

A New Name  
*Isaiah 62: 2*

# III

What's in a name? Quite a lot really! Names, especially personal names are not just labels, 'add-ons' that can be discarded on a whim. Sure you can change your name by what is called *common usage*. I understand you can do that in Canada by simply telling your family, friends/employer the new name by which you'd like to be called. Or you can go the more formal route and apply for a legal name change. Most people will treasure their name and the family lineage in which it is found.

Some cultures and nations have interesting customs to follow in coming to the names of their children. For example, traditionally First Nations people had several names throughout their life. A baby would be given a name according to the earth's elements so: "Fire Child" or "Water Baby" and "Whispering Wind" came on the scene. But then, as the child grew other names were earned and added. "Fire Child" might earn the name "Buffalo Hunter" and "Whispering Wind" added "Sparkling Eyes."

When laws were passed requiring all First Nations be registered there was a problem for the government agents sent out to do so often couldn't make out the names of people as they were unable to spell those names they heard pronounced in a First Nations language. Often those agents used their own name as a surname for the First Nations person. That is why today you will find many First Nation people with a last name that is a really a common Christian (first) name. (Dan George, Harry Paul, Lawrence Joseph. Biblical names such as Job or David also entered the ranks.

God Almighty treasures his own Name. Although he is called by hundreds of names in the bible yet He has revealed himself by some names which are most unique. Once God met Moses from within the burning bush and gave him his mandate to go to Pharaoh telling him to let God's people go out of Egypt ( Exodus 3). Moses, who really didn't want to go said, " What if I tell the people of Israel, " *The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say?"* Then God said, " *I am who I am.*" "Say this to the people of Israel, " *I am has sent me to you.*" ( Ex. 3: 14). " I Am", It is the name Yahweh, or the LORD. It speaks volumes about that special relationship of God to his people called his *covenant*.

Within that covenant the LORD promised to give his faithful children a *new name!* Even early on in the history of his people God had changed the name of some of those children. Abram whose name meant " exalted father" had his name changed to Abraham, " Father of a multitude" or nations, when God made his covenant with him and his offspring. God changed the name of Jacob, one of Abraham's grandchildren to *Israel*, meaning " God contends" when Jacob had wrestled with God who had come down in human form ( Genesis 32).

But now there is this marvelous promise recorded in the prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 62. It is a prophecy which must have raised the spirits of all true believers in that prophet's days. For it told of a time which would surely come when the nations round about Israel would see the blessings of God's people. Blessings of righteousness and glory; the joy of their salvation. Salvation brought about by Israel's God and Saviour. It is a bright, a sparkling picture that was already developed in chapters 58 and 60.

In chapter 58: 8 the prophet said Israel's light would break forth *like the dawn*. And why? "*Because her light had come and the glory of the LORD had risen upon her.*"

As part of that marvelous prophecy we then read these words, "*And you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give.*" ( Isa. 62: 2).

A "new name". It is the result of the Lord "rising upon you." Its like the new clothes of which the prophet speaks in ch. 61:10. That "new name" speaks of a new relationship and an enhanced privilege which is knowing the word of the LORD. The prophet went on to speak of such a new name. He said, " You shall no more be termed 'Forsaken'". "And your land shall no more be termed 'Desolate.'"

" But you shall be called ' My Delight is in Her, and your land, 'Married'". Towards the end of the chapter God's people received more "new names." For they would be called, " The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord" ( v. 12a). They would be named, " Sought Out, a City Not Forsaken." ( v. 12b)

These beautiful names would not be Israel's automatically. For God's covenant, so rich with his promises is also exacting with his demands. Would the Lord grant them salvation, a right relationship to Him, again, after losing that status because of their stubborn disobedience, their immorality and their pride? They would receive it in the way of keeping to his statutes, his ordinances. By doing righteousness, that is by living in faith and in truth, God's gift of salvation would come to them in the Person of Jesus Christ.

One of the foremost things Isaiah mentioned as God's just requirement was that they would honor his commandments,

especially the keeping of the Sabbath Day as a day of devotion to the Lord. Then, said the LORD “ *I will give in my house and within my walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.*” ( Isa. 56: 5).

To be sure, this “new name” of which the prophet spoke so emphatically must be understood figuratively, as referring to the continuation, or perpetuation of *The Name of the LORD*. For that LORD would be a blessing to his faithful people. He would attach his name to theirs. Would he, allow his children to dwell in his house forever as the psalmist said he would? ( Psalm 23) Would God’s truth stay ( abide) in us and be with us forever? ( 2 John 1:2). The truth is that God’s faithful children are his, even from before they are born .

There are those who became Christians even at an older age. Yet their new name which centres on Christ became theirs forever for body and soul, in life and death they now belonged to Jesus Christ. In Christ Jesus heaven came to earth as it were.” By faith in him a new family, a new mankind was born. And God names his people in accordance with what they are namely, *righteous and holy*.

Dear listeners, do not despise this new name. There are those throughout the ages who prided themselves in those names to which they laid claim. Lengthy names involving the sovereign titles to lands, nations, and other possessions were ( and are) found among royalty.

So her majesty Queen Elizabeth II having no less than sixteen royal titles is officially known *in Canada as Her Majesty, Elizabeth the Second, by the Grace of God, Queen of Canada and of Her other realms and territories, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith.* And Prince Charles, Philip Arthur George, the Prince of Wales also owns a significant number of titles.

These however pale in comparison with the length of names that comprise that of Caesar Aurelian, who ruled about 1800 years ago .( I won't mention them all here for I'm liable to run out of breath, but by all means look them up on the NET).

Yet let's not be jealous of those who may legitimately be called Baron of Renfrew and Great Steward of Scotland or Gothicus Maximus and Imperator Caesar. Are you a Christian? Do you cherish your salvation, and so, your "new name" you received from Jesus Christ, who today is King of kings and Lord of lords? You are royalty too, of a kind and a lineage that is unbroken, except by unbelief. By grace, through faith you belong to a royal lineup of kings and queen, princes and princesses whom Christ Himself calls, "*My Holy People. The Redeemed of the LORD.*" Were you baptized, you were immersed into the Name of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

That you might live to give him, royal praise and holy adoration as a children and children of the crown. If you don't already know him and rest and abide in his love, may you come to do so. There is a palace and a crown waiting for all who truly belong to his family. And the King of kings who at the same time is The Good Shepherd, will usher you in. For his is the power and the glory and dominion, for ever. Amen.

Till next time may God be with you and thank you so much for  
listening!

