current pattern within these people is identical with that which the Lord said would characterise His people at the end of the age? Is it by chance that having the rich testimony of history — a history which fulfils the prophecy concerning Israel — that these people still consider themselves as 'Gentiles' — Lo-ammi — not my people?

It would be pointless to argue that the Anglo-Saxon people are today still 'great'. Their authority throughout the world has been shattered and confidence in their ability to cope with the disintegrating forces now at work simply does not exist. The

world has indeed written Anglo-Saxondom off as a spent force while the Third World, the Coloured World, is looked upon as the guide lines for the future.

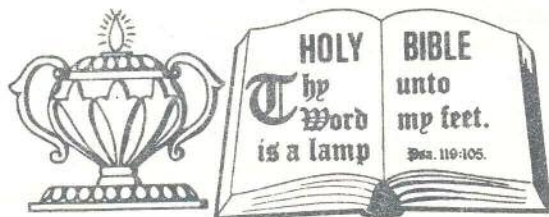
All this and much of what is transpiring in the world today would appear to be totally divorced from what has been written above and would appear to contradict the contention that God did form Israel the nation for His world purposes and that the modern development of these people is to be found in Anglo-Saxondom. It should be stated with all emphasis that the reverse is the case. It should be recalled that the Lord God of Israel emphasised the fact that 'in Isaac shall thy seed be called' and *this name* has a continuing meaning within Anglo-Saxondom irrespective of the calamities which befall both themselves and other people. The name 'Isaac' carries the meaning of 'laughter' or an irrepressible optimism based on a certain knowledge that 'things will come right'.

Notwithstanding the gymnastics of Western politicians today who appear over-eager to sink their identity into the morass of humanity and who appear to care nothing for the traditions of history, what of the every day man-in-the-street? Outsiders, looking in are more than a little puzzled at the apparent complacency of the people when all their institutions are crumbling around them. When crisis builds upon crisis, there is no panic, there are no riots and certainly there is no confusion. Many have attempted to explain this unusual and most unique phenomenon and when asked the reason for it, a typical Briton, Mr. Ian Smart, deputy Director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, replied: "... We suffer from survival." Indeed all Anglo-Saxondom, has suffered from this for centuries and whenever these people begin to worry that they might be losing their gift of survival, without even trying, something comes along to restore their faith. This is the projection of 'Isaac' down the centuries which causes his modern pro-

geny to laugh at the impossible and to joy in the miraculous.

Here indeed is the sub-conscious acceptance of the assurance given by the Lord, the God of Israel, when He said: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, the Saviour..." (Isa. 43:2-3).

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The Word
is a lamp
unto my feet.

Psa. 119:105.

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