

Jesus' New Name and Why We Need to Know It!

Description

A study related to the SDA
Sabbath School Lesson for 2021, 2nd Quarter
The Promise: God's Everlasting Covenant
Week 4
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This week's lesson is entitled, "An Everlasting Covenant" and takes a look at the names of God. The "Week at a Glance" segment for Sabbath afternoon asks,

"What is the name of God? What does it mean? What was the significance of the names God used to identify Himself to Abram? What names did He use to identify Himself? Why did God change Abram's name to Abraham? Why are names important?" Sabbath School Quarterly Lesson, Saturday, April 24, 2021

So, today we will take a look at a few facts concerning the name of God in its relation to present truth for today, in particular, the new name of Jesus.

It might come as a surprise to some that Jesus would have a new name today, but this is exactly what Ellen White prophesied when she said,

"The 144,000 were all sealed, and perfectly united. On their foreheads was written, 'God, New Jerusalem,' and a glorious star containing Jesus' new name. At our happy, holy state the wicked were enraged, and would rush violently up to lay hands on us to thrust us into prison, when we would stretch forth the hand in the name of the Lord, and they would fall helpless to the ground. Then it was that the synagogue of Satan knew that God had loved us who could wash one another's feet, and salute the brethren with a holy kiss, and they worshiped at our feet." Ellen White, *Christian Experience and Teachings*, p. 58

Interesting, isn't it, that the 144,000 are sealed in their foreheads with Jesus' new name? Since the seal of God is a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually (LDE 219.4), we should probably make every effort to know what Jesus' new name is so we can settle into it in time to be a part of the 144,000!

This is right in line with the admonition Ellen gave us to strive with everything we have to be a part of the 144,000. She said,

“Let us strive with all the power that God has given us to be among the hundred and forty-four thousand. And let us do all that we can to help others to gain heaven.” Ellen White, *The Review and Herald*, March 9, 1905.

From these few quotes from Ellen, we should be able to see how important it is for us to care to know the truth of Jesus' new name, as it is a part of the seal on the foreheads of the 144,000. And it has been revealed to us. We need to learn to not be satisfied with what we presently know in regard to “bible truth.” We must be vigilant in the search for new light.

Ellen White said,

“The truth of God is progressive; it is always onward, going from strength to a greater strength, from light to a greater light. We have every reason to believe that the Lord will send us increased truth, for a great work is yet to be done. In our knowledge of truth, there is first a beginning in our understanding of it, then a progression, then completion; first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear. Much has been lost because our ministers and people have concluded that we have had all the truth essential for us as a people; but such a conclusion is erroneous and in harmony with the deceptions of Satan; for truth will be constantly unfolding.” Ellen White, *ST* May 26, 1890, par. 2

There is quite a bit to this constantly unfolding topic, but we offer you here a place to start.

And what better place to start than Revelation, where all books meet and end? (See *Acts of the Apostles*, page 585) In this book, John the Revelator also tells us that Jesus will write His new name upon those who overcome sin in their lives. Revelation 3:12 reads,

“He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.” Revelation 3:12

In Revelation 3:12, the overcomer will have Jesus’ new name written on him or her. So we can see that John’s vision is similar to that of Ellen White’s of the 144,000 having Jesus’ new name written in their foreheads. Each of these visions provide some different bits of information for our study.

We already know that the one speaking in Revelation 3:12 is Jesus. Here, Jesus tells us what He is going to do with those that overcome – He is going to build a temple with them for His Father. Since, as we already noted from Ellen, all books meet and end in the Revelation, we should expect to see this activity of Christ prophesied somewhere else in scripture. And this place is in Zechariah 6:12-13. It reads,

“Thus says the Lord of hosts, saying:
‘Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH!
From His place He shall branch out,
And He shall build the temple of the Lord;
Yes, He shall build the temple of the Lord.
He shall bear the glory,
And shall sit and rule on His throne;
So He shall be a priest on His throne,
And the counsel of peace shall be between them both.’”

Here we see a man building the temple of the Lord, just like in John’s revelation of Jesus. His name is “Branch” in Zechariah’s vision. In Zechariah, Branch is both a ruling king and an interceding priest, just as Jesus is in Revelation 1:5 and Revelation 2:1.

Now we can clearly see from these two visions that the man whose name is “Branch” is Jesus Christ. Also, according to Zechariah 6, “Branch” will be Jesus’ name in particular at the time he builds the temple of the Lord. Ellen White equates the time at which God’s people are sealed in their foreheads with the new name of Jesus to the time of the sealing of the 144,000. Therefore, we can conclude that the time in which Jesus’ builds the Temple of the Lord in Zechariah is the same as the time during which the 144,000 are sealed. They are to be the overcomers whom Jesus will make pillars in the temple of his God as he says in Revelation 3:12.

Now there is another place a new name is spoken of in Revelation, and that is Revelation 2:17 where Jesus says,

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.” Revelation 2:17

Here we have a new name written on a stone that will be given to him who overcomes his sin. Zechariah 3 gives the prophecy for this revelation. Before we read it, let’s read something Ellen White said regarding it. She said,

“Zechariah’s vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God’s people in the closing up of the great day of atonement.”
Ellen White, Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, p. 472

It is important to realize that the time Ellen is speaking of here is “the closing up of the great day of atonement.” We know that the great day of atonement started in 1844 with the Judgment of the Dead in the Heavenly Sanctuary. But here, Ellen is speaking of the “closing up” of the great day of atonement, which clearly is the last portion of this period. About this period of time Ellen said,

“Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. Soon—none know how soon—it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review. At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Saviour’s admonition: ‘Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.’ Mark 13:33. ‘If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.’ Revelation 3:3.” Ellen White, Christ in His Sanctuary, p. 188

So this last portion of the great day of atonement must be after the judgment of the dead has passed to the judgment of the living. We know the sealing of the 144,000 is in the time of the judgment of the living, during the closing up of the great day of atonement, since the 144,000 are “living saints” (EW 14). To show this truth of the Judgment of the Living from scripture, Jesus said, “And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Revelation 22:11-12. Obviously, if Jesus comes for us when people are alive on the earth, and He has a reward for them at that time, they must have been previously judged in the heavenly sanctuary while alive on the earth in order to receive His reward when He returns.

Okay, so, back to the stone in Revelation 2:17 that has a new name written on it which will be given to those who overcome their sin, and the prophecy that applies to it in Zechariah 3, which Ellen said we need to pay particular attention to in these last of the last days.

Let’s read again Revelation 2:17. It reads,

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.” Revelation 2:17

Now Zechariah 3 reads,

“Then he [the angel] showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. ...
‘Hear, O Joshua, the high priest,
You and your companions who sit before you,
For they are a wondrous sign;
For behold, I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH.
For behold, the stone
That I have laid before Joshua:
Upon the stone are seven eyes.
Behold, I will engrave its inscription,’
Says the Lord of hosts,
‘And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. ‘” Zechariah 3:1, 8-9

Just like in Revelation 2:17, we have an engraved stone. This stone represents Jesus, because when Zechariah is told to behold “the Branch,” he is in the next breath told to behold “the stone” indicating that to behold “the Branch” is to behold “the stone!” And of course, we know Jesus is symbolized as a stone elsewhere (see for example Acts 4:11). Furthermore, this stone has seven eyes, much like the description of Jesus in Revelation 5:6 being the lamb with seven eyes.

Now this stone in Zechariah 3 has engraving on it. Revelation 2:17 tells us also of a stone with something written on it...it is a new name. The only new name ever referred to in Revelation is Jesus’ new name.

Revelation brings clarity to what is engraved on this stone with 7 eyes. It is the new name of Jesus, which, according to the context of Zechariah 3, is “Branch.” It is a stone that the overcomers of sin are to receive. Additionally, by connecting Revelation 3:12 with Zechariah 6:12-13, we can see that Jesus’ new name is “Branch” at the time He builds the temple of the Lord! The fact that God has revealed the scriptural truth of Jesus’ new name shows that we must be in the closing up of the great day of atonement. Now is the time to put away our sins – to overcome in the strength of Christ, so that we can have Jesus’ new name, along with other truths, written on our foreheads.

As we said, there is much more to understand concerning these prophecies as they relate to the present truth for today. Please explore this website for further study!