

## Can a Change of Name Create a Change of Destiny?

"Your name shall be Abraham...Sarah is her name"



### Midrash Tanchuma, Haazinu 7

Names are considered very significant in Judaism. Your Jewish name is the channel by which life reaches you from Above. In fact, the Kabbalists say that when parents name a child, they experience a minor prophecy—because, somehow, that child's destiny is wrapped up in the combination of Hebrew letters that make up his or her name. The sages of the Midrash recommend that "one should name one's child after a righteous person, for sometimes the name influences the person's behavior and destiny."

### Genesis, Ch.17:1-2, 4-5; 15-17

And Abram was ninety-nine years old, and G-d appeared to Abram, and He said to him, "I am the Almighty God; walk before Me and be perfect. And I will place My covenant between Me and between you, and I will multiply you very greatly... And your name shall no longer be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings will emerge from you..."

And G-d said to Abraham, "Your wife Sarai—you shall not call her name Sarai, for Sarah is her name. And I will bless her, and I will give you a son from her, and I will bless her, and she will become a mother of nations; kings of nations will be from her." And Abraham fell on his face and rejoiced, and he said to himself, "Will a child be born to one who is a hundred years old, and will Sarah, who is ninety years old, give birth?"

### Talmud, Brachot 13a

Abram who is Abraham. In the beginning he was the father to Aram, in the end he became the father of the world. Sarai, this is Sara. In the beginning she was Sarai to this nation and in the end she became Sara to the whole world.

### Malbim, Gen. 17:5

Sarai, given her name by Abraham, means, Sharasi sheli, my princess and superior. Abraham was now commanded that in his new status of Av Hamon Goyim, the father of a multitude of nations" his wife, too, was to take on a more universal status which would be reflected by the name, Sara, princess par excellence and not just princess of Abraham.

### Talmud Yerushalmi, Sanhedrin 2;6

Rabbi Huna said, quoting Rabbi Acha: The letter "yud" which was removed from Sarai's name was divided into two letters, one "hei" was added to Abram and the other to Sara.

## Change of Name/Change of Destiny

	Universal Mission	Particular Mission	Universal Mission	Particular Mission
<b>Name Change:</b>	שרה SARA	שרי SARAI	אברהם AVRAHAM	אברם AVRAM
<b>Change in Destiny:</b>	של עולם World's Princess	שרתי שלי My princess/ superior	אב המון גוים Father of a multitude of nations	אב רם Father of Aram

## Sharing Spirituality

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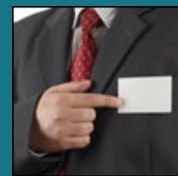
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## Let's Review:



- When Abram was 90, G-d appeared to him to make with him an everlasting covenant and to change his name and inform him that he would have a child from Sara.
- Abram's name was changed to Abraham, meaning the father of a multitude of nations. With this new name he underwent a spiritual transformation and was entrusted with a universal mission.
- G-d also informed Abraham that Sarai's name would now be Sara, a princess for the whole world.
- The letter yud, which is numerically ten, was taken off of Sarai's name and split into two heis, numerically five. One hei was added to Abram's name and the other one to Sara's name. Therefore the text says, "Sara is her name." She already encompassed the full spirituality of her name.
- Sara's yud was later added to Joshua's name to make it Yehoshuah and provide him extra spiritual strength to negate the spies' evil report on the Land.

## Something to Think About:

When parents name their child, they experience a minor prophecy. A name connects an individual to his soul and can affect his destiny.

What's your Jewish name? Do you wear it proudly? What does it mean and what hidden powers does it hold?

Video: [www.chabad.org/2084929](http://www.chabad.org/2084929)