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## The Foretold Name of Jesus

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**Abstract:** This article discusses Old Testament prophecies concerning the name and titles of Jesus, using these to justify the use of the name "Jesus Christ" in the Book of Mormon.

Joshua  
Jehosh  
ah  
Jeshuah  
Iesous  
Tehovah i

## *The Foretold*

*"But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ." (II Cor. 3:14.)*

One of the primary, startling, and distinguishing characteristics of the Book of Mormon, often assailed by its critics, is its use of the proper name *Jesus* as applied to the expected Messiah, many years before his birth.<sup>1</sup>

The historian Nephi stated in the early pages of the Book of Mormon upon authority of "the words of the prophets" as well as revelation, that the name of the Messiah would be *Jesus Christ*. This announcement preceded the birth of Christ by more than five centuries.<sup>2</sup> It invokes inquiry into its credibility, and provokes a search of the words of the prophets, as well as Jewish and Christian traditions to determine whether or not, among the things "hidden from the wise and prudent"<sup>3</sup> the name of the Messiah is shown to be *Jesus*.

There can be no doubt that the name *Jesus* is the English rendition of the Greek form of the Hebrew name *Joshua*. This was the name borne by the illustrious successor of Moses who brought Israel into the promised land<sup>4</sup> and also of that priest celebrated in the annals of the return of Israel from captivity in Babylon.<sup>5</sup> The full form of the name is *Jehoshua*.<sup>6</sup> It is often written in variant forms as *Jehoshuah*, *Jeshuah*, and the contractions *Joshua* or *Jeshua*, all being one and the same word. When the name was carried over into English, the ordinary Greek termination added in translation made it *Jesus*.<sup>7</sup>

The original name of the first Joshua was *Oshea*,<sup>8</sup> and with prophetic significance, this name was changed by Moses to *Jehoshua*. The change had the effect of converting the meaning of the name from *saving* to *Jehovah is Salvation*. In later times *Jehoshua* was called *Joshua* or *Jeshua*, whence came the Greek form *Iesous* (*Jesus* in English) which is always used

in the Greek version of the Old Testament current in the time of Christ.

The Hebrew form *Jeshua* differs little, indeed only by one letter added at the end from the abstract noun *jeshuah*, which is derived from the same ancient root. In common usage the two words were understood to be of the same import. In some notable instances translators have even added the final letter *h* to the full name, rendering it as *Jehoshuah* or *Jeshuah*.<sup>9</sup>

When the name of the ancient Joshua is mentioned in the New Testament, it is found written in the form *Jesus*.<sup>10</sup>

After his resurrection, the Savior, finding two of his disciples puzzled and uncomprehending, began "at Moses and all the prophets"<sup>11</sup> and explained to them, as they walked along the road to Emmaeus in all the scriptures concerning himself.<sup>12</sup> It is to be expected that if such explanations included his foretold proper name, some tradition showing that the very name of *Jesus* was known before his birth, should yet be found. Search reveals that this is true in fact.

The Apostle Peter is credited, in the Preaching,<sup>13</sup> with the declaration that the name was shown forth both plainly and obscurely:

"But we turned to the books of the prophets which we had, which partly through parables, partly through riddles, partly reliably and literally, name *Jesus Christ*."

The quotation is taken from the *Stromata* of Clement of Alexandria.<sup>14</sup>

Justin Martyr, a Samaritan, following the example of *Jesus*, began at Moses, in an effort to enlighten Trypho the Jew, and said:<sup>15</sup>

"Moreover, in the Book of Exodus we have also perceived that the name of God Himself, which He says was not revealed to Abraham or to Jacob, was *Jesus*, and was declared mysteriously through Moses. Thus it is written: 'And the Lord spake to Moses, Say to this people, Behold, I send my angel before thy face to keep thee in the way, to bring thee into

# *name of Jesus*

by Ariel L. Crowley, D. D.



the land which I have prepared for thee. Give heed to him, and obey him; do not disobey him; for he will not draw back from you; for my name is in him.' Now understand that he who led your fathers into the land is called by this name *Jesus* and at first was called *Auses* (Oshea). For if you shall understand this, you shall likewise perceive that the name of Him who said to Moses 'for my name is in him' was *Jesus*."

Trypho was impressed with this position, and he replied:

"Be assured that all our nation awaits for Christ, and we admit that all the scriptures which you have quoted refer to him. Moreover, I do also admit that the name of *Jesus*, by which the son of Nun was called, has inclined me very strongly to accept this view."

The discussion continued, and Justin said:<sup>16</sup>

"What I mean is this: *Jesus* (*Joshua*), as I have now frequently remarked, who was called *Oshea*, when he was sent to spy out the land of Canaan, was named by Moses *Jesus* (*Joshua*). Why he did this you neither ask, nor are at a loss about it, nor make strict inquiries. Therefore Christ has escaped your notice; and though you read, you understand not, and even now, though you hear that *Jesus* is our Christ, you consider not that the name was bestowed upon him not purposelessly nor by chance. But you make a theological discussion as to why one 'a'

was added to Abraham's first name; and as to why one 'i' was added to Sarah's name, you use similar high-sounding disputations. But why do you not similarly investigate the reason why the name of *Oshea* the son of Nun, which his father gave him, was changed to *Jesus* (*Joshua*)? But since not only was his name altered, but he was appointed successor to Moses, being the only one of his contemporaries who came out of Egypt, he led the surviving people into the Holy Land, and he distributed it by lot to those who entered along with him, so also *Jesus* the Christ will turn again the dispersion of the people, and will distribute good land to each one, though not in the same manner. For the former gave them a temporary inheritance, seeing he was neither Christ, who is God, nor the Son of God; but the latter, after the holy resurrection, shall give us eternal possession."

Through the rest of the debate, Justin returned to this theme repeatedly, insisting upon it as a thing established.<sup>17</sup>

Turning to the later *Joshua*, he of the Babylonish

captivity, Justin brought to bear the same foreshadowing of the name of *Jesus*, saying:<sup>18</sup>

"But now I say, that as scripture said that the son of Nun, by the name *Jesus* (*Joshua*) wrought powerful works and exploits which proclaimed beforehand what would be performed by our Lord; so I proceed now to show that the revelation made among your people in Babylon in the days of *Jesus* (*Joshua*) the priest, was an announcement of the things to be accomplished by our Priest, who is God and Christ, the Son of God the Father of All."

In detailing the circumstances he adds:

"For just as that *Jesus* (i. e., *Joshua* the Priest, Zech. 3:1-9) called by the prophet a priest, evidently had on filthy garments \* \* \* even so we, who through the name of *Jesus* have believed as one man in God, the maker of all, have been stripped, through the name of his first-begotten Son, of the filthy garments, i. e., of our sins;" an enlargement upon the prototype of the first *Joshua*.

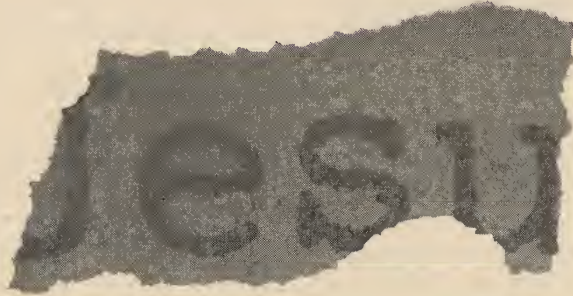
Like Justin, Tertullian, the Carthaginian, in his answer to the Jews, forcefully asserted the revelation of the name of *Jesus* long before his birth:<sup>19</sup>

"In the course of the appointing of a successor to Moses, *Oshea* the son of Nun is certainly transferred from his pristine name, and begins to be called *Jesus*. Certainly, you say. This we

assert first to have been a figure of the future. For because *Jesus* Christ was to introduce the second people (which is composed of us nations, lingering deserted in the world aforesaid) into the land of promise 'flowing with milk and honey' (that is, into the possession of eternal life, than which nought is sweeter) \* \* \* therefore the man who was being prepared to act as image of this sacrament was inaugurated under the figure of the Lord's name, even so as to be named *Jesus*. \* \* \* Thus, too, was the son of Nun called *Joshua*, on account of the future mystery of his name: for that name He who spoke with Moses confirmed as His own, which Himself had conferred on him, because 'He had bidden him thenceforth be called not "angel," nor "Oshea," but "Joshua."' Thus therefore, each name is appropriate to the Christ of God—that he should be called *Jesus*, as well as Christ."

In his summation, Tertullian adduces also the name of *Jesus* as foreseen in *Zechariah*, saying in part:<sup>20</sup>

"So, too, in *Zechariah*, in His own person, nay in the very mystery of His name, withal, the most true Priest



of the Father, His own Christ, is delineated in a two-fold garb with reference to the two advents. \*\*\* Nor will you be able to say that the man there depicted is the son of Josadak, who was never clad at all in a sordid garment, nor ever deprived of the sacerdotal function. But the Jesus there alluded to is Christ, the Priest of God the Most High Father."

By way of close parallelism, it is not improper here to note the play made upon the name of the first Joshua in Ecclesiasticus:<sup>21</sup>

"Jesus the son of Nave, was valiant in the wars and was the successor of Moses in prophecies, who, according to his name, was made great for the saving of the elect of God."

This is precisely the same play upon the name as made in the annunciation to Mary:<sup>22</sup>

"Thou shall call his name Jesus [Joshua] for he shall save his people from their sins."

The African Lactantius, tutor to the household of Constantine the Great, years after the time of Justin and Tertullian, recognized the same foreknowledge of the name of Jesus:<sup>23</sup>

"David, in the 109th Psalm teaches the same, saying: 'Before the morning star I begat thee. The Lord hath sworn and will not repent; Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedec.' Also in the first Book of Kings: 'And I will raise me up a faithful priest, who shall do all the things that are in mine heart; and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk in my sight all his days.' But who this was about to be, to whom God promised an everlasting priesthood, Zechariah most plainly teaches, even mentioning his name: 'And the Lord God showed me Jesus, the Great Priest, standing before the face of the Angel of the Lord, and the adversary was standing at His right hand to resist Him.'"

Lactantius explains the failure of the Jews to understand this passage, adding:

"But they were again misled and deceived in the same manner, supposing that these things were said

concerning Jesus the son of Nave, who was the successor of Moses, or concerning Jesus the High Priest, son of Josedech; to whom none of these things which the prophet related was suited. For they were never clothed in filthy garments, since one of them was a most powerful prince, and the other high priest; or suffered any adversity, so that they should be regarded as a brand plucked from the fire: nor did they ever stand in the presence of God and the angels; nor did the prophet speak of the past so much as the future. He spoke, therefore, of Jesus, the Son of God, to show that He would first come in humility and in the flesh."

Aside from the passage quoted, by which it is demonstrated that in the centuries immediately following the earth life of the Savior, it was understood that the name of Jesus Christ had been foretold centuries before his birth, there is most persuasive evidence in the numerous instances in the Old Testament in which the word jeshuah, meaning salvation, is personified to represent the expected Messiah.

Very possibly this play on words, which carries clear through the prophets, originated in the substitution of the prophetic statement, "Jehovah is Salvation" for the name given to Oshea the son of Nun by his father. To make the point clear, it is necessary to use the Hebrew words involved. The name *Jehovah*, just like the name *Jesus*, is a derivative form used in English. In Hebrew the name given to Oshea by Moses was *Yahveh is yeshuah*. The actual form of the name, close-cropped, is *Jehoshua*. Carried over into its English equivalents, the name given to Oshea is: *Jehovah is Jesus*, since the difference of one letter between Jeshuah, meaning salvation, and Jeshua (the shortened name of Jehoshua) was consistently ignored, in often repeated plays on the name of the Messiah.

A most perfect and touching illustration of this principle of personification of salvation in the person of the Savior is found in the New Testament story of the old man Simeon. (Continued on page 257)

## TRANSIENT APRIL

by Gladys Hesser Burnham

Transient April's brief and weeping splendor,  
Overlaid with golden balm of days,  
Is jeweled with rubies, amethyst, and jade,  
Or topaz, culled in ancient ways.  
Dew-wet diamonds sparkling after rain  
Enhance the emerald sheen of new-mown lawn.  
Jewel-tones hasten April's running feet  
Plunging headlong into summer's dawn.



## The Foretold Name of Jesus

(Continued from page 239)

Having been informed that he should live to see the Christ, he beheld and recognized him in the person of the child Jesus brought into the temple. Lifting the baby in his arms he said,<sup>24</sup> "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation," and he was content to die. Of this passage, recognizing the personification principle, the editors of the new *Interpreter's Bible*, concurring with the universal views of commentators ancient and modern, say:<sup>25</sup>

"The Salvation that Simeon had seen [the Lord's Christ of vs. 26] was intended for all people."

Again, that Jesus is indeed the personification of salvation is most clearly taught in the matter of the conversation of the Savior with the Samaritan woman at the well. It had been written in Isaiah:<sup>26</sup> "... ye shall draw water out of the wells of salvation" [*yeshuah*]. Jesus, regarding himself as the *yeshuah* of this passage, said to the Samaritan woman:<sup>27</sup>

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

Reverting to the Old Testament, the personification principle is carried even to the extent of the use of the masculine pronoun. Thus (Isa. 62:11), it is said:

"Behold thy salvation cometh, behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him."

It is to be noted that the word *salvation* in this case is *yasha* the common root of both *yeshuah* and *Jeshua*; and the identification of this passage with the Messiah has never been in doubt among the Jews.<sup>28</sup>

The saying of Isaiah (52:10) that "all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God" is applied directly to Jesus in Luke (3), and is the subject of extensive dissertations in Yalkut,<sup>29</sup> it being the plain understanding of the ancient Jews that the *yeshuah* whom all the ends of the earth would see, was the Messiah; that his coming would be personal, and would be preceded by Elijah, standing upon the mountains and crying, "Yeshuah has come!"

While some confusion existed in  
(Continued on page 259)

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## The Foretold Name of Jesus

(Continued from page 257)

the minds of the rabbis concerning the details of the prophecy of Zechariah (9:9), "Behold thy king cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation, lowly and riding upon an ass" etc., yet upon one thing all were agreed, that is, that the salvation referred to is the Messiah in person. In the Talmud,<sup>30</sup> it is even said that anyone so blessed as to see an ass in a dream "will live to see salvation" (i. e. Messiah).

Justified entirely by the established practice of paranomasia, familiar in many Old Testament respects other than that under consideration, the unvarying personification of *yeshuah*, salvation, in Jesus, causes the Messianic passages of the scripture to blossom with a new prophetic glory when read as declaring his name.

"I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord!" (Gen. 49:18) becomes a new cry on the lips of aged Israel.

The Song of Moses (Ex. 15:2) assumes new significance: "The Lord is my strength and my song, and he is become my salvation" (i. e. Jesus). It is to be noted that the word *Lord* occurring in this passage is properly *Jehovah* in the Hebrew text, with the result that the passage spells out the name of *Jehoshua* (Jehovah is salvation) the very name of Jesus.

David sings of the Messiah, in the 62nd Psalm, "He only is my rock and my salvation," joining two of the names of Messiah together.

If there be doubt elsewhere, the matter is set at rest in the 12th chapter of Isaiah, wherein Jesus the Christ is identified as being Jehovah and salvation (Jesus) at once:

"Behold God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid: For the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation [yeshuah]; therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of Yeshuah [salvation]."

Jeremiah directly foretold the name "My Righteousness" as one of the names of the Savior (23:6): ". . . and this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord Our Righteousness." The name is joined with Jesus in the warning of Isaiah (56:1):

"Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice, for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed."



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The foregoing instances illustrate what is common usage in the Old Testament, unquestionably intended to foretell the advent of Jesus Christ. No particular purpose is to be served in multiplying citations, the principle and fact of the declaration of the name of Jesus long before his birth being fully established.<sup>31</sup>

Let it be sufficient to say in the words of Jeremiah (Lam. 3:26):

"It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."

May his coming not be long delayed.

- <sup>12</sup>Nephi 25:19; Mosiah 3:8; Alma 7:10.  
<sup>22</sup>Nephi 25:19.  
<sup>31</sup>Matthew 11:25; Luke 10:21; I Corinthians 1:19, 2:8.  
<sup>4</sup>Exodus 24:13.

- <sup>5</sup>Zechariah 3:1.  
<sup>6</sup>Numbers 13:16.  
<sup>7</sup>McClintock & Strong Cyc. Religion, Theology, and Ecclesiastical History Vol. 4, p. 873.  
<sup>8</sup>Numbers 13:16.  
<sup>11</sup>McClintock & Strong, op. cit.; Ecclesiasticus 46:1; I Chronicles 7:27; 24:11.  
<sup>10</sup>Hebrews 4:8; Acts 7:45.  
<sup>11</sup>Jacob 7:11.  
<sup>12</sup>Luke 24:27.  
<sup>13</sup>Pfeiffer, Introduction to Old Testament, Harpers N. Y. 1948, p. 5.  
<sup>14</sup>Stromata, 6:15, 128; 2 ANF (Am. Ed.) 510.  
<sup>15</sup>Dialogue with Trypho, Ch. 75, 89.  
<sup>16</sup>Idem, Chapter 113.  
<sup>17</sup>Idem, Chapter 128, 131, 132, etc.  
<sup>18</sup>Idem, Chapter 115; Zechariah 3:1.  
<sup>19</sup>Ad Judaeos, Chapter 9.  
<sup>20</sup>Idem, Chapter 14.  
<sup>21</sup>Ecclesiasticus 46:1.  
<sup>22</sup>Matthew 1:21.  
<sup>23</sup>Div. Inst. Book 4, Ch. 14.  
<sup>24</sup>Luke 2:30.  
<sup>25</sup>Vol. 8 (1952), p. 61.  
<sup>26</sup>Isaiah 12:3.  
<sup>27</sup>John 4:13-14.  
<sup>28</sup>Edersheim, Life and Times, Vol. 2 pp. 728-729.  
<sup>29</sup>Idem, p. 736.  
<sup>30</sup>Ber. 56b; Sanh. 98a, etc.  
<sup>31</sup>Edersheim, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 159.

### Alvin Larson's Last Pony Express Ride

(Continued from page 241)

"I hate to send ye on, boy, but ye'll be all right?"

"Don't worry, Ben, I'll make out, Fred needs your help," Alvin told him cheerfully. Bad weather, Indians, or death, the mail had to go through. The other keeper had changed the *mochila*, and Alvin was soon on his way. In another hour he had reached the next station where he slept a few hours and then started on his way toward Fort Bridger.

\* \* \*

"Hey, Alvin," Bill called, shaking him by the shoulder. "Jim is due to ride in in about twenty minutes." He grinned down at Alvin. "Ready to hit the old trail again?"

Alvin grinned back, yawned noisily as Bill went out. He stretched his short, wiry body to its full length once, then swung slim, muscled legs over the side of the rude bunk standing against the log wall of the station. He yawned loudly once more. He would not sleep again for many hours. He pulled on his blue trousers and fancy leather boots, then washed at the bench in one corner of the room. He put on his red flannel shirt and buckled his belt with revolvers and a sheath knife.

At one end of the enclosure a huge fireplace stood with kettles of hot food suspended above the flames.

He helped himself then sat down and looked about him. On the walls were rough shelves stacked with food supplies and on the dirt floor bags of less perishable foodstuff. It was from these supplies that the post keepers fed themselves and the riders of the Pony Express trails. Guns stood ready and loaded at several portholes around the walls. A door leading to one of the stables stood open, and he could smell the corrals and hear the horses munching hay or stamping about.

Alvin put on his buckskin jacket and cap just in time to see clouds of dust rising in the east and hear the shouts of the pony rider approaching. In a few minutes Jim rode in.

"Any trouble back there?" asked one of the keepers putting on the *mochila*.

"Injuns gone huntin', I guess. Too hungry to hunt white man's scalp," Jim grinned, stretching his stiff limbs.

In minutes Alvin had mounted the horse, cool, brave, before the dangerous journey ahead of him.

"Good luck," they yelled.

In relays such as this the mail was kept on the move by the Pony Express.

Now looking toward the west Alvin saw dark clouds above the mountains. There were few human beings to see along the trail, none to visit with except the station keepers. Occasionally he passed a mule train carrying the heavier mail or an emigration train going to Utah or to the California gold fields. Some-