

# Was the Savior Greek?

## Why is a Hebrew Called by a Greek Name?

Suppose a new Bible translation had the second chapter of Matthew begin like this: "Now when Yahshua the Messiah was born at Athens Grecia in the days of Alexander the Great, behold there came wise men from the east to Olympia saying, 'Where is He that is born king of the Greeks, for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him?' When Alexander heard these things, he was troubled, and all Olympia with him."

If you read such a translation, you would be troubled, too. "My Bible says the Savior was Hebrew, born of the tribe of Judah at Bethlehem!" you would say. "That translation is wrong! The Greeks were pagans. He wasn't Greek nor was he born among Greeks." You would be absolutely right. Now let's look at this passage as it appears in the King James Version: "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king,

behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem saying, 'Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.'

Now the facts are right, expressing the Hebrew heritage and birth of our Savior. But one problem remains. **Jesus** is a Greek name. It is as out of place in the setting of Hebrew Israel as the Hebrew Savior would be in Greece --to be king of the Greeks!

## **Yahshua the Hebrew**

Our Savior was a Hebrew, born of a Jewish mother. He had a Hebrew family. He spoke Hebrew, lived the Hebrew culture, kept and taught Hebrew laws, had Hebrew followers, and quoted from the Hebrew Scriptures. So what is He doing in our Bibles with a Latinized -Anglicized-Greek name? And why, being a Hebrew, is He referred to by the purely Greek title "Christos" rather than the Hebrew title "Mashiyach" (Messiah)? One might argue, that's because ours is an English Bible, not a

Hebrew one.

If that's true, then why is the Greek "Christ" and its possessive "Christ's" found 570 times in our ENGLISH Bibles, while the original Hebrew-rooted "Messiah" appears a mere four times? Others may say, well this just shows that the New Testament was originally inspired in the Greek. Not true. And we can cite myriads of reasons why the title "Christ," meaning "anointed," remains un-translated in our ENGLISH versions.

## **Hebrews Loathed Greek Culture**

Was the New Testament written in Greek? Consider: The Jews of the Savior's day spoke Hebrew (or some say its sister language, Aramaic). As loathsome as the thought of eating swines flesh was, it is said that a Jew of that time would rather eat swine's flesh than speak the Greek language. What average Jew could or would want to read Greek writings (even if the Apostles could write Greek, which most could not)? Some Alexandrian Jews had re-

settled in Judea and did speak Aramaic, but they hardly constituted a fraction of the majority of Hebrew-speaking Jews. They had nothing but animosity for the heathen Greeks and their Hellenization policy. Why would Jewish Apostles write Greek?

Josephus, the famous first-century Hebrew priest and historian-- who said he far exceeded the average Jew in learning--wrote, "I cannot pronounce Greek with sufficient exactness..." (Antiquities of the Jews, 20:11.1). If this eminent priest and scholar could not speak Greek, how could most of the Jews in Judea?

Yahshua sent the 12 Disciples "not to the Gentiles [Greeks included], but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," Matthew 10:6. Obviously, these Hebrew Disciples, writing for Israelites wrote in Hebrew--so the average Hebrew would understand. To think they would be writing in Hebrew but inserting Greek substitute names for the Father and Son is absurd. On the contrary, they would

use the personal Names first revealed from On High to the Hebrew patriarchs in the Hebrew language long before the Greek language even existed! (See Genesis 4:1, 26)

## **The Case for 'Yahshua'**

That the Heavenly Father's personal, revealed, covenant Name is Yahweh is widely known and recognized in religious circles. But how do we know that the Saviors Name is Yahshua? First, the "J" did not exist in any language until about the 15th century common era (A.D.). This eliminates both "Jehovah" and "Jesus." Second, Yahshua said He came in His Fathers Name, John 5:43. YAHweh and YAHshua both bear the family name "YAH." The Name Yah-shua means "Yah's salvation." Third, Yahshua was a Jew, a descendant of the Hebrews. He would no more have a Greek name than a German would have a Chinese name!

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Reprinted by:

Assembly of Yah

2695 N 2409th Rd

Marseilles, IL 61341

1 [815] 357-9926

E-mail: [askyah@pcwildblue.com](mailto:askyah@pcwildblue.com)

Internet: [Assemblyofyah.com](http://Assemblyofyah.com)