

# What's in a Name? הושע becomes י'הושע

Source Sheet by Rabbi Ephraim Pelcovits

## 1. Numbers 13:16

(16) These are the names of the men that Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun Joshua.

## במדבר י"ג:ט"ז

(טז) אֶלְהָ שָׁמֹת הָאָנָשִׁים  
אֲשֶׁר-שָׁלַח מֹשֶׁה לְתוֹר אֶת-הָאָרֶץ  
וַיִּקְרַא מֹשֶׁה לְהֹשֶׁעַ בֶּן-נוּן יְהוֹשָׁעַ

## 2. Rashi on Numbers 13:16

(1) "And Moses called to Hoshea etc." - [Moses] prayed to G-d about [Hoshea] that [he] should be saved from the counsel of the spies.

## רש"י, על במדבר י"ג:ט"ז

(א) וַיִּקְרַא מֹשֶׁה לְהֹשֶׁעַ וָגוֹן.  
הַתִּפְלֵל עַלְיוֹן יְהוָה יְשִׁיעָר מִנְצָת  
מִרְגָּלִים:

## 3. Rashbam on Numbers 13:16

(1) **And Moses called Hoshea son of Nun Joshua:** This does not mean that the people from then on called this man Joshua. It means that the man who had been referred to as Hosheah son of Nun in his father's house was the one whom Moses now referred to as Joshua. The change had occurred already at the time when Moses appointed this man to be his personal valet. It was customary to change the names of people who were promoted in rank. We find this the first time when Pharaoh changed Joseph's name to Tzofnat Paneach (Genesis 41,45) We find it again in Daniel 1,6 when Nevuchadnezzar's chief officer changed Daniel's name to Belteshazzar. This had been a reference to a Babylonian idol so named. The first time Joshua's name

## רש"ב"ם על במדבר י"ג:ט"ז

(א) וַיִּקְרַא מֹשֶׁה לְהֹשֶׁעַ בֶּן-נוּן  
יְהֹשֶׁעַ - לֹא עַתָּה קָרָא אֶת-זֶה,  
שָׁהָרִי כִּכְרָה קָדָם לְכָן נִקְרָא יְהֹשֶׁעַ  
אֶלְאָ כֶּךְ פִּירָחוֹ: הַשְׁעָר בֶּן-נוּן  
שָׁאַמְרָנוּ לְמַעַלָּה שְׁנָקְרָא כִּי בְּבֵית  
אָבִיו הָוָא אֶת-זֶה שְׁקָרָא מֹשֶׁה  
[יְהֹשֶׁעַ] כְּשַׁנְעִישָׁה מִשְׁרָתוֹ וְהַפְּקִידָוֹ  
עַל-בֵּיתָו, שְׁכָרָה הָיָה מִנְהָגָם כִּמוֹ:  
וַיִּקְרַא פְּרָעָה שֵׁם יוֹסֵף צְפָנָת פָּעַנָּה.  
וַיִּקְרַא לְדָנִיאָל דִּי שְׁמִיָּה בְּלַטְשָׁצָר  
כַּשְּׁם אֶלְהִיהָ.

had been changed was in Exodus 24,13.

4. **Ramban on Exodus 17:9**

**Moses said to Joshua:** Apparently Moses called him Joshua from the day when he first began to serve him; evidently "Moses changed the name of Hoshea son of Nun to Joshua" (Numbers 13:16) is telling us that the Hosea selected to be among the spies is the one whose name Moses had changed. The Midrash says Moses changed his name to make it a prayer, "May God preserve you from the counsels of the spies," which tells us that Moses knew about the incident in advance. Or perhaps at that time Moses made the name change public so that from that time on everyone would call him Joshua instead of Hoshea.

רמב"ן על שמות י"ז:ט'

(א) ויאמר משה אל יהושע נראה מכאן כי מisha מיום היותו לפני היה קורא אותו יהושע, וכן כתוב (להלן לב יז) וישמע יהושע את קול העם. והכתוב שאמר בעניין המרגלים ויקרא משה להוושע בן נון יהושע (במדבר יג טז), למבראשונה ידבר, והודיעו כי זה הוושע בן נון אשר בחרו במרגלים הוא אשר קראו משה יהושע. וכדברי רבותינו (סוטה לד) שאמר יה ישעך מעצת מרגלים, להגיד כי בעבור זה המעשה שהיה משה יודע שהוא עתיד לлечת עם המרגלים קרא לו השם הזה. או נאמר כי אז קבע לו משה אותו השם בפני הנזה שלא קרא שמו עוד הוושע והוא שמו יהושע:

5.

**Joseph ben Isaac Bekhor Shor of Orleans on Numbers 13:16**

**Moses changed the name of Hoshea:** As the Holy One did to Abraham, Sarah, and Jacob; but Isaac was named by the Holy One to begin with, so his name did not have to be changed...

6.

**Jacob ben Asher Ba'al HaTurim al HaTorah**

According to the simple meaning, Moses changed Joshua's name for he had been the General of the Army during the war with Amalek, and coins(?) were circulated celebrating that victory, so Moses changed his name so that [the Canaanites] would not recognize him.



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