

## Ask the Rabbi:

### Should Ephraimites “adopt” a Hebrew name?

**ANSWER:** This is a very good inquiry from a sincere heart wanting to please Yahweh. Should an Ephraimite, after learning of their Hebraic lineage as Israel, adopt a Hebrew name to take the place of their “given” gentile name? In **Bereshith (Gen.) 17**, Yahweh Elohim changes Avram’s name to Avraham as He renews the covenant. Avraham is never again called Avram. Yahweh called him Avraham –the father of many nations (*goyim*). Yahweh added the *heh* to Avram’s name, as it was a covenant practice to take on part of the other party’s name (we see this in the wedding ceremony today). Yahweh became the Elohim of Avraham and his seed after him if they accepted the covenant. Later, Ya’akov’s (one who follows on the heels) name is changed to Yisrael (one who prevails with El) after he wrestles with Yahweh’s messenger and obtains a blessing. A change had taken place in Ya’akov at that point of his life. Moshe changed Hoshea’s name to Yahoshua in the wilderness, just before Yahoshua assumed the mantle of leadership. It is scriptural to change or add to a name after some major event takes place in a person’s life and their relationship with Yahweh the Elohim of Yisrael.

In Scripture a name is very important as it is prophetic of the nature, character, and significance of an individual. This is true in modern Hebrew culture. The Hebrew naming ceremony of the child is very important to the parents and the child. In gentile culture, a name is given to an individual by the parents because it was popular name of that generation, a name of a close relative, or for other non-scriptural reasons. But, what should we do as returning Ephraimites?

I believe it is scriptural to change a name or adopt a Hebrew name after you have a revelation of who you REALLY and your Hebraic heritage. If it has been revealed to you by the *ruach hakodesh* that you are a Yisraelite and you have a renewed relationship with YHWH through the Moshiach and the Torah-then I encourage you to adopt a Hebrew name. For example: the Rebetzin’s name is Joan, now she is called Yohanah, my daughter is Rebekah and she is now called Rivkah. I was named Edward Lewis after my father, grandfather and great grandfather. Lewis is an anglicized version of Levi. Thus, my Hebrew name is Levi. The priests’ job was to teach Yisrael the difference between the set-apart and the profane, and the Torah. I believe that name is the true name YHWH called me in my mother’s womb.

My brother and sister Ephraimites adopt a Hebrew name. May even our names truly reveal our nature and calling as Yahweh. Choose a name that YHWH would have named you-not the Babylonian gentile society that dictated our past lives. In the Book of Daniel, the first thing the Babylonians did to the Jewish children was to give them a Babylonian name or one of their false deities. We are YISRAEL, may the name we are called by show the world our belief in Yahweh and His eternal covenant with our ancestors!

Shalom

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