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**For His Name's Sake:  
A Study of Old Testament Passages in which  
God had Mercy upon Israel for His Name's Sake**

This unmeritorious basis is the same for which believers are saved today.

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The biblical expression lema'an shemo "For His Name's Sake" or lema'an shemi "For My Name's Sake" occurs in different places in the Old Testament. In Ezekiel 36:22 (KJV) God says: "Therefore say unto the house of Israel, thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went." Psalm 106:6-8 gives us the first historical setting of this expression as well its original meaning: "We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly. Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea. Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known." Ezekiel 20:14 "But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, in whose sight I brought them out", points to the history in Numbers 14.

In Deuteronomy 28:9, 10 it says: "The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee." To be called by a name, means in the Hebrew and Jewish tradition: to appertain to someone. As the LORD God had proclaimed His name over His people Israel, they were so to say claimed by Him to be His possession. This refers to the particular event of the liberation of the people of Israel from the land of Egypt and during their journey in the wilderness. As well as Ezekiel 36 as Psalm 106 refer to this history. Moses was called to make known the rightful and legitimate Owner of Israel, Exodus 3:13 "And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, the LORD God of your fathers, the

God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you : this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.”

The particular Name of God mentioned here is the meant Name in Ezekiel 36 and in Psalm 106. We don't know the right pronunciation of the four Hebrew consonants indicating this Name. In Judaism, this Name is referred to as Hashem (“the Name”) or ADONAI (“LORD”). Another explication is given by rabbi Ibn Ezra who says that He saved them, because He was known as Elohay Ivrim, the God of the Hebrews (Exodus 3:18 ; 5:3).

It's not the people who earned deliverance from Egypt; it's only because of the Lord who claimed the ownership of His own people. Deuteronomy 7:6-9 “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God : the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people ; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations.” Also consider Deuteronomy 9:4-6 “Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee. Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people.”

The very same reason for which the Lord delivered His people from the bondage of Egypt and during their journey in the wilderness, is also the very same reason to bring Israel back from Babylon/Persia to the promised land in Ezekiel 36 and is still the very same reason today for setting a people apart, consisting of Jews and non-Jews; the latter ones to be ingrafted into the former ones (cf. Romans 11:11-36).

The prophet Amos mentions non-Jews: “In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this”, Amos 9.11, 12. According to certain commentators, the following expression in Deuteronomy 29:12-16 also refers to the Gentiles which will be ingrafted into the people of Israel and be included into the same covenant: “That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day : That he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; But with him that standeth here with us this day before the LORD our God, and also with him

that is not here with us this day : (For ye know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt ; and how we came through the nations which ye passed by.)”CONCLUSION

The Name of the LORD, pronounced upon His people is the sole reason of their preservation among all the nations, as there is no righteousness in them, neither in us.

The expression “For His Name’s Sake” puts the emphasis about the Lord’s initiative to save, because of His election from eternity, which He works out (elaborates) through His covenant. The election and the covenant don’t cover each other. The covenant is larger, as there have been, there are and there always will be two kinds of children of the covenant : obedient and disobedient ones. The message is clear to those upon whom God pronounced His name : “Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations”, Deuteronomy 7:9. Covenant children aren’t saved by nature, only set apart. They are to be born again. They are called to believe personally, to cling unto the Lord with all their heart, to die in themselves and to live in Christ.

When a covenant child believes, it’s because of the very same reason : “For His Name’s Sake.” Isaiah 48:8, 9 states : “Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb. For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.”

How could the Lord defer His anger and how is it possible He still does today, He still saves, He even gives a new heart to “transgressors from the womb” ? The answer : Because of Christ Jesus, the only ransom and perfect sacrifice the Lord agreed upon, who has been appointed from all eternity to be our only Redeemer. That’s why the LORD God could clothe Adam and Eve Himself after the fall in Genesis 3 and that’s why enemies of God are still reconciled with Him (Romans 5:8-10).

Although physically still invisible in the Old Testament (but spiritually present everywhere), it has been said of Him in Exodus 23:21 “Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions : for my name is in him.” The only one God of Israel, whose name is I AM, has revealed Himself to us in the fullest measure in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:14,18 ; Hebrews 1:3). The Lord called His son out of Egypt (Hosea 11:1), a son who didn’t deserve it, a perverted son, because of the merits of another Son, very Man and very God, perfect and without blemish, Whom has been called out of Egypt (Matthew 2:15), as He took our place.