

The Power Of A Changed Name- Elder Harry L. Jackson

I. The Significance of Names In The Bible

A. Unlike in today's society wherein names are oftentimes given frivolously, names were important in biblical times. A person's name (and the meaning thereof) was indicative of a person's character, destiny, and role in society and/ or history. People were sometimes named according to the circumstances under which they were born, or according to some significant event that took place at the time of their birth.

B. Notable Bible Names:

1. **Abram** ("High Father") changed to **Abraham** ("Father of a Multitude") *Gen. 17:5*
2. **Jacob** ("supplanter") changed to **Israel** ("he will rule") *Gen. 32:28*
3. **Benoni** ("son of my sorrow") changed to Benjamin ("son of the right hand") *Gen. 35:18*
4. **Moses** ("drawing out; to pull out") *Ex. 2:10*
5. **Joshua** ("Jehovah saves") *Ex. 17:9*
6. **Bezaleel** ("in the shadow or protection of God") *Ex. 31:12*
7. **Jabez** ("to grieve; sorrowful") *1Chr. 4:9*
8. **Ichabod** ("(there is) no glory") *1Sam.4:21*

These are examples of Old Testament names, but there are examples in the New Testament as well, such as **Peter** ("a stone"), **Paul** ("little"), and **Barnabas** ("son of encouragement").

II. The Power of the Spoken Word

A. It is important that we as believers be vigilant concerning what we say out of our mouths. The same power that God used to create and sustain the universe (Gen. 1, Heb. 1:3) resides in us. Therefore, we as His children, have the ability to create or to destroy based on what we say.

- *Rom. 4:17- "(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were."*

B. A person will say what he or she believes. Therefore we must have our minds renewed by the Word of God (Rom. 12:2), so that when we speak, we say what God says.

- *Prov:23:7- "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he:"*
- *Matt. 12:34- "... out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."*

C. "If you don't say what God says, He will say what you say." Unbelief insults God.

- *Ezekiel 37:4-7- "Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto*

these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. 7: So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

- *Mark 11:23- “For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.”*
- *Hebrews 11:6- “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”*

III. The Significance of a Changed Name and the New Birth

- A. The main difference between Christianity and every other system of belief is that when a person converts to a religion, such as Islam, or Buddhism, the person’s lifestyle may change, but the person himself remains fundamentally unchanged. But when a person is saved by faith in Jesus Christ, that person is spiritually joined in death with the crucified Christ and united with the risen Christ, and therefore a whole new life is created. Hence the term, “born again.” (*John 3:3*)
- B.
 - *Romans 6:3-5- “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:”*
- C. Because some aspects of our growth and development as Christians is progressive, the physical evidence of our transformation may not always be apparent, the Bible instructs us to consider it to be so. This is what we call “walking by faith and not by sight (*2 Cor. 5:7*).
- *Romans 6:10-11- “: For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise **reckon** ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*
- *2 Cor. 5:16-17- “Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

IV. The Spiritual Principle of a Changed Name

A. Certain characters in the bible had their names changed after experiencing radical and life-altering encounters with God. These may be seen as types of the change that every born again believer experiences upon his or her entrance into the God's Kingdom upon their confession of faith in Jesus Christ.

1. **Abram** ("High Father") changed to **Abraham** ("Father of a Multitude") *Gen. 17:5*
2. **Jacob** ("supplanter") changed to **Israel** ("he will rule") *Gen. 32:28*
3. **Benoni** ("son of my sorrow") changed to **Benjamin** ("son of the right hand") *Gen. 35:18*
4. **Saul** ("to demand") changed to **Paul** ("little") *Acts:13:9*

V. Conclusion

When God changes a name (of a place or person), unless that person or place is under judgment, it is usually of a change for the better. As Christians, we must agree with God by first believing what He has said about us, and expressing that faith speaking the same things. We no longer think of ourselves or refer to ourselves in terms of our old life.

- ❑ *Rom:6:6- "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."*
- ❑ *Eph. 4:22-24- "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."*
- ❑ *Phil. 3:13-14- "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."*
- ❑ *Heb. 12:1- "let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,"*