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## MOST COMMON SURNAMES IN ISRAEL: ARABIC AND JEWISH (Part II)

by Charles Kormos, Edwin D. Lawson, and Joseph Ben Brit

### Alphabetical List of Name Entries

Note: The language source of a name is assumed to be Hebrew unless specified otherwise.

Bible references are generally those of the first mention. The spellings of the English version of the Hebrew names are as found in Israel today. There are many variations in the Diaspora.

**ABITBOL** (rank 130) From Arabic, "father of the tambourines" or "man of the tambourines" referring to one who made or sold tambourines.

**ABOUTBOUL** (rank 163) Variant of ABITBOL.

**ABRAMOWITZ** (rank 83) Other spellings: Germ./Slav. suffixes. Patronym based upon Abraham (pronounced *Ahv' rahm* in Slavic countries) with a Slavic suffix indicating "son of."

**ADLER** (rank 113) From Germ. *Adler* ("eagle"). 1. Ref. to Psalm 103:5 ("So that thy youth is renewed like an eagle"), a symbol of Jewish survival. 2. A house name from the Judengasse of Frankfurt where n° 27 had the sign of the black eagle, and n° 86 the golden eagle.

**AGBARIYA** (rank 54) Arabic, "most strong, very strong." Name of a large Arab clan from the area of the Sharon and Jezreel valleys.

**AHARON** [Aaron] (rank 89), **AHARONY** (rank 128) *Aharony* ("son of the Aharon family") is a very old form. "Teaching, shining, singing." Older brother of Moses and Miriam (Exodus 6:20).

**ALFASI** (rank 147) Arabic, place name, from *Fez*, Morocco.

**ALI** (rank 171) Arabic, "sublime, elevated," Muhamed's son-in-law. One of the most popular of Muslim names.

**ALMALIACH** (rank 134) Arabic, "good." According to Beth Hatefutsoth records, *El Maliha* was a Jewish female name in Africa, adapted to *Maliha* in Spain, where it became a matronymic family name.

**ALON** (rank 90) "Oak tree." A descendant of Simeon (1 Chronicles 4:37).

**AMAR** (rank 16) From Arabic 1. As used by Jews, Laredo considers it to mean a colonist or farmer. 2. As used by modern Arabs, has two meanings: "builder, constructor" and "one who prays and fasts a great deal." (Al-Ja'fari)

**AMSALEM** (rank 76) 1. A place name from two possible places, the town of *Amsellam*, in the Casablanca region of Morocco, or the masculine form of the Berber name *Amsallam* for the Oran suburb of Tansalmet. 2. In Moroccan and Algerian Arabic ("the one obedient/submissive [to God]"). In Islamic countries, it was a synonym for Jew. 3. Another view is that it is from the Hebrew *am shalem* "perfect people" or a form of *am sholom* "people of peace."

**ASHER** (rank 186) "Happy, fortunate." eighth son of Jacob, second of Zilpah (Genesis 30:13).

**ASHKENAZI** (rank 15) First mentioned in the Bible (Genesis 10:3), referring to the sons of Gomer living in a country bordering Armenia. In early rabbinic literature, Ashkenaz was identified with Asia; in the Middle Ages, with the area of Jewish settlement in NW Europe and the banks of the Rhine. Later, referred to German Jews and Jews from Eastern Europe as opposed to Jews originally from Spain, the Sefardim.

**ASRAF** (rank 149) From Arabic, "money changer."

**ASSOULINE** (rank 68) Berber place name meaning "rocks, stones." The root is in the name of several places or tribes.

**ATIAS** (rank 61), **ATTIA** (rank 189) Both of these names come from Arabic meaning "gift." According to Laredo it is a translation of the Hebrew *Matanya* meaning "gift of God." Both names are also used by Arabs, and the original source for Arab usage might be the Greek *Theodore*. However, evaluation of the usage of *Atias* and *Attia* in Israeli telephone directories suggests that the overwhelming majority of those who bear the name are Jews (as judged by the first names they bear and the neighborhoods they live in).

**AVRAHAM** [Abraham] (rank 6) "Father of a multitude," first Patriarch (Genesis 17:5). His original name was *Avram* [Abram].

**AZOULAY** (rank 11) 1. From Berber *izil* ("good") of the Middle Atlas region of Morocco. 2. From the fem. form *Tazulait* referring to a village to the S. of Djebel Sarro. 3. An ancient Berber name for the city of Asilah (ancient Ziliz) on the Atlantic coast of N. Morocco. 4. Laredo (p. 243) also thinks that the name has a Hispano-Chaldean root and means "bluish." Toledano

(p. 70) speculates that this refers to blue eyes. 5. Our view is that the name is an acronym for *ishah zohnah vechalahlah loh yekachoo* "they shall not take a woman that is a harlot or profaned" (Leviticus 21:7). This is the requirement for the *cohanim*, the priests.

**BAR** (rank 146) 1. An acronym for *BE(A?)n Reuven* ("son of Reuven/Reuben"). 2. An acronym for *B(A?)'nai Rabanim* ("son of rabbis"). 3. A place name, from the town of *Bar* in Ukraine. 4. Aramaic for "son."

**BARUCH** (rank 39) "Blessed [by God]." Friend and secretary of the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 32:12).

**BECHER, BECHOR, BACHAR** (all at rank 21). Since the Hebrew of the Population Ministry records does not show diacritical marks, this rank subsumes forms that, transliterated into the roman alphabet, correspond to the following three names:

**BECHER.** From Germ.-Yid *becher* ("cup" or "cup of water") as a symbol of Levites, who wash the hands of the *Cohanim* before their blessing of the congregation.

**BECHOR.** "The first born, the eldest son." Popular among Sefardic Jews. Sometimes used in a way similar to North American "Senior." Ex. *Bechor Shitrit*, *Shitrit Senior*.

**BACHAR.** From Arab., "sea merchant" or "perfume and incense merchant or producer."

**BEN DAVID** (rank 24) Filial form of *David*. See **DAVID**.

**BEN HAMO** (rank 64) 1. From Hebrew *cham* ("hot"). 2. From Arabic: Laredo (p. 589) interprets it to mean "father-in-law" and to be the eponym of the tribe of Ait Hamu ("the sons of Hamu) in the Dades region of Morocco. 3. Toledano (p. 203) reports it as a Berber form of the Hebrew *chaim*. 4. It is also possibly a Berber diminutive of Mohamed, which would explain why the rabbis in Morocco refused to recognize *Hamo* as a first name in religious documents.

**BEN SHOSHAN** (rank 161) Filial form of *Shoshan*. See **SHOSHAN**.

**BERGER** (rank 95) 1. From Germ.-Yid. *berg* ("mountain"). 2. A form of *Baruch*. 3. An acronym for *BEen Reb GERshon* ("son of Rabbi Gershon"). 4. A symbolic allusion to Mt. Sinai (Exodus 3:12), Jacob's dream (Genesis 28:12), or the Temple Mount (Psalm 34:3). According to the tradition in some families, this name was "purchased" or the authorities were bribed to obtain this "pleasant" name at the time surnames were required; for similar cases, see **GOLDBERG, GOLDMAN, GOLDSTEIN, ROSENBERG, ROSENFELD, ROSENTHAL, STEIN, TAL, ZILBERMAN**.

**BERKOWITZ** (rank 45) *Bär* in Germ. means "bear." 1. A Germ.-Yid. *kinnui* for Issachar, the son of Jacob, who was compared to an ass when Jacob gave his final blessing (Genesis 49:14). In this case, the bear was selected as being more socially acceptable in Europe. 2. A Frankfurt house sign showing a bear. 3. Possibly a form of *Baruch*, in this case, "son of Baruch."

**BINYAMIN** (anglicized form: Benjamin) (rank 111) "Son of my right hand," twelfth son of Jacob, second of Rachel (Genesis 35:18).

**BITON** (rank 5) Judeo-Spanish from the Latin *vita* ("life"), a translation of the Hebrew *hayyim* from Genesis 2:7 "breath of life" (*nishmat hayyim*), a popular practice being to add *Haim* to a given name at circumcision or to the child at a time of sickness or danger. Originally a first name, later a surname.

**BRACHA** (rank 130) From *baruch* ("blessing"). A name given to ensure good fortune and avert evil spirits. Also given to a child when ill. Apotropaic.

**BUZAGLO** (rank 177) Berber "man of the rod or pole, or man of the yoke", referring to a man who made rods or shafts for pulling a plough.

**CHEN** (rank 141) 1. "Charm." 2. Possibly an acronym for *CHACHma Nisteret* ("wisdom of hidden knowledge"), a mystical or kabbalistic reference. 3. May also come from *Hannah*.

**COHEN** (rank 1) From *kohen* ("priest"). The most common Jewish surname. Originally for those who traced ancestry to the priests, *kohanim*, referred to in many places in the Bible.

**DADON** (rank 108) Berber. Laredo traces this as an ethnic name of the Ouled Doudoun, a division of the Berber tribe of Ida-Ou-Blal of southern Morocco.

**DAHAN** (rank 8) Arabic, "house painter" or "oil merchant."

**DANIEL** (rank 105) "God is my judge" or "God has judged," (Daniel 1:6).

**DAR'I** (rank 169) Variant of **EDRI**.

**DAVID** (rank 12) "Beloved," second king (1 Samuel 16:19). King David is the only one in the Bible who bore this name.

**DAYAN** (rank 56) From Hebrew *davan* ("rabbinical judge").

**EDRI** (rank 30) Place name, from the town of *Der'a* (*Draa*) in the province of Draa, southern Morocco. This area is one of the oldest sites of Jewish settlement in North Africa, preceding the Arab invasions. Since many



towns built by Jews were named after places in Palestine, it may be that the name of this town derives from Edrehi, an ancient village in the Jordan Valley (Joshua 13:12, 31. Deuteronomy 3:10). Laredo (pp. 231-2) reports that Draa in Morocco was established by people from Edrehi. The spelling of the name has undergone changes from *Draa* to *Edrehi* to *Dera* to *Draa*.

**ELBAZ** (rank 46) From Arabic *El-Baz* ("falcon") or *El-Biyaz* ("falconer"). 1. The Albaicín, a district of the Spanish city of Granada, which is called by the Arabs *El Bayazin* ("falcons or falconers"). 2. Place name *Elbas/Elbaz*, the Jewish quarter of the Saharan town of Guerrara in Central Algeria. 3. A translation of one of the appellations "falcon, hawk" which was given to Joshua. Evidence for this is provided by Levy (1960, p. 129).

**ELIAS** (rank 144) Greek form of *Eliahu*, used by both Christians and Jews.

**ELIAHU** (anglicized as Elijah) (rank 42) "The Lord is my God," prophet at the time of King Ahab (1 Kings 17:1).

**ENGEL** (rank 195) Other spelling: *Angel*. In the Bible, *malach* means "angel." Malachi was the twelfth of the Minor Prophets. *Engel* is the Germ.-Yid. form.

**EZRA** (rank 63) "Help," priest and scribe (Ezra 7:1).

**FELDMAN** (rank 70) 1. "Deliverance of the Lord" or "one who escapes, or survivor," the name of a man, *Pelet*, mentioned in 1 Chronicles 2:47." The name was given to small children who had escaped great danger, and was also symbolically applied to the Jewish people as a whole.

The "p" and "f" in Hebrew and Germ.-Yid. are interchangeable. That with other changes converts *Peter* into the Germ.-Yid. *feld* "field", which is a component of many Jewish names. 2. Sometimes means "field man," referring to a man who lived in the country rather than in town. A name perhaps given by officials at a time when surnames were required.

**FISHER** (rank 99) 1. According to Kaganoff (pp. 34, 51), it is a *kinnui* for Ephraim, the younger son of Joseph, blessed by Joseph (Genesis 48:16). Like Hanks and Hodges (p. 194), we point out that the phrase in the Hebrew text *veyidgu larov* is to be translated as "they will grow like fish", although the usual English translation is "let them grow into a multitude." Hanks and Hodges also suggest that *Fish(er)* could refer to Jonah since he was swallowed by the big fish. 2. May refer to a person who sold fish. 3. May also refer to a person who was thought to look like a fish.

**FRANKEL** (rank 118) Ethnic or regional place name, for someone from Franconia, a region of SW Germany.

**FRIDMANN** (rank 7) From the Germ.-Yid. *fried* ("peace"). Used as a *kinnui* for Solomon or Shalom which both mean *peace*. Usually spelled as *Friedman* in the Diaspora.

**FUCHS** (rank 100) 1. The Frankfurt ghetto had a fox on a house sign, and the family may have taken its name from the sign. 2. Derived from a nickname for a red-headed family member. 3. Rabbis in Poland in the 18th and 19th centuries wore an outer fox-lined garment. 4. The name of a Jew's protector, or a protector who had a fox on his coat of arms, or a protector who was a fox hunter.

**GABAI** (rank 17) From *gohve* "to exact payment" (Nehemiah 11:8) and the Aramaic *gabav* ("tax collector"). The term refers to collectors of all kinds of taxes.

**GOLAN** (rank 65) High area on the Syrian border. Mentioned in the Bible several times, first as a city (Deuteronomy 4:43). later as district by other writers such as Josephus.

**GOLDBERG** (rank 57) and its variant **GOLDENBERG** (rank 124) 1. Place name, derived from either of two towns named *Goldberg* in Germany, or *Goldeberge*, also in Germany. Another possibility is that it is the German form of *Zlotoryja*, town in Lower Silesia, Poland. 2. A matronym derived from *Golda* "gold, golden." For tradition regarding "purchase", see **BERGER**.

**GOLDMAN** (rank 129) 1. Symbolic in light of references to gold throughout the Bible (e.g., Genesis 24:53). 2. An occupational name for those trading in gold. 3. A matronym for *Golda*, see **GOLDBERG**. For tradition regarding "purchase", see **BERGER**.

**GOLDSTEIN** (rank 47) From Germ. *Goldstein* "touchstone," a hard stone used to test the quality of gold. The name was used to identify those whose occupation was goldsmithing. For tradition regarding "purchase", see **BERGER**.

**GREENBERG** (rank 28) Translation of German *Grünberg*, a town in Silesia that produced a cloth known by the same name. When surnames were required by the authorities, Jews involved in the cloth trade chose that name.

**GROSS** (rank 72) Germ.-Yid. for a large or fat person, originally a nickname.

**GROSSMAN** (rank 188), an extension of **Gross**.

**GUTTMANN** (rank 92) 1. Germ.-Yid. translation of the Hebrew *Tuviah*, "goodness of God" (Zechariah 6:10). 2. A matronym derived from Germ.-Yid. *Gute/Gittel*, "goodness."

HADAD (rank 19), HADAD (rank 160) This name has two spellings in Hebrew (rank 19 without, and rank 160 with an aleph), but without difference in pronunciation. Arabic "blacksmith." Used by both Arabs and Jews.

HAIM (rank 59) "Life." Appears in the phrase *nishmat chayyim* "breath of life" (Genesis 2:7). In the Middle Ages, it was a popular practice among Ashkenazi Jews to add this name at the time of circumcision or at a time of illness or danger.

HALEVY (rank 107) Variant of *Levy*, meaning "the Levy." See *LEVY*.

HARARI (rank 145) 1. From Arabic *harrar* ("manufacturer of silks"), an occupational name. 2. From Hebrew *har* ("mountain"), a toponym identified with Montpellier, France, an old seat of Jewish settlement. According to Beth Hatefutsoth records, many great Jewish scholars and poets took the Hebrew name for the city *Ir Har* "city of the mountain" as their surname, which became *Harari*. 3. A translation into Hebrew of a Diaspora name such as *Bergman*, *Belmonte*, *Schoenberg*, or *Van de Berge*.

HAREL (rank 150) 1. From *har* + *el* ("mountain of God"). 2. From *harel* in Ezekiel 43:15, referring to the altar of God in the Temple. 3. From *ari* + *el* ("lion of God").

HARUSH [Harush] (rank 116) 1. From Arabic, "food peddler." 2. From Hebrew *charash* ("craftsman, artisan"). The name is used by Moroccan Jews. 3. From Arabic-Hebrew "son of the head" referring to the son of the chief, reported by Toledano, p. 88. 4. From the acronym *Rosh* standing for *Rabbi ASHer ben Yehiel* (1250-1327), a famous Talmudist who lived in France, Germany, and Spain.

HASSAN (rank 55) Arabic, "handsome."

HASSON (rank 104) Arabic and Hebrew, "strong, powerful."

HATIB (rank 26) Arabic, "preacher." Used mostly by Arabs.

HAYOUN (rank 115) Variant of *chai* ("life"). See *HAIM*. May have been influenced by Arabic.

HAZAN (rank 31) Cantor in the synagogue. Occupational name.

HERSKOWITZ (rank 44) Other spellings: The root *hersko* used with several other Germ. and Slavic suffixes as well. See *HIRSH*.

HIRSCH [Hirsh, Hersh] (rank 133) From Germ.-Yid. *hirsch* ("hart"), used as a *kinnui* for Naftali, referring to the time when Jacob in his final blessing

compared Naftali to a hart (Genesis 49:21). *Hirsch* is probably the original form of *HERSKOWITZ*.

HOROWITZ [Horwitz] (rank 187) Other spellings: with other Germ./Slav. suffixes. Place name, from the town of *Horovice* in Bohemia.

HUSSEIN (rank 190) Arabic, "handsome."

IBRAHIM (rank 181) Arabic form of *ABRAHAM*.

ISSA (rank 136) Arabic, through Greek *Jesus*, from Hebrew *yehoshua* ("God is salvation.")

JABARIN (rank 49) Arabic, "strong." Used by Arabs.

KADOSH (rank 85) From Hebrew *kodesh* ("holy man, saint, martyr").

KAPLAN (rank 121) From Germ. *Kaplan* or Slavic *kaplan* "prior." According to Hanks and Hodges (p. 289), used as a translation of *Cohen*.

KATZ (rank 9) An acronym from *CO(KA)hen TZedek* ("righteous priest"), Linked to Psalm 132:9 "Let thy priests be clothed in righteousness."

KAUFMAN (rank 174) 1. Derived from *YAAKOV* (*Jacob*). In this case the original *Yaakov* was transformed to *Yakovman*, then to *Yakofman*. Then it was shortened to *Kofman* and finally to *Kaufman*, resembling the German word for "merchant, shopkeeper", and becoming a *kinnui* name. 2. German occupational name, "merchant."

KHOURY (rank 41) In Arabic, "Christian priest". Among Jews, "free man", used originally in Tunis.

KLEIN (rank 22) From Germ.-Yid. *klein* ("small"). Originally a nickname.

KOREN (rank 192) 1. Germ.-Yid., "grain dealer." 2. A form of *COHEN* (with *h* changed to *k* by mistake or to germanize the Jewish origin).

LAVI (rank 79) 1. Place name, from *Laveno*, a village in Varese province of Lombardy, Italy, or from the Polish town of *Labishin*, near Poznan. 2. From biblical *lavi*, "lion" (Genesis 49:9, etc., etc.), a *kinnui* for *YEHUDA*.

LEIBOWITZ (rank 74) From Germ.-Yid. *leib/leyb* ("lion"), which is a *kinnui* for *Judah* + the Slavic suffix *witz*, "son of."

LEV (rank 139) 1. "Heart", mentioned in the Bible (Psalm 73:26, etc.) as describing the whole inner life of man. 2. *Lev* is also a Russian form of *Leo* and might be considered as a *kinnui* form of *YEHUDA* (*Judah*).

LEVIN (rank 33) Yiddish form of LEVY.

LEVY [Levi] (rank 2) "To accompany, to join." Possible descendant of the ancient Levites.

LIEBERMAN (rank 162) 1. The root appears to come from Germ.-Yid. *lieb* "dear, beloved" and may be a translation of the Hebrew *habib* linked to the name *Jedidiah* ("beloved of God"), which was given to King Solomon by the prophet Nathan (2 Samuel 12:25); would thus be a *kinnui* for *Jedidiah*. 2. It is also linked to *Eliezer*, who was beloved by God.

LIPSHITZ (rank 127) Place name, from (i) *Liebeshitz*, Bohemia, (ii) *Liebschuetz*, Thuringia, Germany, or (iii) *Loebeschuetz*, Silesia, Poland.

LUGASSI (rank 196) Arabic place name, from the region of *Lugas* in the province of Oviedo, Spain.

MAHAGNA (rank 50) Arabic, perhaps referring to someone who made the *haj* (pilgrimage) to Mecca. This is the name of an Arab clan in the Sharon-Jezreel Valley.

MAIMON (rank 60) According to Laredo (p. 813), an Arabic form of the Hebrew name *memuneh* ("guardian"), the guardian angel of each person. It means "son of fortune." According to Beth Hatefutsoth records, was used by Jews and Arabs in North Africa as a surname to protect the family. A fortune and remedy name. There is also a North African folklore tradition that *Maimon* is a friendly genie.

MALKA [Malcha] (rank 13) 1. "Queen." Name given to girls born around the time of Purim (Kaganoff, 4, 47). 2. A matronym to honor a particular woman (Kaganoff, p. 25). 3. Toledano (p. 828) traces the root to Aramaic with the meaning of "king" rather than "queen".

MALUL (rank 125) From Berber *amelal* ("white"). Toledano (p. 249) lists several villages and tribes with this name. How it got to be a Jewish name is speculative. It may refer to a person's hair colour or complexion, or indicate Jews who lived in one of the regions inhabited by Berbers with this name.

MAMAN (rank 62) According to both Laredo and Toledano, this is a place name derived from the city of *Meaman* in the province of Orense in Galicia, Spain. The name is borne mostly by Jews from Morocco.

MANSOUR [Mansur] (rank 75) 1. Arabic, "aided by God, victorious." 2. Judeo-Yemenite, "fortress."

MARCOVITZ (rank 88) Other spellings: with various Germ./Slavic suffixes. From Latin *Marcus*, possibly chosen because of resemblance to similar-sounding Jewish names such as *Moshe*. It is also speculated that *Marcus* is used as a Hebrew acronym for a rabbi or scholar, or for a passage in the Bible.

MASARWA (rank 91) Arabic, "from Egypt, an Egyptian." Name used by Muslims in the Sharon-Jezreel Valley area.

MEIR (rank 35) "He lights, shines."

MEHAMID (rank 34) Arabic, derivative of *Mohamed*. Plural form of *Hamid* "praise." Considered a religious name. Reported popular with Druze and Bedouin.

MELAMED (rank 172) "Teacher, educator."

MENACHEM (rank 148) "Comforter," name of a cruel king (2 Kings 15:14). The name was given under two types of circumstance: 1. for a child during the week of the Tisha b'Av (anniversary of the destruction of the first and second Temples); 2. for a child born after the death of previous children and who would be a comfort to the parents. An apotropaic name. According to Beth Hatefutsoth records, *Menachem* is one of the names of the Messiah and is a name given boys born during the week after Tisha b'Av.

MENASHE (rank 166) "Cause to forget," elder son of Joseph (Genesis 41:51).

MENDEL (rank 185) Variant of MENACHEM ("comforter"). Mendel is the Germ.-Yid. *kinnui* for *Menachem*, because the Germ. *mandel* refers to an almond tree. According to some family anecdotes, it was a "purchased" name because of its fine sound.

MILLER (rank 106) 1. From Germ.-Yid. *miller*, occupational name. Despite appearances, this is not an English translation of the German *Müller* (*Mueller*). As the Germ. *ü* (*ue*) does not exist in Yiddish, *Müller* came to be spelled *mem*, *yud*, *lamed*, *resh*, thus becoming *Miller* in Yiddish. The pronunciation, reached by a somewhat different route, is similar to that of English *Miller*. 2. From the Hebrew *mohel*, "ritual circumciser," which entered Germ.-Yid. as *Mohel(er)* and became *Moeler/Miller*.

MIZRACHI (rank 3) "Easterner." Associated with families from the Eastern Mediterranean (Levant), from Iran, and Western Asia.

MOR (rank 153) 1. From myrrh, a plant used for incense and perfume, mentioned in the Bible (Song of Songs 5:5, etc.). 2. Originally *moreh*, a title for teacher, later reduced to *mor*, used especially by Iranian Jews.



- MORDECHAI (rank 183) Babylonian and Persian, originally from *Marduk*, a Babylonian god. In the Bible, cousin and fosterfather of Esther (Esth. 2:15). Name given to boys born at Purim.
- MOSHE (anglicized as Moses) (rank 23) 1. Possibly from Egyptian "son of" as in *Tumose*. 2. Possibly, though this may be a folk etymology, from Hebrew "drawn out of the water." Greatest Hebrew leader (Exodus 2:10).
- MOSKOWITZ (rank 173) Other spellings: with other Germ./Slav. suffixes. Most likely source, a form of MOSHE.
- MOYAL (rank 156) Place name, from a town in Spain, 45 km. N. of Barcelona. Jews left it in 1492, going to the Atlas mountains in Morocco.
- MUALZEM (rank 138) Arabic, "teacher." Name occasionally used by Jews.
- NAGAR (rank 101) "Carpenter." Used by Yemenite and North African Jews.
- NAHUM (rank 43) "Comfort," seventh Minor Prophet (Nehemiah 1:1).
- NAIM (rank 131) 1. "Pleasant." 2. Arabic, "happiness."
- NASSER (rank 200) Arabic, "victory."
- NATHAN (rank 193) "[God] has given," a prophet (2 Samuel 7:2).
- NEUMAN (rank 158) Probably originally Germ.-Yid *Neumann*, referring to a newcomer in the community.
- NISSIM (rank 110) "Miracles," given a son born on Purim or Chanukah.
- OHANA (rank 53) 1. Composed of the Berber prefix *o-* ("son of") + the Hebrew root *chanah* [*Hannah*] "grace, merciful, gift." 2. The Berber prefix + *henna* referring to a seller of henna. 3. Possibly a place name, from the casbah of *Bou Hanna* in the valley of the Moulouya in Morocco.
- OHAYON (rank 20) Berber prefix *o-* ("son of") + a variant of HAIM.
- OREN (rank 132) 1. "Pine tree." Son of Yerachmiel (1 Chronicles 2:25). 2. Kaganoff (p. 182) considers it a disguised form of AHARON. However, we consider it a form of *Aharon* which has been modified to adapt to the local culture and language, rather than an attempt to disguise or hide its origin.
- OVADYA (anglicized as Ovadia) (rank 51) "Servant of God", fourth Minor Prophet (Obadiah 1:1).
- PELED (rank 155) 1. "Steel," in some cases a Hebrew translation of Diaspora names having the Germ.-Yid. component *eisen* ("iron"). 2. Also a Germ.-

- Yid. name ending in *feld* translated into Hebrew by those emigrating to Israel. The *feld* is said to be traced to the biblical *Pelet* referring to "one who escapes, or survivor." For explanation, also see FELDMAN.
- PERETZ (rank 4) "Burst forth," son of Judah and Tamar (Genesis 38:29).
- PINCHAS (anglicized as Phinehas/Phineas) (rank 165) 1. "The Nubian (dark-complexioned)," grandson of Aharon, the high priest (Exodus 6:25). 2. Possibly from the Hebrew *pinkas*, "writing tablet", linked to the account books of tradesmen.
- POLAK (rank 137) Germ.-Yid. "someone from Poland."
- RABINOWITZ (rank 80) Other spellings: with German and Slavic suffixes. From Hebrew *rav* through Polish *rabin*, "rabbi."
- RACHAMIM (rank 78) "Mercy, compassion of God," name given to a son born at the time of Yom Kippur.
- RAZ (rank 191) "Secret," a new name. May also be a shortened form of a Diaspora name such as *Razinovsky*.
- REUVEN (anglicized as Reuben) (rank 143) "Behold a son," first son of Jacob and Leah (Genesis 29:32).
- ROSEN (rank 114) 1. A matronymic form of *Rose*, in Hebrew *Shoshanah*. 2. A symbolic reference to the rose in the Apocrypha (Ben Sira [Ecclesiasticus] 24:14, etc.), where it symbolizes joy. 3. From a house sign in Frankfurt and other cities: Hebrew *Rozen*, "lord, ruler", referring to a Jew who had the protection of a local ruler. Names like *Herzog*, *Koenig*, and *Kaiser* had a similar basis.
- ROSENBERG (rank 25) 1. A Germ.-Yid. place name (meaning "rose mountain"), from one of several towns of this name in Germany, Silesia, and Bohemia. 2. A matronymic form for a woman with the name of *Rose*. 3. A symbolic reference to the rose in the Apocrypha (see ROSEN), where it symbolizes joy. 4. The *berg* suffix may be a *kinnui* for *Baruch*. For tradition regarding "purchase", see BERGER.
- ROSENFELD (rank 122) 1. From Germ.-Yid meaning "rose field" and referring to German towns such as *Rosenfeld* and *Rosenfelde*. 2. A matronymic form for a woman with the name of *Rose*. 3. A symbolic reference to the rose in the Apocrypha (see ROSEN), where it symbolizes joy. 4. The *feld* root can be traced to the name *Pelet*, explained under FELDMAN. For tradition regarding "purchase", see BERGER.



ROSENTHAL (rank 168) 1. From Germ.-Yid. meaning "rose valley" and derived from any one of four towns of this name in Germany, one in Bohemia, or *Rosendall* in the Netherlands. 2. A matronymic form for a woman with the name of *Rose*. 3. A symbolic reference to the rose in the Apocrypha (see ROSEN), where it symbolizes joy. For tradition regarding "purchase", see BERGER.

ROTT (rank 134) 1. Germ.-Yid., most probably originally a nickname for a man with red hair, beard, or possibly complexion. 2. A place name, possibly from one of several German towns with first element *Rot-* or *Rott-*: *Rotenberg*, *Rottweiler*, etc.

RUBIN (rank 81) Appears to come from the Germ. *Rubin* "ruby." However, we would classify it as a *kinnui* for REUVEN.

SABAG (rank 71) Arabic occupational name, "dyer." Jews were notable in the dyeing of wool and silk.

SAID (rank 119) Arabic "happy, fortunate." Name used by both Arabs and Jews.

SALACH [Salah] (rank 179) Arabic, "righteousness." Name used by both Arabs and Jews.

SALAMA [Salamah, Salame, Salameh] (rank 154) Arabic, "peace." Names used by both Arabs and Jews

SALOMON (rank 135) Europeanized form of the Hebrew *shlomo* [Solomon], See SHLOMO.

SASSON (rank 37) "Joy, delight." Given to sons who were born on a holy day, or after many girls. *Sassoon* is a variant but is spelled the same way in Hebrew characters where diacritical marks are not shown.

SCHWARTZ (rank 14), SCHWARTZ (rank 94) Has two Hebrew spellings: rank 14 with one *vov*, rank 94 with two *vovs*. From Germ.-Yid. *schwarz*, "black", referring to a person with black hair or beard or dark complexion.

SEGAL (rank 18) Acronym for Hebrew *SEGA* *Leviyyah*, "prince of the Levites, assistant to the high priest."

SELA (rank 199) "Rock, cliff," referring to strength. Probably most who bear the name *Sela* are ex-Diaspora Jews (or their families) who had Diaspora names such as *Fels*, *Felsenstein*, *Stein*, *Steinberg*, etc., incorporating the element *stein* or *fels*.

SHAHAR, SACHAR (rank 96) (*Shahar* and *Sachar* are spelled the same way in

Hebrew without diacritical marks, but they do have different pronunciations. One of the features of Hebrew and its printed form is that the first letter of this name can be either a *shin* (with an *sh* sound), compatible with the source 1 indicated here, or a *sin* (with an *s* sound), compatible with sources 2—4.) 1. The primary root is *Shachar*, "dawn". It is a new name used by new immigrants to modern Israel. 2. Germ.-Yid., from Hebrew *sacher*, "payment", meaning "merchant." 3. A truncated form of *Yisachar* [*Issachar*] ("he will be rewarded"), ninth son of Jacob (Genesis 30:18). 4. A Germ.-Yid. truncated form of *Zecharya* [*Zechariah*] ("memory of the Lord"). Of the many *Zecharyas* in the Bible, the best known is the eleventh of the Minor Prophets.

SHAHADA (rank 117) Arabic, "beggar." Originally a name given to a poor man. Used by Arabs.

SHALOM (rank 40) "Peace."

SHAPIRA (rank 27) 1. Place name, from *Speyer* (near Mannheim), Germany, which once had a large Jewish community. 2. From Hebrew *shefer*, "fair, lovely". 3. Linked to *sapeer*, "sapphire."

SHARABI (rank 38) Arabic place name, from *Shar'ab*, a district in S.W. Yemen. Used by Jews only.

SHARON (rank 103) "Plain." The fertile area from Mount Carmel to Jaffa.

SHAUL [Saul] (rank 151) "Asked, requested [of God]," first king (1 Samuel 9:2).

SHECHTER (rank 109) Yid. translation of Hebrew *shohet*, "ritual butcher".

SHEMESH (rank 36) "Sun." References throughout the Bible.

SHIMONI (rank 176) Derived from *Shimon* [*Simon*] ("[God] heard"), second son of Jacob and Leah (Genesis 29:33). Descendant of the tribe of *Shimon* [*Simon*], a descendant of a man named *Shimon*, or the son of a man named *Shimon*.

SHITRIT (rank 197) Derived from Arabic *shatehr*, "strong, brave." Used by Jews from Morocco and Algeria.

SHLOMO (rank 198) "Peace," third king, son of David and Bathsheba (2 Samuel 12:24).

SHMUEL (rank 86) "His name is God" or "God has heard." Prophet and judge (1 Samuel 1:20).

- SHOSHAN (rank 159) Name of a lily-like flower, the etymology of which is similar to that of *Shoshanah* (Hosea 14:6).
- SHUKRUN (rank 178) Arabic, developed as a nickname meaning "red-haired" or "blond". Associated with Jews from Morocco.
- SOFER (rank 97) "Writer, scribe, scholar."
- SOLOMON (rank 77) English form of SHLOMO. The Hebrew form has three vowels. *Salomon* has two.
- STEIN (rank 152) From Germ.-Yid. *stein*, "stone". 1. Symbolic name, many references in the Bible to stone: Jacob's pillow (Genesis 28:10-22), the house of David (2 Samuel 5:11), the tablets of Moses, etc. 2. Place name, from cities in Europe. 3. An occupation name from a person who dealt in precious stones. For tradition regarding "purchase", see BERGER.
- STERN (rank 48) Germ.-Yid. "star". 1. Symbolic references in Bible, e.g., Joseph's dream (Genesis 37:9-10). 2. From house signs in Frankfurt and other German cities. 3. Place name, from *Sterniany*, Byelorussia, evolving to *Sternin* and then *Stern*. 4. Symbolic of the six-pointed star of David.
- SUAD (rank 84) Arabic, "luck." Used by Arabs.
- SUISSA (rank 5) 1. Laredo (p. 882) considers this a place name, derived from *Suesa*, a locality of the former province of Santander, northern Spain. 2. Possibly refers to the plume of the turban worn by Turkish officials, then extended to the *shames* (sexton of a synagogue). Name borne by Jews. 3. Toledano (p. 319) suggests that it comes from the region of *Souss*, southern Morocco, whose inhabitants, known as sharp businessmen, had the status of being protected by the king.
- SULRIMAN [Suliman] (rank 175) Arabic form of SHLOMO.
- TANA (rank 120) Arabic opening letters of the 20th sura of the Qu'ran, used to refer to Muhamed. A Muslim name.
- TAL (rank 82) A "new" name, created in the last hundred years. 1. "Dew," symbolic of abundance, several references in the Bible (e.g. Genesis 27:28). 2. May have been chosen by some European Jews, because of a Diaspora name incorporating *thal* (Germ.-Yid. "valley"), accepting the Hebrew meaning and spelling for use with the roman alphabet. For tradition regarding "purchase", see BERGER.
- TURCEMAN (rank 87) Arabic *torjman*, "interpreter, translator," associated with Jews from Arab countries. Occupational name.

- UDA [Audeh] (rank 182) Arabic, "return." Several interpretations are given, notably an allusion to the return of good fortune referring to the birth of another child. While Laredo (p. 234) considers this a Berber name for "Jew", derived from the Aramaic *yehudai*, and Toledano (p. 63) considers it a Berber diminutive of *Yehuda*, our investigation indicates that most, if not all, of the bearers of this name in Israel are Arabs: thus it must have the "return" meaning.
- WAKNIN (rank 67) Berber diminutive, "son of *Jacob*".
- WEISS (rank 66), WRISS (rank 167) (There are two entries because Hebrew transliterations have either one *yud* (rank 167) or two (rank 66), the second serving to ensure pronunciation with an initial *v* sound.) 1. A Germ.-Yid. nickname for a person with white hair (or beard) or fair skin. 2. A Germ.-Yid. place name, from towns or cities such as *Weissenburg* in Bavaria, *Weissenburg/Wissembourg* in Alsace-Lorraine.
- WOLF (rank 157) *Kinnui* for BINJAMIN.
- YAAKOV [Jacob] (rank 29) "Supplanter" or "heel." Third Patriarch, son of Isaac (Genesis 25: 26).
- YECHYEZKEL [Ezekiel] (rank 69) "May God strengthen." Prophet (Ezekiel 1ff).
- YEHUDA [Judah] (rank 112) "To praise, to thank." Fourth son of Jacob (Genesis 29:35). Another *Yehuda*, Judah Maccabee, was the hero of the revolt against Antiochus (1 Maccabees 2:1).
- YICHYE (rank 142) "May he live." Often given by Yemenite and Sefardic Jews to a child born ill.
- YIFRACH (rank 102) "He will flourish" or "may he grow." An apotropaic name.
- YISRAEL [Israel] (rank 73) "Wrestled with God." Jacob's name after the struggle with God (Genesis 35:10). Also, Jews are called *B'nai Israel* (sons of Israel) in the Bible and the term has been used for the people.
- YISRAELI (rank 123) *Yisraeli*, which may be spelled *Israeli* in an English version of an Israeli telephone directory, is a variant of *Yisrael*. It can mean someone from the people of *Yisrael* [*Israel*], a descendant of a man or family with that name.
- YITZCHAK (rank 32) May also be spelled *Itzhak* in an English version of an Israeli telephone directory. "He will laugh" or "laughter," second Patriarch, son of Abraham (Genesis 21.3).

YITZCHAKI (rank 93) *Yitzchaki*, which may also be spelled *Itzchaki* or *Itzhaki* in an English version of an Israeli telephone directory, is a variant of YITZCHAK. It may refer to a descendant of a man with that name.

YONA (rank 194) "Dove." Fifth Minor Prophet, hero of the whale story (Jonah 1:1).

YOSER [Joseph] (rank 10) "God will add." Eleventh son of Jacob, first by Rachel, chief steward to Pharaoh (Genesis 30:24).

ZADOK (rank 170) "Righteous." Of several people of this name in the Bible, one was the founder of the priesthood (2 Samuel 8:17).

ZARFATI (rank 98) *Zarfati*, mentioned in the Bible (1 Kings 9-10) as a community outside of the Israelite kingdom. Gesenius (Brown, p. 864) placed it on the coast of Lebanon or Egypt. However, it came to designate France in the Middle Ages and referred to those who left there after the expulsion of 1306 and following years.

ZILBERMAN (rank 140) 1. Germ.-Yid. occupational name for one who dealt with silver. For tradition regarding "purchase", see BERGER.

ZINGER (rank 164) Derived from Germ.-Yid. *saenger*, referring to a cantor or *hazan*. See also HAZAN.

ZUABI (rank 58) Arabic, "swordsmen," family name of a Druze clan in the Galilee.

ZUR (rank 126) "Rock," probably a symbolic name. In the Bible, son of Yeiel [Jeiel] (1 Chronicles) 8:30. Like SELA (above), also a name assumed by Diaspora Jews as a translation of names with a *fels/stein* ("stone") component.

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