

משיח MASHIACH

Apostolic
Writings
Messiah
Hebrew Bible
Second Temple
Judaism

How is Yeshua honored explicitly in our synagogues? I asked my students this question recently and several gave me the same example—at their Messianic synagogues, after the singing of *Alenu*, the cantor, rabbi or congregation recites the mind-blowing words of Philippians 2:5-11:

Let the same mind be in you that was in
Messiah Yeshua,
who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
he humbled himself and
became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.
Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
so that at the name of Yeshua
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under
the earth,
and every tongue should confess
that Yeshua the Messiah is *ADONAI*,
to the glory of God the Father.

I was not surprised that the students answered as they did. In my travels, I have noticed that amid the diversity of worship expression in the Messianic Jewish movement, declaring Philippians 2:5-11 after the *Alenu* has become for many Messianic Jews a climactic worship experience—a sacred moment during Shabbat when we lift up the name of Yeshua. I would like to make two points about this remarkable praise that Paul penned.

First, Philippians 2:10 is a reworking of the Septuagint (Greek translation) of Isaiah 45:23. Paul took these prophetic words “to me [*HASHEM*] every knee shall bend, and

every tongue confess” and applied them to Yeshua—

at the name of Yeshua every knee
should bend, in heaven and on earth
and under the earth, and every tongue
should confess (Phil 2:10).

Because the *Alenu* also draws from Isaiah 45, it is understandable that many Messianic synagogues are now concluding their services with the singing of *Alenu* followed by Philippians 2:5-11.

Second, Paul restated Isaiah 45:23 to underscore that Yeshua participates in the divine identity of the God of Israel and as such he is to be worshipped. When Paul writes in Philippians 2:11—*KURIOS Iesus Christos*—he is saying that “Yeshua the Messiah is *ADONAI*” (Complete Jewish Bible). Stated bluntly—“Yeshua the Messiah is *HASHEM*.”

In his book *Jesus and the God of Israel* (2008), Richard Bauckham emphasizes that the “worship of Jesus by the whole creation is associated with the giving of the divine name [the Tetragrammaton] to Jesus at his exaltation” (p. 199). This is “the name that is above every name” (Phil 2:9). In his letter to the Colossians, Paul says without blinking an eye: “For in him [Yeshua] the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily” (Col 2:9 CJB).

If we keep this truth always before us—*Yeshua HaMashiach Hu HaAdon*¹ (“Yeshua the Messiah is *HASHEM*”)—we will not only cling to him more tightly (*d'vekut*) but we will find ourselves naturally and powerfully sharing about his glory with others.

¹*Modern Hebrew New Testament*, The Bible Society in Israel, 1991.



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