

The Power of a Name

Genesis 29:32 Leah conceived and bore a son, and named him Reuben; for she declared, “It means: ‘The LORD has seen my affliction’; it also means: ‘Now my husband will love me.’”

Genesis 32:29 Then he said, “Let me go, for dawn is breaking.” But he answered, “I will not let you go, unless you bless me.

Said the other, “What is your name?” He replied, “Jacob.”

Said he, “Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with beings divine and human, and have prevailed.”

Excerpt from *Homegoing*, a novel by Yaa Gyasi

“You have to understand. The day you called me that woman’s name, I thought, *Ain’t I been through enough?* Ain’t just about everything I ever had been taken away from me? My freedom. My family. My body. And now I can’t even own my own name? Ain’t I deserve to be Ethe, to you at least, if nobody else? My mama gave me that name herself. I spent 6 years with her before they sold me out to Louisiana to work them sugarcanes. All I had of her then was my name. That was all I had of myself too. And you wouldn’t even give me that.”

Tanchuma, Vayak'heil 1. Every time a man increases the good deeds he has performed, he adds to his good name. In life, you discover that people are called by three names: One is the name the person is called by his father and mother; one is the name people call him; and one is the name he acquires for himself. The best one is the one he acquires for himself.

***The Crucible* by playwright, Arthur Miller**

PROCTOR: Because it is my name! Because I cannot have another in my life. Because I am not worth the dust on the feet of them that hang! How may I live without my name? I have given you my soul, leave me my name!

Samuel I Early next morning they bowed low before the LORD, and they went back home to Ramah. Elkanah knew his wife Hannah and the LORD remembered her.

Hannah conceived, and at the turn of the year bore a son. She named him Samuel, meaning, "I asked the LORD for him."