

THE TRANSFORMATION

by Avram Yehoshua

[The Seed of Abraham](#)

It all began for me in the summer of 1983 when God led me to establish The Seed of Abraham in Tulsa, Oklahoma USA. I had been living as a follower of the Lord Jesus for eight years. I had been raised Jewish and at 13 I had an Orthodox *bar mitzva*, even though it didn't mean much to me. At 24 years old I gave my life to Jesus, and at 32 years old I found myself loving all peoples, but having no 'special' love for my own people.

The Lord Yeshua (the Hebrew name for Jesus that I came to use in 1983), began to move on my heart and in time spent with Him in prayer I sensed that I was to begin using my Hebrew first name. On the eighth day of life all Jewish boys are circumcised into the Covenant of Father Abraham and given a Hebrew name, and so, André, my birth name (on my birth certificate), gave way to Avram (Hebrew for Abram), the name I had been given at my circumcision (Gen. 17:1-14).

Also, the call to minister to my own people became so strong that I thought the Lord was sending my wife and me to live in Israel. I thought we were to be there by the end of the summer of 1984 so my first born son, Zavdi, could be born in Israel. (*Zavdi* means, 'My gift to you.' He would be born in October 1984 in Tulsa, Oklahoma.)

What I thought was supposed to work out never did, and so one day in prayer in January 1985 I said to the Lord, 'I guess I must have missed you on this Israel thing.' The Lord audibly spoke to me and said, 'The Israel I have called you to are the Jewish people of Tulsa.' This began my attachment to a specific Jewish community. The Lord planted me in Tulsa, Oklahoma for a season that would span 14 years.

For the next three years (1984-1987) Yeshua kept bringing another name across my path. It was Yehoshua (Hebrew for Joshua). I felt over and over again that the passage in Joshua 1:5-9 pertained to me in some significant way. God was encouraging Joshua that he would be the one to cause Israel to inherit the Land:

'No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses I will be with you. I will not fail you and I will not forsake you. Be strong and courageous for you shall cause this people to inherit the Land, which I swore to their Fathers to give to them. Only be strong and very courageous, to keep and to do all the Torah which Moses, My servant, commanded you, not turning from it to the right nor to the left, in order that you may have success everywhere you walk.'

'This Book of the Torah must not depart from your mouth and you must meditate on it by day and by night so that you may keep and do according to all that is written in it, for then your way shall prosper and then you will be successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Be not terrified nor discouraged, for Yahveh your God is with you wherever you walk!'

As months turned into years, a deep love for my Jewish people began to spring up inside me. The Lord was causing me to identify with my own people. Time and time again Gentile Christians would come across my path and tell me that God was speaking 'Joshua' to them about me. For example, after a time of ministry and prayer for a number of people, I asked for prayer, and after they were done praying for me, a woman, whom I had never met before, told me that she sensed from the Lord that I was Joshua.

Another time, after our Shabat service, a godly woman, whom I respected, who walked in the office of a prophetess, shared with the congregation that the Spirit of the Lord allowed her to see me in a different

light. She said that I had become what, or rather whom I had been teaching about at the service. The message that day was on Joshua and the Sons of Israel entering the Promised Land.

There were also other godly external witnesses to me, but the most profound internal witness came on June 3rd, 1987. I felt impressed by the Holy Spirit to read Deuteronomy, chapters 5 and 6 in Hebrew and English. In the four verses of Deut. 5:31–6:1 the word ‘to possess’ occurs three times in Hebrew. It relates to the Land of Canaan (Israel) that God was giving to the Sons of Israel *and the one who would lead them in was Joshua*, even though the passage has God speaking to Moses:

‘You stand by Me here and I will speak to you all the commandments and the statutes and the judgments which you will teach them, that they may do them in the Land which I am giving to them *to possess*. And you shall observe to do all which Yahveh your God has commanded you; not turning to the right nor to the left. In all the Ways which Yahveh your God has commanded, you must walk, for your sake, that you may have a good life and that your days may be prolonged in the Land, which you will *possess*. Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments, which Yahveh your God commanded to teach you—to do them in the Land which you are crossing over *to possess*.’

That day, as I read it the words, they seemed to leap out into me. It was as though Yeshua was saying He would cause me to be like Joshua and that He wanted me to take on the name of Yehoshua as my last name.

Four days later, on June 7th, 1987, on God’s holy day of *Shavu’ot* (Pentecost), I stood up and publicly declared to my congregation that I was taking on a new name—the name that God had given to me. A little while after that I had my name legally changed.

Avram Yehoshua symbolizes the culmination of the Lord’s dealings with me in terms of both *identifying* with my Jewish people and being used of the Lord in their lives. He has taken me from being Jewish ‘in name only’ to a total identification with my Jewish people and the belief that Yeshua will use me to lead many of my Jewish people to Himself. Truly, it is the divine transformation of André Michel Sestac into Avram Yehoshua. He has made me a Jew and given me a heart for my own Jewish people—His heart.

Interestingly enough, name changes happen several times in Scripture. Abram had his name changed to Abraham (Avram to Avraham); Jacob to Israel (Yakov to Israel); Hosea to Joshua (Hoshea to Yehoshua); and Simon to Peter (Shimon to Kayfa). The Scriptures are clear that a name change involves a transformation of character (e.g. Jacob to Israel; Jacob means a ‘thief,’ and Israel means, ‘one who struggles with God, perseveres and finds favor with God and man’). God desired to bless greater (Abram to Abraham; Abram means, ‘exalted father of a people’ and Abraham means ‘exalted father of a multitude of peoples’).

Avram Yehoshua means that I will be the ‘exalted father of a people’ (Avram), who are ‘saved by Yahveh’ (Yehoshua). I have seen the beginning of this and I am looking forward to the day when the Lord will cause the fullness of this to come to pass—that I might lead many of my Jewish people into the Promised One, Yeshua the Messiah, as my namesake, Yehoshua (Joshua), led the Sons of Israel into the Promised Land.

I am a Jew who loves his Messiah and His Jewish people. This is all the Lord’s doing and isn’t it a most Wonder-Full thing?! To Yeshua be Glory forever and ever!

אָבְרָם יְהוֹשׁוּעַ¹

(Avram Yehoshua)²

¹ To read more about Avram’s life and his times of witnessing in Israel see [Sam the Rock Thrower](#).

² Revised on Tuesday, March 23, 2021.