

On the Evolution of Jewish Names

By Eleazar ha-Levi

eleazar_halevi@yahoo.com

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to trace the evolution of Jewish names from the earliest Biblical names to the vernacular names used throughout the medieval period to encourage future research and as an aid to those wishing to submit a Jewish name. The lists of names referred to in this article are from articles found on the Medieval Names Archive or from my own research as published in various proceedings of Known World Heraldic and Scribal Symposiums.

I. Jewish Names in the Ancient World

A. Biblical Names

There are four types of Hebrew names in the earliest books of the Jewish Bible.¹

- **Theophoric names**, which contained the name of G-d, such as Eleazar (my G-d is my help) or Batya (daughter of G-d). The most frequent elements in such names are **אל** (*el* -- for Elohim) and the tetragrammaton, the four-letter Hebrew word that is pronounced in English as Jehovah.² The latter is used in abridged form, **יהו** (*yeho*) and **יו** (*yo*) at the beginning; **יהוה** (*yahu*) and **יה** (*yah*) at the end, of the word. The context of theophoric names is that G-d: (1) has given, created/made, or added to the child named; or (2) has granted, helped, saved, and had mercy, spared, restored justice to, or cured the child, or that He may do so.
- **Names referred to the specifics of the birth**. Other names referred to the specifics of the birth. When their child was born, Sarah (age 90) told Abraham (age 100) to call him Isaac (they will laugh) because “G-d hath made laughter for me; everyone that heareth [that a woman in her 80s had borne a child] will laugh on account of me.” (Genesis 21:6). Similarly, Moses named his son Gershom (literally, “a stranger there”), saying, “For I have been a stranger (**גל**) in a strange land.” (Exodus 2:22).
- **Children were named for plants or animals**. (Tamar = date palm; Rachel = ewe; Zipporah = bird; Ari=Lion).
- **Names described an attribute or characteristic**. (David=Beloved or Naomi=Sweet).

Biblical names were not repeated, even such important names as Abraham Isaac, Moses, David, or Solomon. Lauterbach notes that the name Abraham was not used and the name Moses was seldom used even in Talmudic times.³ Derda Tomaz suggests that such names were considered too holy to be used.⁴

During the Babylonian Captivity (586-538 B.C.E.), which followed the destruction of the Temple of Solomon and the Northern Kingdom of Israel, some Jews began to adopt a second, foreign names. Notable examples of this are Esther and Mordechai (from the Babylonian gods Ishtar and Morduk),⁵ whose Hebrew names were Hadassah and Malachi. Daniel and his friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, were also known as Baelteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. However, these Babylonian names are slave names: Baelteshazzar means “protect the life of the king”; Shadrach, “brightness”; Meshach, “little sheep”, and Abed-nego, “slave of (the god) Nabu.”⁶ They were forced names and should not be considered for registration as Jewish names.

During the Captivity, Jews also adopted the new names Haggai and Shabbatai. Haggai (born at the time of a Jewish festival) reflects the importance given to the rituals of the Jewish holidays during the exile from the Temple in Jerusalem. During this same period, religious leaders, such as the prophets Ezekiel and Nehemiah, stressed the importance of the Sabbath, saying that the Captivity had been the Lord’s punishment for the Jews neglect of the Sabbath⁷

Following the return, Jews adopted Aramaic as their spoken language. At the same time, they replaced their former writing system with Aramaic script, which is now known as the Hebrew alphabet. As a part of this

Aramaic names found their way into Jewish use. Names from this time or later ending in “ai”, such as Haggai, Shabbetai, Shammai, and Zaccai are of Aramaic origin. In other cases, the Aramaic form of Hebrew names was adopted. This includes Akiva and Jose, the Aramaic forms of Jacob (Ya-akov) and Joseph). Other Aramaic names include Abba (father), Halafta (unsteady), Hanina (compassionate), and Hisda (gracious).⁸

B. Usable Biblical Names

There are over 1500 names in the Jewish Bible, but Joseph Schatzmiller, Professor of Jewish History at the Duke University, in his general survey of medieval European Jewish names notes that medieval Jews used only a fairly small sub-set of Old Testament names, and not always the expected ones.⁹ While there are some differences between the names used by Ashkenazic (in the Middle Ages: English, French, German, and Eastern European) Jews and Sephardic (Spanish/Portuguese, Mediterranean, and Middle Eastern) Jews, for the most part, the same 150 or so names are used.¹⁰

In the Talmud, the great compilation of Jewish Law, names were believed to determine a person’s character.¹¹ One Talmudic sage is said to have claimed that an innkeeper was a wicked man purely from hearing his name, and he was proven correct.¹² Giving a child a good name strengthened the soul and the memory of the person the child was named for. A child with a good name might hope to receive all the blessings due to the ancestor with that name, while the child with a bad name might be fated to receive all the evil decreed against the ancestor with that name.¹³ Rabbi Isaac Luria (1534-1572) explained that, when a father names a child, G-d speaks through him, and the spirits, thus, treat the name as a holy command for good or ill.¹⁴ For these reasons, the Sages of the Talmud decreed that “bad” names should not be given. This decree was accepted from the Talmudic Age down, almost, to the present day.

These practices changed with the advent of political Zionism in the late 1900 century. The Zionists wanted to rebel against Diaspora culture in every way. This included re-introducing Biblical and other ancient names whose original user might have offended the moralists of the Talmud, but whose story appealed to people desiring to build a nation.

For example, consider Gideon, whose story is told in chapters 6-8 of the book of *Judges*, and who is best remembered by the phrase “Gideon’s band.” The phrase refers to the small band of men that Gideon led successfully against a far larger force of Midianites.

In the Aggadah, the nonlegal or narrative material in the Talmud, Gideon is considered one of the least worthy of the Judges (Rosh Hashanah 25a and b). Some of his actions bordered on the blasphemous. He had a metal ephod, an oracular garment worn by the High Priest made. He wore it himself, and, after his death, it was treated as a holy relic. Although he refused an offer to be king, he also named a son (one of seventy children) named Abimelech, which means “my father is king.”¹⁵ For these reasons, the Sages of the Talmud said that his name was unsuitable.

All that the Zionists cared about was that Gideon had assembled a small band of Jews who drove out a larger army of foreign invaders, something that they very much wished to do. They, therefore resurrected the name, and, as political Zionism became a major movement adopted by Jewish groups throughout the world, Gideon and other “Zionist” names were adopted for use everywhere and by all groups.¹⁶

In Academy of St. Gabriel Report 1786, ‘Iberian Jewish Female Names Circa 950,’ Master Arval Benicoeur stated that because of the small number of biblical names used by Jews in period, “we do not recommend using a biblical name without evidence that it was actually used in period.”¹⁷

I have recommended more than once on OSCAR (the Laurel Sovereign of Arms’ *Online System for Commentary and Response*) that, in keeping with the Talmudic decrees, a Jewish name not be accepted solely because it appeared in the Bible. Previous Laurels have chosen to disagree. However, in the July 2013 Letter of

Acceptances and Returns, Master Gabriel Kjotvason, the current Laurel Sovereign of Arms, said the following in his acceptance of the name Elisheva al-'Ass{a-}la:

“The biblical name allowance is intended to apply to most “important” characters; it simply disallows those names that appear only once in a list of people. The wife of an important man like Aaron is important enough that her name would be allowed. Moreover, Elisheva is actually found in Beider's Dictionary of Ashkenazic Given Names as the name of a woman from Mainz in 1223. Thus, clearly medieval Jews in at least one location thought her name an appropriate woman's name.”¹⁸

The key parts of this decision are (1) that the biblical name allowance is intended to apply to “important”, and not minor names that only appear once in a list, and (2) one good measure of that importance is that the name can be documented as having been used by Jews in Period.

This decision eliminates many names, such as the various “begats”, from consideration. However, some names are not eliminated. The name of Haman, the villain of the Book of Esther, is an important name, but for a Jewish family to name a newborn son by that name would be the equivalent of naming him Adolph Hitler.

The term “important” is very subjective, and giving the designation to any less than obvious name would be open to debate. However, giving the actual use of the name by Jews in Period makes it far less subjective. A documentable name is a documentable name, after all. And what can be a better measure of the value attached to a given Biblical name than the fact that Jews in Period gave it to their own children?

C. Greek and Roman Names

In 333 B.C.E.¹⁹, Alexander the Great conquered the Persian Empire, taking ancient Palestine as part of his prize. According to the historian Josephus, Alexander visited Jerusalem after the conquest and granted a great degree of religious freedom to his Jewish subjects.²⁰ It also led to adoption of Alexander (and the female Alexandra) as Jewish names. The freedom granted by Alexander was continued by his successors, the Seleucid dynasty and it led to a high degree of assimilation among the Jewish population,²¹ including the adoption of Greek names. In addition to Alexander, one finds Antiginos, Dositheos, Hyrkanos, Petros (Peter), Philippos, Theodoros, and Tryphon, all names mentioned in the Talmud. In addition, the Greek form of biblical names Yitchak, Yehuda, Levi, and Shimon (Isak, Juda, Levitas, and Simon) appear between 330 B.C.E. and 200 C.E.²²

During the first two centuries of the Common Era, Latin names appear. Examples from the Talmud include Agrippa, Drusus, Julianus, Rufus, and Titus. Some Jews had both a Hebrew name and a Greek or Roman one. The best known of these is Saul of Tarsis, who was also known as Paulus or Paul the Apostle. Greek and Roman names so predominated that only about 15 percent of the names in the Jewish catacombs of ancient Rome are Semitic or have Semitic elements.²³ One of the Sages of the Talmud complained that “[t]he majority of Jews in the Diaspora have the same names as gentiles.”²⁴

Examples of Names from the Jewish Catacombs of 2 nd Century Rome ²⁵	
Type of Name	Examples
<i>Latin Names (46.1percent of all names)</i>	
• Male Single Names	Abundantius, Dativus, Gaudentius, Marinus, Proculus, Ursacius
• Female Single Names	Aelia, Damnata, Iulia, Marosa, Primativa, Simplicia
• Double Male Names	Aelius Primitivus, Caelius Quintus, Flavius Iulianus, Siculo Sabinus
• Female Double Names	Aurelia Celerina, Domitia Felicitas, Iulia Marcella, Sabina Palma
• Male Triple Names	Gaius Furfanius Iulianus, Lucius Maecius Victorinus
<i>Greek Names (31.8 percent)</i>	
• Male Single Names	Alexander, Epagathus, Himerus, Meander, Socus, Xanthias
• Female Single Names	Ammias, Dionysias, Hermione, Poemenis, Tryllis

Examples of Names from the Jewish Catacombs of 2 nd Century Rome ²⁵	
Type of Name	Examples
<i>Semitic Names (13.1 percent of all names)</i>	
• Male Single Names	Beniamin, Iacob, Lazar, Sabbatius, Zortasius
• Female Single Names	Aster, Mara, Rebecca, Sara
<i>Latin/Greek Names (6.4 percent)</i>	
• Male Double Names	Agris Euangelus, Caelius Anastasius, Pompeius Eutyches, Sempronius Basileus
• Female Double Names	Aurelia Althea, Fabia Asia, Iulia Aphrodisia, Naevia Cyria, Varia Zotice
• Male Triple Names	Atronius Tullianus Eusebius, Marcus Quintus Alexus, Quintus Claudius Sysnesius
• Female Triple Names	Iulia Irene Arista
<i>Latin/Semitic Names (2.2 percent)</i>	
• Male Double Names	Arelus Ioses, Claudius Ioses, Pompeius Ionata
• Female Double Names	Appidia Lea, Fabia Mauria, Pticia Aster, Titinia Anna
• Male Triple Names	Lucius Domitius Abbas
• Female Triple Names	Lucia Maecia Sabbitis

D. Talmudic and Early Medieval Era Practices

Custom of naming a child for after its grandparent began in period of Second Temple. In the Hellenistic period, repetitions are found in list of High Priests, the Maccabean rulers, and, later, the family of Hillel. Gradually, the practice spread through the whole of the Jewish people.²⁶

As stated earlier, such important Biblical names as Abraham Isaac, Moses, David, or Solomon were seldom used. These names came into common use in the Gaonic age (roughly 600-1100 C.E.)²⁷ Derda Tomaz suggests this practice was changed by contact with Muslims, who freely used the name Mohammed.²⁸ Bareket notes that the Biblical names used by Jews in Cairo during the Fatimid period (10th-11th century C.E.) were those which appeared in their Arabic form in the Quran. Jews, hearing these Biblical names used by their Moslem neighbors began to give them to their own children. The same, I suggest was also true on Christian Europe. As Christians adopted Biblical names from their Old Testament, the Jews in these areas resumed using them as well.^{29,30}

Arabic names began replacing Aramaic names following the Moslem conquests of the 7th and 8th century C.E. conquests. Jews used the Arabic forms of Biblical names, including Ibrahim, Ishma'il, Ishaq, Ya'qub, Yusaf, Ayyub (Job), Da'ud and Sulayman. Classical Arabic names, such as Ghulayb, Hasan, Huysayn, and, even, Muhammad were also used.³¹

With the re-popularization of Biblical names, the custom grew of giving male Jewish babies two names. The first was a sacred Jewish name (*shem ha-quodesh*), to be used when the boy became bar mitzvah (he was considered an adult and responsible for his own actions under Jewish Law), when he was called up to read a portion of the Torah, and when he married. The *shem ha-quodesh* was given one the eighth day after birth, the same time as the baby was circumcised. A second secular name, called a *kinnui* in Hebrew, was also given to the boy. Some Ashkenazic Jews gave the *kinnui* in the synagogue on the first Sabbath when the newborn left its parent's house, the fourth or fifth week after birth. The same time that Jewish Law called for a baby girl to be named.³² In the twelfth century, Rabbi Judah ben Samuel He-Hasid (1150-1217) decreed that the use of non-Jewish names was so widespread that every Jewish boy must be given a purely Jewish name at his circumcision.³³

Girls were not given a *shem ha-quodesh* because, in Period, they did not have a bar mitzvah or participate in the synagogue service, such as read Torah.

II. Jewish Names in Period (Standards for Evaluation of Names and Armory)

(Appendix A)

	Double Given Names	Locative	Patronymic	Other Relationship	Descriptive/ Occupational	Dictus	Double Bynames	Order
Hebrew (A)	(B)	(C)	(A)	(D)	(E)		(F)	
Vernacular(A)								

A. The Form of the Jewish Name

The Talmud³⁴ gives the basic form as:

[Name 1] son/daughter of [Name 2 (father)] (Standard; All Names)
 {son/daughter of Name 3 (grandfather)} {Descriptor} {Priestly Byname} (Optional: See Below)

1. Son/Daughter

The patronymic bynames are formed using ben [Name 2] "son of [Name 2]," and bat [Name 2] (Sephardic) or bas (Ashkenazic) "daughter of [Name 2]." The words "bas" and "bat" are the same Hebrew word בַּת (bet tov). Sephardic Jews (Jews from the Iberian Peninsula, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East) pronounce the tav as a "t", while Ashkenazic Jews (northern and eastern European Jews) pronounce it as an "s." In Arabic territories, the Arabic cognates *ibn* (son of) and *bint* (daughter of) were sometimes used, rather than *ben* or *bat*. Vernacular bynames often follow the Hebrew forms (so mostly patronymic), but are generally written following the standards for the local vernacular.

Catalan and Castilian Jews (southwestern France/northwestern Spain) did not always use "ben", meaning "son of" when forming names. (See the Medieval Names Archive article, "Jews in Catalonia: 1250 to 1400" by Juliana de Luna at www.s-gabriel.org/names/juliana/catalan-jews/.) A number of these names have an origin in southernmost France, near territories where Catalan was the spoken language. For example, Bendich Isaac of Arles might actually have been Bedich ben Isaac of Arles.

In Italy, the standard form Given Name son/daughter of Father's Name was translated into Italian using both Hebrew names and *kinnui* in their Italian form with the Italian "di" used between the two names. Examples of this include: Giacobbe di Moise (Jacob ben Moshe) or Leone di Angelo (Judah ben Mordechai). The form was also used for women: Diamante di Maimon Abramo di Joshua Tarmo (Diamante bat Maimon Avraham ben Joshua Tarmo).³⁵ In 13th and 14th century Spain, Jews used *fijo de* (son of)³⁶ and *filia* or *filla de* (daughter of)³⁷

2. Optional Portions of a Name

If there were more than one person in the town with the same name, the grandfather's name and a descriptor would be added. A personal descriptor and/or the priestly byname "the Kohane" or "the Levite" could also be added, if applicable and if there were still a chance of confusion.

In both Hebrew and vernacular, names could include three – and, very occasionally more than three – generations.

Given Name son of Father's Given Name son of Grandfather's Given Name.

Any or all of these names could have a byname attached, as will be discussed later.

Even for simpler names (X son of Y), not all parts of the name need be used. A man whose full name was Joseph ben Simon ha-Kohen of Rome might also be known as:

Joseph of Rome;
Joseph ha-Kohen;
Joseph ha-Kohen of Rome;

Joseph ben Simon;
Joseph ben Simon ha-Kohen or;
Joseph ben Simon of Rome.

B. Double Names

Although rare, some Jews in Period, both male and female, had double given names. Beider states that Ashkenazic double Hebrew names, both part of the *shem ha-qodesh*, go back to the 13th century.³⁸

Double Names from the 13 th -14 th Centuries (Names are German Transcriptions from Hebrew) ³⁹		
Male Names		
Name	City or Town	Time Period
Juda Asher	Erfurt	1285
Elieser Hiskia	Cologne	1308
Perez Juda	Nürnberg	1296-1342
Female Names		
Name	City or Town	Time Period
Bona Ester	Nürnberg	1296-1342
Jiska Vromut	Nürnberg	1296-1342
Hanlin Hevlin	Nürnberg	1349

Beider also notes that the percentage of those with double given names was small; about three percent in Prague and Frankfurt, and some sixteen percent in Hamburg for the period 1608-1800.⁴⁰

Examples of Jewish Double Given Names from the Medieval Names Archive ⁴¹	
Name	Source
French Male: Abba Mari ben Moise Hayarhi (Hebrew) French Female: Alyes Doucete a Paris (Vernacular) German Male: Bonus Astrux (Vernacular)	“Jewish Given Names Found in <i>Les Noms Des Israélites en France</i> ” by Aryanhwy merch Catmael www.ellipsis.cx/~liana/names/jewish/levy/
Female and Male Names: Oro Sol eshet Yaakov Naaman	“Jewish Women's Names in 13th to 15th Century Navarre” by Julie Kahan www.s-gabriel.org/names/juetta/nav_intro.html
Male Names: Giuseppe Menasce, Jehudah Angelo Cerusi	“Names of Jews in Rome In the 1550s” compiled by Yehoshua ben Haim haYerushalmi (MKA Zachary Kessin) www.s-gabriel.org/names/yehoshua/rome_article.html

C. Locative Bynames

The great majority of bynames were locative.⁴² This was true for both Hebrew and vernacular names. Countries and regions were often referred to by Hebrew names or Hebrew versions of vernacular names. The name *Ha-Ashkenazi* referred to a Jew of northern or Eastern European descent, while *ha-Sephardi* meant a Jew of Spanish, North African or Middle Eastern descent. Italians Jews, *Italki* or *Italyani*, having been there since near Biblical times (the Maccabean Wars circa 150 B.C.E.), formed a third branch. *Gallico* and *Zarfati* referred to Jews of French origin. (*Zarfat* was the Hebrew term for central and northern France.). *Lombardi* referred to Jews from the Lombard region of Italy. *Yavani* referred to Jews from Greece, while Egyptian Jews were called *Mitzri*: *Mizrachi* refers to a Jew from the (Middle) East. *Israeli* referred to a person from the Holy Land, as it was then called, and *Yerushalmi* was used for a person from the Holy City. The words *al-Basri* and *Al-Baghdadi* served for persons from those two Arabian cities.

For other locations, such as towns or cities, the Hebrew prefix “mi-“ meaning “from” would be attached to the place name.⁴³ Thus:

Reb Binyamin haNadiv miVoliere [haNadiv=the noble or the philanthropic] [miVoliere = from Voliere]
 Reb Avraham haSofer miCarentan [haSofer = the scribe] [miCarentan = from Carentan]

“Names from Hebrew Chronicles of the 10th to 13th Centuries” by Julie Stampnitzky
www.s-gabriel.org/names/juetta/crusades.html

D. Priestly Relationships

1. The Definite Article

The definite article in Hebrew is the prefix “ha” (or “heh” for words beginning with certain Hebrew letters). The prefix is attached to the word it refers to. It is NEVER a separate word. When the words are written using the Latin alphabet, this linkage should continue, so that the prefix is still connected to the other word. The prefix may or may not be capitalized, and a hyphen may or may not be used. Thus, Ha-Cohen, ha-Cohen, HaCohen, and haCohen are all correct. Separating the two into Ha Cohen or ha Cohen are both incorrect.⁴⁴

2. Kohane and Levi as Priestly Byames

SENA Appendix A refers to “Kohane” and “Levi” as “tribal names. This is incorrect. First, the Kohanim aren’t a tribe. They are a clan, the descendents of Aaron, Moses’ older brother and the first High Priest.⁴⁵ The Levi were a tribe, but in the division of the land of Canaan among the Twelve Tribes, they were not given any territory. Instead, they were chosen to guard the Sanctuary and the Law. Both Kohanes and Levites have specific duties, responsibilities, and limitations under Jewish Law, the Kohanes more than the Levites. It is a sin under Jewish Law to pretend to be a Kohane or Levite if one is not.

Second, The Talmud, in tractate *Baba Bartha 172a* states that “And, if [their names] are [alike] to the third [generation], they add [some personal] description; and if their [personal] descriptions are alike, they write ‘priest.’” (Brackets are those of the translator.)

A footnote says “If one of these was a priest, or some similar patronymic. e.g., Levite.” Thus, Cohen and Levi should be referred to a priestly names, not tribal names.⁴⁶

Third, Kohane and Levi are used in ways that the names of the other Twelve Tribes were used. There are no cases of Yitzchak ha-Benjaminite or Dovid the Ephraimite.

In Arabic countries, the phrases, al-kūhān, al-Kūhīn, and Kūhīn were the words to signify a Kohane.⁴⁷

3. Female Names

The priestly bynames, Kohane and Levi, could not be directly used as part of a woman’s name, since women could not be priests, nor could they participate in the synagogue service. For example, Sara ha-Levi would not be allowed. However, the name could be used indirectly; for example, Sara bat Chayyim ha-Levi. Sara is not considered the Levi; she is considered the daughter of Chayyim the Levi.

A woman’s name could also describe other relationships to a man than his daughter. She could be referred to as his wife or his widow. “Eshet” (Sephardic) or “Eshes” (Ashkenazic) is the Hebrew word for “Wife (of)” or “Woman of.” “Almanah” is the Hebrew word for “Widow (of)”

Examples of Other Female “Relationship” Names from the Medieval Names Archive ⁴⁸	
Name	Source
First Crusade (1096) Mainz and Nuess, Germany Maras Guta <i>eshes</i> Rabbana R[eb] Yitzchak b[en] R[eb] Moshe Maras Rachel haZekenah <i>eshes</i> R[eb] Shlomo haKohen	“Names from Hebrew Chronicles of the 10th to 13th Centuries“ by Julie Stampnitzky www.s-gabriel.org/names/juetta/firstcr.html
Oro Sol <i>eshet</i> Yaakov Naaman Ceti, <i>uxore</i> (wife – Latin) Juçe Cohen Çaragoçano Dona Cima, <i>muger de</i> (wife of – Spanish) Salomon Alborge Bellita, <i>vidua</i> (widow – Latin), judia d'Arguedas	“Jewish Women's Names in 13th to 15th Century Navarre” by Julie Kahan www.s-gabriel.org/names/juetta/nav_intro.html
Gracia <i>femme</i> de David à Toulouse Nassi Gracia à Bordeaux, <i>épouse</i> de Christoval Mendès Lya <i>uxor</i> Vidas Arar à Marseille	“Jewish Given Names Found in <i>Les Noms Des Israélites en France</i> ” by Aryanhwy merch Catmael (Sara L. Uckelman) www.ellipsis.cx/~liana/names/jewish/levy/
Perna <i>wife of</i> Giuseppe di Samuele Rosa <i>the widow of</i> Angelo di David	“Names of Jews in Rome In the 1550s” compiled by Yehoshua ben Haim haYerushalmi (MKA Zachary Kessin) www.s-gabriel.org/names/yehoshua/rome_article.html
Gh{a-}liya <i>the wife of</i> Is{h.}{a-}q the Jew Rifqa <i>wife of</i> Y{u-}sif	“Jewish Names in Ottoman Court Records (16th C Jerusalem)” by Mari Elspeth nic Bryan medievalscotland.org/kmo/Jerusalem/

E. Occupational and Descriptive Bynames Bynames

1. Religious Occupations

The *Chazzan* (in Arabic, *al-dallāla*) is the person who led the congregation in the singing of certain prayers. A *M'lammed* is a teacher or tutor of young children. A *Dayyan* was a judge who heard cases under Jewish civil law. (Medieval Jewish communities were internally self-governing with their own courts and officials.) In Arabic speaking countries, *al-dayyān* meant “the rabbi.” A *Darshan* or “preacher” wrote and delivered homilies in a synagogue on the Sabbath.

Other minor religious occupations also became bynames. The *Shammish* was the beadle (usher) at the synagogue. The *Ballan* was the keeper of the mikvah, the Jewish ritual bath. *Ha-Shochet* was the person who slaughtered animals for a community. He (although women sometimes performed this function) was trained in the Jewish law relating to the slaughtering of animals and the koshering of meat.⁴⁹

2. Community Leaders

Community leaders whose titles became bynames included: the *Parnas* (warden), who oversaw the collection and distribution of communal charity; the *Rosh* (head) was the chief officer of the community, sometimes with the responsibility of affixing his name to legal documents; and the *Gabbai*, another elected congregational leader, possibly the treasurer.⁵⁰

Sofer means “scribe”. The profession was so important to the Jewish religion that the Talmud (Sanhedrin 17b) says that no scholar should dwell in a town that does not have a scribe. In some places, the Jewish community appointed a *sofer* as a clerk to keep the records of the community meetings and write official documents and act as notary.⁵¹ *Lavlar* means “clerk” and may have applied to this community functionary.

Nakdan means “punctuator”. The term refers to a person expert in the various sets of vowel markings that evolved in the early Middle Ages as part of the new study of Hebrew language and grammar. Northern European, French, Spanish, and Italian Jewry each had their own systems of markings. A *Nakdan* would prepare documents or put punctuation in a work that some other scribe had written. (Grammarian and the Italian term *Emundante*, “corrector” were used and probably also referred to a *Nakdan*. A *Kotave* is a scribe/calligrapher.

3. Other Occupations

Although *ha-Rophe* (in Arabic, *al-Hakīm*) means “healer”, the term should not be automatically taken as “physician”. It can also apply to a herbalist, an apothecary, or a barber-surgeon, while *Mayaledet*, midwife (or female healer), was an accepted byname for women.⁵² *Aptgar* is a German name meaning apothecary.

Chozah can be translated as astronomer, astrologer, prophet, or seer. *Paroosh* is an obscure term meaning “recluse” or “ascetic.”⁵³

4. Arabic Occupational Bynames

A partial list of Arabic occupational bynames used by Jews include: *al-adamī* the tanner (one who separates the fat from the hide), *al-haddād* the blacksmith, *al-jawkhī* the cloth merchant, *al-mubayyid* the tinner, *al-najjār* the carpenter, *al-sayrajāni* the sesame oil dealer, and *al-Sukkerī* – the sugar maker.⁵⁴ Female occupational bynames included *al-khayyāta* (the dressmaker) and *al-Mua'llima* (the schoolmistress).⁵⁵

5. Physical Descriptors

Finally, there were physical descriptors. One Italian scribe referred to himself as “short” or “small.” A second, probably referring to his scribal ability, used the Hebrew word for “graceful”. Descriptors in the English list include: “bandy-legged” or “bowlegged”, “the fat”, “tall”, and “short”. Another, “nosey”, may refer to a long nose or to excessive curiosity.

F. Double Bynames

The form of Hebrew names (X child of Y, or X child of Y child of Z) allows for a byname for each generation. For example,

Chaim ha-Rophe ben Shlomo ha Chazzan ben Avraham ha-Dayan ha-Kohane.

Examples of Multiple Byname Names from the Medieval Names Archive⁵⁶

Name	Source
Mar Yitzchak haTzadik b[en] R[eb] David haParnas Maras Rachel haZekenah eshes R[eb] Shlomo haKohen R[eb] Moshe heChazan = R[eb] Moshe b[en] R[eb] Elazar haKohen heChazan R[eb] Chizkiyah haNagid b[en] R[eb]r Reuven miBovart = Chizkiyah haNadiv	“Names from Hebrew Chronicles of the 10th to 13th Centuries” by Julie Stampnitzky www.s-gabriel.org/names/juetta/crusades.html
Abraham le Mestre et Baru le Mestre Paris Salomon ben Menachem Rapa et Samuel Porto	“Jewish Given Names Found in Les Noms Des Israélites en France” by Aryanhwy merch Catmael (Sara L. Uckelman) www.ellipsis.cx/~liana/names/jewish/levy/

III. Hebrew Names and Kinnui

A. Men’s Names

Three lists of the most common male Jewish names used in separate times and places in Period Europe are shown below. The first is from Jacobs⁵⁷ includes the most frequent male names found in various English records between 1070 and the expulsion of the English Jews in 1292. I compiled the second list from a listing of some 400 Jewish Italian scribes who lived between the 11th and 16th Centuries.⁵⁸ The third is from my paper on the names of some 500 Jews, male and female, killed in a pogrom in Nuremburg in 1349.⁵⁹ In no case are these all the names in the source document.

<u>English Jewish Male Names</u> (c. 1100-1300)	<u>Italian Jewish Male Names</u> (11th-16th Centuries)	<u>German Jewish Male Names</u> 1349
Isaac 59	Moses 49	Yosef 11
Joseph 55	Abraham 33	Moshe 10
Abraham 49	Isaac 30	Yitzchak 10
Berachiyah (Benedict*) 45	Samuel 24	Avraham 8
Jacob 40	Joseph 24	Natan 7
Moses 38	Menachem 22	Yechiel 7
Samuel 37	Solomon 22	Berichiya 6
Hayyim (Vives*) 23	Mordecai 21	Dovid 6
Elias 19	Benjamin 20	Shmuel 5
Aaron 18	Judah 19	
Gedaliah or Solomon (Deulecresse*) 17	Jechiel 15	
Manesser 17	Elia 15	
Samson 16	Shabbetai 15	
Solomon 15	Jekutiel 11	

It should be remembered that these names are shown in their modern English form, rather than in the form that was used at the time. In Angevin England, for example, Moses was spelled Mosse. Also, in the English name list, the names marked with an asterisk are *kinnui*; translations or transliterations of the Hebrew name. In this case, they are the Norman French translations of the Hebrew names.

Kinnui are created in several other ways. Some names were simply transliterated to their local form; e.g., Abraham and Jacob becoming Abramo and Giacobbe in Italy, Ibrahim and Ya'qub in Arab areas. In other cases, a similar sounding equivalent was used, such as George for Gershom. Similarly, Menachem moved through the German variant, Mendele, to become Manuele. Marco was used for the similarly sounding Mordecai.

Chayyam, "Life" translated into the Italian Vital, the French Vidal, or the English Vives. Barachiya ("blessing") became the English Benedict and the German Selig. The biblical matriarch Sarah mocked the idea of becoming pregnant in her old age by naming her son Isaac ("They will laugh"). Romans converted the name to Hilarius, while their Italian descendants used Gaio.

Biblical allusions were also used. Jacob's blessings to his sons (Genesis, Chapter 49) described Judah as a lion's whelp, Issachar as a strong ass, Nephthali as a hart (stag), and Benjamin as a Wolf. Judah became Leone, while Benjamin moved through its German *kinnui*, wilf (Wilhelm), to become Gugliemo. In Ashkenazic lands, Hirsh and Zvi (both meant deer or stag) was used as a *kinnui* for Nephthali. Because of the negative connotations with referring someone as an ass, Ber (bear) was used. The passage about Ephraim included the word הרבה (multiply), which has the same root as דג (fish), so the name Fishl was used.⁶⁰

Since Mordecai was sometimes associated with the archangel Malechi in Italy, the name Angelo was also used.⁶¹

One female *kinnui* was relatively common in Angevin England and in France. Girls named Rachel were sometimes referred to as Belaset or Belasez from the description of Rachel in Genesis 29:17, "Rachel was fair to look upon." In (Norman) French, *belle* means "fair" and *assez* means "to look upon."⁶²

During the Babylonian Captivity, the exiled Jews commemorated their faith by creating names based on the Sabbath and Festivals: Shabbetai and Haggai. These names continue to the present. In the Middle Ages, children born on or around Passover, Chanukah, or other holidays were given the names Pesach, Chanukah, and Yom Tov (good day = holiday), respectively. Traits related to the holiday also became names: Rachamim (mercy) for a son born on Yom Kippur, and Menachem (consolation) for one born on the 9th of Ab (the date of the destruction of both Temples and of the exile from Spain (1492)).⁶³

There is a strong messianic tradition in Judaism, including persons who proclaimed themselves either the messiah or the forerunner of the messiah. *The Jewish Encyclopedia* lists some 16 such messianic figures between 450 and 1650.⁶⁴ This led to parents giving such messianic names as Melki Tzaddik (King of the Just) or Sar Shalom (Prince of Peace).⁶⁵

There is also a folk tradition in Judaism of renaming a very sick child with a name like Chayim (Life) or Zaken, which means “old” or “ancient”, so that the Angel of Death can’t find him or her. “I’ve come for the child,” the Angel says, and the reply is that there is only Zakan (the Old One). Confused, the Angel leaves, and the child survives. This would be done for male or female children, and the new name would continue to be used for the rest of the individual’s life.⁶⁶

Jews living in Islamic areas did not have two separate names, a *shem ha-qodish* and a *kinnui*. However, a Jew might use both the Hebrew and the Arabic form of his name. Thus, Moshe ben Yishmael would also be known as Musa ibn Ishmail.⁶⁷

Jews also adopted the Arab custom of referring to a man as Abu (Father of) and the name of his son, usually the oldest son. The next step was to reference a person in the Bible in the same name as a *kinnui*; for example, any man named Avraham would be called, in Arabic, Abu Ishaq. Since Abu also can mean “possessor of a given quality”, abstract concepts were applied, such as Abu al-Barakot, “Father of Blessings”. The Jewish surname Abulafia derives from Abu-al-Fiya (possessor of health).⁶⁸ The custom continued in Italy long after Arabs ceased to control parts of southern Italy and Sicily.

B. Women’s Names

Since women had very little part in Jewish rituals, few had *shem ha-kodesh*. These are Hebrew (literally, “holy”) names that would be used to refer to a Jew during a Jewish ritual, such as being called to read a Torah portion. The parents of Jewish girls were free to give their child any name they felt suitable. Some Biblical or Hebrew names were used: Abigail (Gaila or Ogiya), Anna (Channa or Hanna), Deborah Esther, Judith, Miriam, Sarah, and Tzipora or Zipporah. Though few realize it, Alexander and Alexandria have been Hebrew names since the days of Alexander the Great (who was remembered for his kindness to the Jews after he had conquered their Persian overlords). The Biblical Salome was a Hashmonean princess whose full name was Salome Alexandra.

More common, however, were vernacular names;

- Flowers: Bluma, Fleur de liz, Fleur, Rose;
- Things of value: Almonda, Chera (Greek: *Iekara*, precious stone), Diamante, Golda;
- Desirable traits: Armonia (harmony), Bona (good), Belia or Gnanna (pretty), Dulcie or Licoritia (sweet), Genta (gentle, which, ironically became Yenta), Shpritze (from *Esperanza*=hope), Virtudiosa (virtuous);
- Terms of endearment: Columbia or Tuva (dove), Comitessa (countess), and Pulcella (little girl).

Often, the girl was simply given one of the names their Gentile neighbors used, such as Elfid, Auntera, Jessica, Margaret, or Swetecote in England. In *The Jews in the Renaissance*, Roth lists such non-Hebrew women’s names as Laura, Laudomia, Imperia, Diamante, Marchigiana, Virtudiosa, Armonia, Pomona, and Diana.⁶⁹

A number of the German names include the diminutive suffix “lin.” The Biblical names Channa (Anna/ Hanna) and Rachel, became Channalin and Rachelin or Raizlin (from Raizel, a German form). The German names, Golda and Froeda, became Goldalin and Frodelin.⁷⁰

In several cases, the name Miriam lost its last two syllables to Mirlin or Merlin. This works out nicely with a German Jewish male name, Yuta or Yoda, so that Merlin bat Yoda becomes a documentable period name.⁷¹

In Arabic speaking areas, some women had classical Hebrew names. However, most were given Arabic style names. The Arabic form, Given Name *bint* (daughter of) Father's Name, rather than the Hebrew *bat* (daughter of). There were several patterns, all similar to Moslem use. The first form appears to be the name of a favorable trait like Bahiyya (radiant), Hasab (noble), Husn (beauty), Jamila (beautiful), Surura (happy), or Yumm (good luck)

There are also three groups of multi word names. These are *Umm* (Mother of), *Sitt* (Mistress of), and *Amat* (Maid-servant of).

- The *Umm* form appears in two sub forms, similar to the two forms for *Abu*. The first which was very common among the Muslim is mother of a first born son, such as Umm Hasan, “mother of Hasan”. Other names list a woman as the mother of a quality such as: Umm al-Khayr (mother of goodness), Umm Sa'id (mother of propitiousness), and Umm Thana (mother of praise).
- The next pattern is a quality prefixed by *Sitt*- meaning lady or mistress of. There are a large number of these names and most seem to be allegorical in their description showing a wide variety of forms. Examples include: Sitt al-Agran (mistress of her peers), Sitt al-Bayt (mistress of the house), Sitt al-Fakhr (mistress of glory), Sitt al-Kuttab (mistress of the scribes), Sitt al-Su'ada (mistress of the happy ones), Sitt al-Yumm (mistress of good luck), Sitt Ghazal (lady gazelle), and Sitt Hidhq (mistress of efficiency).
- The *Amat* class of names appear to be classic Arabic women's names, and may be multiple words or be single words (with the *Amat* term not used). . These names indicate that the bearer is a servant of G-d directly in some way or has some sort of relationship to G-d. *Amat al-'Aziz* (servant of the Omnipotent), *Amat al-Qadir* (servant of the Almighty), *Amat al-Wahid* (servant of the Unique), *Mahfuza* (guarded, perhaps by G-d), and *Mubaraka* (blessed one).⁷²

IV. Appendix C: Regional Naming Groups and Their Mixes

Regional Groups:	By Time Period:	Languages Included In This Group:
Hebrew	550-1100	Hebrew, Yiddish, etc.

This is not correct. The earliest form of what would become Yiddish did not exist before 1250.

The period of Earliest Yiddish, until 1250, is the time before Slavic contact was established. Jews from northern France and northern Italy, speaking a language they called Laaz, established their first bridgeheads in German-language territory in the kingdom of Loter (i.e., Lotharingia). It is in this period, too, that the old practice of using Hebrew, the sacred language, for additional vocabulary, along with the custom of writing the vernacular in the Jewish script, was transferred from the Laaz areas to Ashkenaz (Germany). In the Old Yiddish period (1250–1500), Yiddish speakers made contact with Slavs and Slavic-speaking Jews – first in southeastern Germany (Bavaria) and Bohemia, then in Poland and still further east. Yiddish replaced Knaanic (a Slavic-based Jewish language).⁷³

V. Surnames

The longest Jewish surname is Katzenellenbogen, which was assumed by Talmudic scholar Meir ben Isaac (1480-1565). The name is a toponym, derived from the town of Katzenelnbogen.⁷⁴

This section is a brief overview. It describes how surnames were formed and gives some details for specific area. The possible list of surnames is too long to include here.

In *A Dictionary of Jewish Surnames from the Kingdom of Poland*, Alexander Beider gives six ways in which surnames are chosen: (1) from the occupation of a parent or ancestor, (2) from the given name of a parent or ancestor, (3) to indicate the place of origin of a parent or ancestor, (4) to designate a physical or moral quality of a parent or ancestor, (5) from the house sign on the residence of a person, parent, or ancestor, or (6) to indicate status as a Kohane or Levi.⁷⁵

Some surnames are actually acronyms formed from a descriptive phrase. Examples include Katz (kohane tzaddik; “pious priest”) and Brill (bnai rabbi Yehuda Lowe; “children of Rabbi Yehuda Lowe”; Lowe is the rabbi who, allegedly, created the golem to guard the Jews of Prague).⁷⁶

Jews in different areas adopted surnames at different times. By the 14th century, Jews in Spain and Portugal generally had inherited family names. However, the Spanish system of a double surname with the elements combined with a y did not originate until the end of the 16th century. This was a century after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. The system was, therefore, not adopted by Sephardic Jews.⁷⁷

At least some Italian Jews had surnames by the middle of the 16th century.⁷⁸

Although Jews in some central European cities were allowed to adopt surnames during late period, Ashkenazic Jews generally did not have surnames until much later. The decree allowing Jews in the Austria-Hungarian Empire was not issued until 1787.⁷⁹

In Arabic speaking areas, Jewish family names were using *ben* or *ibn*, while the other parts of the name are preceded by the Aramaic *bar*, which also means son. The name Meshullam bar Japeth ben or ibn Misk indicated a man names Meshullam bar Japeth or the family Misk.⁸⁰

Endnotes

-
- ¹ This material on the four types of names comes from pp. 764-765 of _____, “Names”, *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. Ed. Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik. Vol. 14. 2nd edition. (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007). pp.764-770.
 - ² “But in the Latin, the name Jehovah starts with a ‘Y.’” Professors Henry Jones, Senior and Junior in INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE.
 - ³ Lauterbach, Jacob Z.; *Studies in Jewish Law, Custom and Folklore*. “The Naming of Children in Jewish Folklore, Ritual and Practice”, p. 49, 70 (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1970).
 - ⁴ Tomaz, Derda. Did the Jews Use the Name of Moses in Antiquity?” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 115, pp. 257-260, cited in Lawson, Edwin D. “Some Jewish Personal Names -2: An Annotated Bibliography, in Demsky, Aaron, Reif, Joseph A, and Tabory, Joseph. *These Are the Names: Studies in Jewish Onomastics*, volume 4, p. 199. (Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1977).
 - ⁵ Baron, Salo Wittmayer, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, volume 1, p. 96-97. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937)
 - ⁶ Demsky, Aaron, “Double Names in the Babylonian Period and the Identity of Sheshbazzar” in Demsky, Aaron, editor, *These Are the Names: Studies in Jewish Onomastics*, volume 2, p.28. (Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan Press, 1997).
 - ⁷ Williams, Margaret H. “Jewish Festal Names in Antiquity – A Neglected Area of Onomastic Research”, *Journal for the Study of Judaism: In the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period*, XXXVI, 1, pp. 21-40. (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill Academic Publishers, 2005), pp. 24-26.
 - ⁸ Beider, Alexander. “Discontinuity of Jewish Naming Traditions, *Avotaynu*, XXVIII, Number 2, Summer 2012, pp. 43-53. (New Haven, Connecticut: Avotaynu, Inc. 2012), p. 43.
 - ⁹ Mittleman, Josh (Arval Benicoeur). *Academy of St. Gabriel Report 1786: “Iberian Jewish Female Name Circa 950”*, November 24, 1999. The report was available online on 05/27/11 at www.panix.com/~gabriel/public-

bin/showfinal.cgi?1786+0. The report cites Shatzmiller, Joseph, "Le Monde Juif" ("The Jewish World"), pp.87-96 in Bourin, Monique, Jean-Marie-Martin, and Francois Menant, eds., *L'Anthroponymie: Document de l'Histoire Sociale des Mondes Mediterraneens Medievaux (Anthroponymy: A Document of the Social History of the Medieval Mediterranean World)*, Collection de l'Ecole Francaise de Rome, 226 (Rome: Ecole Francaise de Rome, 1996).

- ¹⁰ Shiloh, Dina. "Call Me Adiella," *The Jerusalem Post*, Sunday, May 11, 1997 / 5 Iyyar 5757. The article, which deals with the problems with Jewish names, was available online on 05/27/11 at www.jpost.com/Cooperations/Archives/.
- ¹¹ Ibid., p. 41. "How do we know that the name is a determining factor in the character and destiny of a person?" said R. Eleazar. Scripture says, 'Come behold the workings of the Lord who hath accomplished *shmot* (sin-mem-vav-tav) in the earth.' (Psalm 46:9). Do not read "*Shamot*," which is rendered "desolations," but read "*Shamot*," meaning "names." B. Berakhot 7b
- ¹² Ibid. p. 42.
- ¹³ Ibid., pp. 44-45.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., p. 57.
- ¹⁵ Sarna, Nahum M. "Gideon." Berenbaum and Skolnik, editors *Encyclopedia Judaica*. The document was available online on May 26, 2011 as go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?&id=GALE%7CCX2587507285&v=2.1&u=pl2881&it=r&p=GVRL&sw=w.
- ¹⁶ Shiloh, Dina, "Call Me Adiella", *Jerusalem Post*, Sunday, May 11, 1997.
- ¹⁷ Mittleman, Academy of St. Gabriel Report 1786: "Iberian Jewish Female Name Circa 950."
- ¹⁸ July 2013 Laurel Letter of Acceptances and Returns (LoAR), dated September 17, 2013. The LoAR may be found in the Archives on the Laurel webpage, heraldry.sca.org/loar/#letters.
- ¹⁹ For what should be obvious reasons, Jews do not use B.C. and A.D. as part of their system for determining dates. Instead B.C.E., Before Common Era, and C.E., Common Era are used.
- ²⁰ ----- "Alexander the Great", the online Jewish Encyclopedia. The article was found to online on January 15, 2014 at www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/1120-alexander-the-great.
- ²¹ ----- "Hellenism", the online Jewish Encyclopedia. The article was found to online on January 15, 2014 at www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/7535-hellenism.
- ²² Beider, "Discontinuity", p. 43.
- ²³ Wolkoff, Lewis H. (Eleazar ha-Levi), "Jewish Names from the Roman Catacombs," A.S. XLII *Known World Heraldic Symposium*, 2006.
- ²⁴ Talmudic Tractate Gittlin 11b, cited in Jacobs, Joseph, "Names, Personal", *Jewish Encyclopedia*, the article was available online on 02/18/2010 at <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=51&letter=N>.
- ²⁵ Wolkoff, "Catacombs." The examples shown here are not the only ones to be found in the paper
- ²⁶ Lauterbach, Jacob Z.; *Studies in Jewish Law, Custom and Folklore*. "The Naming of Children in Jewish Folklore, Ritual and Practice", p. 37 (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1970).
- ²⁷ Lauterbach, Jacob Z.; *Studies in Jewish Law, Custom and Folklore*. "The Naming of Children in Jewish Folklore, Ritual and Practice", p. 49, 70 (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1970).
- ²⁸ Tomaz, Derda. Did the Jews Use the Name of Moses in Antiquity?" *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 115, pp. 257-260, cited in Lawson, Edwin D. "Some Jewish Personal Names -2: An Annotated Bibliography, in Demsky,

Aaron, Reif, Joseph A, and Tabory, Joseph. *These Are the Names: Studies in Jewish Onomastics*, volume 4, p. 199. (Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1977).

- ²⁹ Bareket, Elinoar. "Note on Jewish Naming Patterns in the Cairo Geniza During the Fatimid Reign (Tenth-Eleventh Centuries," *European Journal of Jewish Studies*, 5.1, pp. 81-92. (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill Academic Publishers, 2005), pp. 83-85.
- ³⁰ Beider, "Discontinuity", p. 44.
- ³¹ Kessin, Zachary (Yehoshua ben Haim haYerushalmi), "Jewish Names in the World of Medieval Islam" , which was available online on 07/18/11 at www.s-gabriel.org/names/yehoshua/jews_in_cairo/index.html.
- ³² Baumgarten, Elisheva, *Mothers and Children: Jewish Family Life in Medieval Europe*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2nd edition, 2007), p. 96.
- ³³ Personal e-mail from Dr. Aaron Demsky, professor emeritus of Jewish history at Bar-Ilan University in Israel and founder of The Project for the Study of Jewish Names. Judah wrote this in *Sefer Ha-Hasiddim* Para # .(תתשט) Professor Demsky's e-mail was received on April 2, 2010.
- ³⁴ "If there were two [men] in the same town [and the] name of the one [was] Joseph son of Simeon and the name of [the] other [was] Joseph son of Simeon, neither may produce a bond of indebtedness against the other, nor may another [person] produce a bond of indebtedness against them. [if] a man found among his deeds [a quittance showing that] the bond of Joseph son of Simeon [was] discharged, the bonds of both [are considered to be] discharged. How should they proceed? They should indicate the third [generation]. And if [their names] are [alike] to the third [generation], they add [some personal] description; and if their [personal] descriptions are alike they write, 'priest'." Soncino Translation of the Talmud, Tractate Baba Bathra, Folio 172a. This material was found to be online at www.come-and-hear.com/bababathra/bababathra_172.html. According to the comments, "description" referred to a physical characteristic "such as Joseph the tall, the short, black, brown, etc."
- ³⁵ Kessin , Zachary (Yehoshua ben Haim haYerushalmi), compiler, "Names of Jews in Rome In the 1550's". The article was available online on July 9, 2008 at www.s-gabriel.org/names/yehoshua/rome_names.html.
- ³⁶ Smith, Julia (Juliana de Luna) and Mittleman, Josh (Arval Benicoeur) "Medieval Spanish Jewish Names of the 13th and 14th Centuries." The article was available online on March 5, 2010 at part of The Medieval Names Archive at www.s-gabriel.org/names/juliana/iberian-jewish/.
- ³⁷ Stampnitzky, Julie, "Jewish Women's Names in 13th to 15th Century Navarre." The article was available online on March 5, 2010 as part of the Medieval Names Archive www.s-gabriel.org/names/juetta/nav_intro.html.
- ³⁸ Beider, Alexander, *A Dictionary of Ashkenazic Given Names* (Bergenfield, N.J.: Avotaynu, Inc., 2001), p.9.
- ³⁹ Ibid. The list of male names in this table is only a small portion of the names in Beider.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 9.
- ⁴¹ All of the sites listed can be found at the Medieval Names Archive, www.s-gabriel.org/names/. Also, the examples shown in this table are not the only instances shown at those sites.
- ⁴² Kaganoff, Benzion C., *A Dictionary of Jewish Naes and Their History*, (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), p. 17.
- ⁴³ Ben-Yehuda, Ehud and Weinstein, David, *Pocket English-Hebrew/Hebrew-English Dictionary*, (New York: Pocket Books, 1972), pp. 125 (English-Hebrew), 135 (Nebrew-English).
- ⁴⁴ Blumberg, Harry Ph. D. *Modern Hebrew Grammar and Composition*, New York" (Hebrew Publishing Company, 1955), "Lesson Two – The Definite Article", pp. 4-6.

⁴⁵ Scientific studies begun in the 1990s found that over 90 percent of men of Kohanic descent tested had a particular array of six chromosomal markers, which were far less common in Jewish men who were not of Kohanic descent. Further tests and analysis suggested that this array showed common descent from a common ancestor who lived at the approximate time of the Exodus from Egypt. During the Exodus, Moses' older brother, Aaron was named the first High Priest, with the office limited to his descendants.

The original paper, "Y Chromosomes of Jewish Priests" by Michael F. Hammer, Karl Skorecki, Sara Selig, Shraga Blazer, Bruce Rappaport, Robert Bradman, Neil Bradman, P.J. Waburton, Monic Ismajlowicz, *Nature*, Volume 385:2, January 1997 was found at www.familytreedna.com/pdf/nature97385.html on March 30,

⁴⁶ Soncino translation of the Talmud, Tractate Baba Bathra, Folio 172a.

⁴⁷ "Jewish Names in Ottoman Court Records (16th C Jerusalem)" by ingen Briain meic Donnchada, Mari (O'Brien, Kathleen M.), www.medievalscotland.org/kmo/Jerusalem/.

⁴⁸ All of the sites listed can be found at the Medieval Names Archive, www.s-gabriel.org/names/. Also, the examples shown in this table are not the only instances shown at those sites.

⁴⁹ Lowe, W.H., ed. *The Memorbook of Nürnberg, The Names of the Jews Martyred in that City in the Year 5109=1349 A.D.* London: "Jewish Chronicle" Office, 1881, pp. 27-28.

⁵⁰ Wolkoff, "*Benjamin of Tudela*." The names are from the Signer edition, pages 143 and 144.

⁵¹ Baron, Salo Wittmeyer, *The Jewish Community: Its History and Structure to the American Revolution*, II, Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1948, p. 110.

⁵² The practice of noting midwifery as a profession on tombstones was known from antiquity. A list from medieval Nürnberg includes Marat Rikhzena ha-Mayaledet as making donations for the upkeep of both the synagogue and the cemetery. Baumgarten, Elisheva. *Mothers and Children: Jewish Family Life in Medieval Europe*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 44. The term was applied to other female healers.

⁵³ Wolkoff, "*Benjamin of Tudela*."

⁵⁴ ingen Briain meic Donnchada, Mari (O'Brien, Kathleen M.), "Jewish Names in Ottoman Court Records."

⁵⁵ de Luna, Juliana (Smith, Julia), "Jewish Women's Names in an Arab Context: Names from the Geniza of Cairo" and ingen Briain meic Donnchada, Mari (O'Brien, Kathleen M.), These files were available online on 07/18/11 at heraldry.sca.org/laurel/names/geniza.html.

⁵⁶ All of the sites listed can be found at the Medieval Names Archive, www.s-gabriel.org/names/. Also, the examples shown in this table are not the only instances shown at those sites.

⁵⁷ A list of the names of 748 English Jews found on pages 345-369 of Joseph Jacobs' *The Jews of Angevin England* (London: David Nutt Publisher, 1893). The list includes 613 names from a great many (cited) period sources and 135 "implied" names; e.g., the name Aaron fil (=son of) Jacob de Bedford "implies" the name Jacob of Bedford.

⁵⁸ Wolkoff, Lewis H. (Eleazar ha-Levi), "Names Found on a List of Eleventh to Sixteenth Century Italian Jewish Scribes," A.S. XXXII *Known World Heraldic Symposium*, 1997.

⁵⁹ Wolkoff, Lewis H. (Eleazar ha-Levi), "A Jewish Memory Book: Nuremburg, 1349," A.S. XXXIX *Known World Heraldic Symposium*, 2004.

⁶⁰ Beider, *Dictionary of Ashkenazic Given Names*, pp. 5-6.

⁶¹ Roth, *Renaissance*, pp. 19-20. Roth also cites an Italian rabbi named *Giovanni Battista* (John the Baptist)..

- ⁶² Roth, Cecil, *Essays and Portraits in Anglo-Jewish History*, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1962, p. 26. The name Belle Assez can also be found in “An Index to the Given Names in the 1292 Census of Paris” by Lord Colm Dubh, which is available online at heraldry.sca.org/heraldry/laurel/names/paris.html on February 14, 2010.
- ⁶³ Lauterbach, Jacob Z., p. 57.
- ⁶⁴ Kohler, Kaufmann and Friedman, H.G. “Pseudo-Messiahs”, *Jewish Encyclopedia*, available online on 02/18/2010 at <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=581&letter=P#ixzz0fvTAzOtO>.
- ⁶⁵ Wolkoff, Lewis H. (Eleazar ha-Levi), “Names from *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela*”, A.S. XLIII *Known World Heraldic Symposium*, 2007.
- ⁶⁶ Trachtenberg, Joshua, *Jewish Magic and Superstition: A Study in Folk Religion*. (New York, New York: A Temple Book -- Argeneum, 1970), pp. 204-206.
- ⁶⁷ Buenaventura, Raquel, *Academy of St. Gabriel Report 1966*: “Egyptian Jewish Male Name – 10th Century”, April 12, 2000, www.s-gabriel.org/1966.
- ⁶⁸ Berenbaum, Michael and Skolnik, Fred “Abu.” *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. The material was online on June 14, 2008 at <http://go.galegroup.com/navigator-stlib.passhe.edu/ps/start.do?p=GVRL&u=pl2881>.
- ⁶⁹ Roth, *Renaissance*, p. 47.
- ⁷⁰ Wolkoff, “Nuremburg”.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.* Yoda may be a variant on Yehudah. The name can be documented, but I doubt that it would be approved.
- ⁷² All material on female Islamic Jewish names comes from Kessin, Zachary (Yehoshua ben Haim ha-Yerushalmi), compiler, “Jewish Names in the World of Medieval Islam: Women’s Names”, which was available online on July 9, 2008 at www.s-gabriel.org/names/yehoshua/jews_in_cairo/cairo_women.html
- ⁷³ Weinreich, Uriel. "Yiddish Language." *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. Ed. Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik. 2nd ed. Vol. 21. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007. 332-338. Gale Virtual Reference Library. The material was available online on 06/21/12 at go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CCX2587521264&v=2.1&u=pl2881&it=r&p=GVRL&sw=w
- ⁷⁴ Kaganoff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Names*, p. 1.
- ⁷⁵ Beider, Alexander, *A Dictionary of Jewish Surnames from the Kingdom of Poland*, (Teaneck, NJ: Avotaynu, 1996), p. xiv. The given name might be of a female parent or ancestor. Although not in period, the Rothschild family takes its name from the red shield painted on the door of the grandfather of Mayer Amschel Rothschild (1744-1812), founder of the financial dynasty.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. xiv.
- ⁷⁷ Ayyanhwy merch Catmael, *Academy of St. Gabriel Report 3269*: “Spanish Forms of Isaac.”, April 30, 2007. Available online at www.s-gabriel.org/3269.
- ⁷⁸ See: Kessin, Zachary (Yehoshua ben Haim ha-Yerushalmi) “Names of Jews in Rome In the 1550's, Table of Names”, available at www.s-gabriel.org/names/yehoshua/rome_names.html; and Kessin, Zachary (Yehoshua ben Haim ha-Yerushalmi) “A Sample of Jewish Names in Milan 1540-1570”, available at www.s-gabriel.org/names/yehoshua/milan_names.html. Both articles include a great majority of names with bynames and/or surnames.
- ⁷⁹ Beider, *Kingdom of Poland*, p. ix.

⁸⁰ Goitein, S.D., "Nicknames as Family Names" in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 90, No.4 (October-December 1970), pp. 517-524; p. 522. Goitein says that some Jewish family names existed at the end of the Babylonian exile. He also states that some family names were sarcastic: Faylasūf ("philosopher") might indicate a pretentious fool) or "Zü al qaşaba ("sap of the sugar cane") might refer to a family members were hardly of a sweet nature.