

JESUS ... from Hebrew to Greek to Latin to English

In Hebrew the name Joshua is:

- יהושע *or* ישוע ... *Yehoshua* “the LORD is salvation.”
- *Yeshua* was a common alternative form of the name.

In Greek it is the transliteration of the Hebrew:

- Ἰησους (*lēsous*, sounds like ee-ay-soos).

Therefore in the Greek New Testament Jesus and Joshua are both *lēsous*. Up until now the names are the same and even in the Latin Vulgate they remained the same.

In Latin *lēsou* was called *Iesus*, again a transliteration of Joshua in Greek.

- The Latin spelling differed from the Greek because the two alphabets are not identical. The Latin pronunciation however was still very close to the Greek sounding like "ee-ay-soos".

In English

When an English version of the name was created from the Latin, it was close to the Latin and was spelled “Iesus”. The 1611 King James Version uses “Iesus”.

- **However the English language was evolving and any name starting with I or Y was replaced with a J so... we finally arrived at the name *Jesus*.**

Now the question one might ask is, 'Why was the English name Joshua taken from the original language but Jesus from the Latin?' There is no apparent answer other than possibly the publishers of the King James Bible decided it was good to keep the familiar Latin spelling for the name Jesus due to its common frequency (*Latin was still the common language of worship in those days*), whereas since the name Joshua is not frequently found in the New Testament [only Luke 3:29 (“Jose” in the KJV), and, Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8 (“Jesus” in the KJV, but they don’t refer to Jesus Christ), other than the references to “Jesus, the Christ” that is], a transliteration from original languages was preferred.

It seems to have been some practical decision to translate Jesus from Latin, rather than a logical exegetical or deep theological reason. Even more so today, now that everyone is familiar with the name 'Jesus' it seems best and practical by modern English translations to keep it and not confuse anybody with pedantic quibbling about the exactness of the original sound.