

THE DIVINE NAME

in the

NEW WORLD TRANSLATION

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First printing, 2001 — 20,000 copies

Release for worldwide internet distribution, 2001

All general Scripture quotations in this book are from either the

New World Translation or the

Kingdom Interlinear Translation.

Both are published by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society
of New York.

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Chapter 1: **The *New World Translation* is Unique**

Unless you are able to read the Bible in Hebrew and Greek, you must rely upon the accuracy of the Bible translation you are using for reading and study. This is true irrespective of which of the many Bible translations you choose.

In 1950, the Watch Tower Society released a new translation of the Christian Scriptures (New Testament) in English that they called the *New World Translation of the Greek Scriptures*. By 2001 they had published the entire *New World Translation Bible* in 21 languages, and the Greek Scriptures in 16 additional languages. By 1998, over 100 million copies had been printed.

A first look at the *New World Translation*

The *New World Translation* is unique in restoring the divine name. In the Introduction to the 1984 Reference Edition, the editors state the purpose for their Bible translation:

Since the Bible sets forth the sacred will of the Sovereign Lord of the universe, it would be a great indignity, indeed an affront to his majesty and authority, to omit or hide his unique divine name, which plainly occurs in the Hebrew text nearly 7,000 times as יהוה (YHWH). Therefore, the foremost feature of this translation is the restoration of the divine name to its rightful place in the English text. It has been done, using the commonly accepted English form Jehovah 6,973 times in the Hebrew Scriptures and 237 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures.

From this statement of purpose we understand that the publishers identify the restoration of God's name as the foremost feature of the *New World Translation*.

The *New World Translation's* contribution in the Hebrew Scriptures

If you are not one of Jehovah's Witnesses, it may seem strange for you to think that their "Old Testament" (Hebrew Scriptures) translates the name of God more accurately than does the Bible you most likely use. Yet, that is true if your translation uses *LORD*¹

¹ In most English "Old Testament" versions *LORD* in capital letters indicates an occurrence of God's name. At these same references,

rather than God's name in the "Old Testament."

You know, of course, that the Hebrew Scriptures were written in Hebrew. (There are a few exceptions where Aramaic was used.) Much could be said about the use of the four Hebrew letters יהוה (YHWH) in the Hebrew Scriptures. The subject of how God's name is written is important, but it is beyond the scope of this short book. Nonetheless, there is no doubt regarding the occurrence of the divine name in the Hebrew Scriptures. It occurs 6,961² times and is clearly identifiable as such.

When William Tyndale published his English Bible in 1530, he used the English word *LORD* in uppercase letters in place of God's name in the Hebrew Scriptures. The translators of the 1611 King James Version followed Tyndale's example of using *LORD*, establishing a long-standing English Bible translation tradition.

This distortion of God's name is serious. His name appears frequently in the Hebrew Scriptures, and should be properly represented in all modern language translations. Sadly it is not. "Old Testament" translators and publishers should carefully re-evaluate their practice of altering God's word. It is no longer acceptable for them to replace his name with a misleading typographical representation that can easily be confused with Jesus' title from the Christian Scriptures. There is an important translation principle which applies here. The translator must choose words that communicate the same idea to today's readers that the inspired

the *New World Translation* correctly *translates* God's name as *Jehovah* using an English language-equivalent name. *Yahweh* is an English *transliteration* of the Hebrew letters יהוה. That is, the four Hebrew letters are assigned phonetic-equivalent English letters. Either a translation or a transliteration is appropriate, though different religious groups may prefer one over the other. Notice carefully, however, that the title *Lord* in lowercase letters also occurs in the *New World Translation* Hebrew Scriptures and in most English "Old Testament" versions. This title *Lord* is the proper translation of the Hebrew word *Adonay*.

² The book *Aid to Bible Understanding* says on page 885, "The Tetragrammaton occurs 6,961 times in the original-language text of the Hebrew Scriptures (this includes 134 times where the Masoretic text shows that ancient copyists [Sopherim] had changed the primitive Hebrew text to read 'Adho-nay' or 'Elo-him' instead of *Y^ehowah*')."

writer communicated to the readers of his day. The inspired writers of the “Old Testament” most certainly communicated a revered name to their readers when they used the Tetragrammaton.³ An English Bible translator today must communicate that same meaning to his English reading audience.

The translators of the *New World Translation* are to be commended for properly “restoring” God’s name to the Hebrew Scriptures. Indeed, there was need for that restoration. The Hebrew Bible uses God’s name almost 7,000 times. Early English translators substituted *LORD* for God’s name. Then, for almost 400 years, Bible publishers used *LORD* to represent the divine name. Consequently, the New World Bible Translation Committee rightly “restored” God’s name to the Hebrew Scriptures when they reinstated the name *Jehovah*.

Should God’s name be “restored” in the Christian Scriptures?

The *New World Translation* also claims to “restore” God’s name 237 times in the Christian Scriptures. (That is, in 237 instances where the word *Lord* generally occurs in the Christian Scriptures, the *New World Translation* instead uses *Jehovah*.) This is an entirely different issue. In order for a word to be “restored” to an ancient biblical text, it must be substantiated that the inspired writer actually used that word in the original text and that it was subsequently removed.

It should be clear that a translator cannot add or change words in the Greek Christian Scripture text in order to then “restore” them to his new translation. Furthermore, a translator cannot “restore” a new word to his translation if that word is not found in the Greek text he is translating.

The Watch Tower Society admits that there are no ancient Greek manuscripts of the Christian Scriptures which contain God’s name in Hebrew letters.⁴ We also know that there are no ancient Greek

³ The Tetragrammaton is the four Hebrew letters יהוה (YHWH), which designate the divine name.

⁴ For reference, see *Aid to Bible Understanding*, pages 886-888. Despite the absence of manuscripts containing the Hebrew letters of the Tetragrammaton, the Watch Tower Society maintains that the Tetragrammaton was used by the inspired Christian Greek Scripture writers but was subsequently removed as a result of a great heresy in the second and third centuries C.E. The book *The Tetragrammaton*

Christian Scripture manuscripts which contain a transcription of the four Hebrew letters into Greek letters.⁵

On the surface, it would seem as though this lack of textual evidence indicates that the name of God should not be restored to the Christian Scriptures.

However, the New World Bible Translation Committee proposed two translation guidelines and a third hypothesis regarding the history of the early Christian congregations that, when combined, support the use of *Jehovah* in their Christian Scripture translation.

1. Most importantly, they stated that quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures using the divine name guided their decision to use *Jehovah* in the Christian Scriptures for that same quotation.
2. Secondly, they stated that God's name should be restored when it is found in Hebrew versions at a given verse.
3. Finally, they stated that it should be restored because a purported heresy in the early Christian congregations resulted in the removal of the Tetragrammaton from the Christian Scripture writings.

Therefore, lest we reach any incorrect conclusions, we must evaluate these three possibilities fairly. We will carefully examine each after we review some necessary Bible background information.

The Translation Committee's statement

We will close this chapter with a quotation from Appendix 1D of the *New World Translation*, Reference Edition, 1984, pages 1564 and

and the Christian Greek Scriptures (available at www.tetragrammaton.org) discusses in detail this purported heresy.

⁵ A *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, United Bible Societies, 1971, lists no variant (an alternate reading which differs from the wording of a majority of Greek manuscripts) of God's name for any of the 237 *NWT Jehovah* verses. However, there are ancient Hebrew Scripture manuscripts (not Christian Scripture manuscripts) and other religious writings from this same time period that do contain God's name transcribed into Greek letters (ΙΑΩ—YAW) or into transcription-equivalent Greek letters (ΙΙΙΙΙ—PIPI). (PIPI has no phonetic meaning in Greek. It was merely used by early scribes to represent the graphics of יהוה using Greek letters.)

1565. This statement is the basis for the first two guidelines above. The Committee's statement is as follows:

To know where the divine name was replaced by the Greek words *Κύριος* and *Θεός*, we have determined where the inspired Christian writers have quoted verses, passages and expressions from the Hebrew Scriptures and then we have referred back to the Hebrew text to ascertain whether the divine name appears there. In this way we determined the identity to give *Κύριος* and *Θεός* and the personality with which to clothe them.

To avoid overstepping the bounds of a translator into the field of exegesis, we have been most cautious about rendering the divine name in the Christian Greek Scriptures, always carefully considering the Hebrew Scriptures as a background. We have looked for agreement from the Hebrew versions to confirm our rendering. Thus, out of the 237 times that we have rendered the divine name in the body of our translation, there is only one instance where we have no agreement from the Hebrew versions.



Chapter 2: *The Septuagint Version*

Because there is sometimes confusion between the *Septuagint* and the Christian Greek Scriptures when discussing the Tetragrammaton, we need to briefly describe the *Septuagint*.

We are familiar with the history of the nation of Israel in the Hebrew Scriptures. Though good kings occasionally came to power, divine judgment ultimately fell as a result of the unfaithfulness of Solomon and successive kings. The divided kingdoms of Judah and Israel were finally conquered, with each being taken into captivity.

Without going into any of the details of the military and political defeats of Israel, we are aware that a typical form of conquest for that time was the deportation of the populace to the conquering nation's homeland. As a result, colonies of Jews¹ were established in various areas of the Mediterranean world. Alexandria (Egypt) became an important center for expatriate Jews. Alexandria was also the leading center of learning and Greek culture from about 350 B.C.E. until it, in turn, was conquered by Rome.

The Jewish religious leaders were confronted with a problem they had not faced before the days of their captivity. After spending many years in captivity, large numbers of Jews living in Greek-speaking regions could no longer read and understand the Hebrew Scriptures. Thus, in approximately 280 B.C.E.,² a group of Hebrew scholars began translating the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. There are some interesting—though improbable—traditions surrounding that translation project. The least credible tradition says that the translators were supernaturally empowered and completed the entire work in 70 days. A more likely possibility is that 72 Hebrew scholars did (or at least began) the work. Whatever the truth is, the translation became known as the *Seventy*. Thus, we now know it by its Latin name *Septuagint*, which is abbreviated with the Roman numerals LXX (70).

¹ Strictly speaking, descendants of Abraham were not called Jews until post-exilic times. (See *Insight on the Scriptures*, Vol. 2, page 73 under the heading "Jew(ess)" for more complete information.) In this book, however, we will use the term "Jew" in reference to pre-exilic times.

² "All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial," page 307.

However, regarding the *Septuagint* itself, we will make five statements that have a bearing on our study of the divine name:

1. The *Septuagint* occupied an important place in both Jewish and Christian thought. It was a monumental and far-reaching translation. Among other things, it showed that the Jews who used it understood that God's revelation was not limited to the Hebrew language.
2. The Hebrew Scriptures were written in Hebrew. The *Septuagint* was a *translation* of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. The term *Septuagint* should never be used as a synonym for early Hebrew Scripture manuscripts written in Hebrew.
3. The *Septuagint* was not unique as a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures.³ However, the *Septuagint* version was widely accepted by both the Greek-speaking Jews and Gentile Christians. By the end of the third century C.E., however, a number of Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures were available. Three widely-used translations were done by Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus. Aquila's translation of the Hebrew Scriptures is of particular interest. Although many manuscripts are available today that contain the word **Kyrios**⁴ rather than the Tetragrammaton, a recent discovery in Cairo of Aquila's Greek text clearly shows the four Hebrew letters of the Tetragrammaton. One must remember, however, that both Aquila and Symmachus lived during the second century C.E. Thus, these were not translations available to Jesus or the Apostles.
4. The *Septuagint* was a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures that was widely circulated throughout the Greek-speaking world of its day. Today we know that the Tetragrammaton was

³ Origen used three—and sometimes as many as five—distinct Greek versions of the Hebrew Scriptures in his *Hexapla*. These versions were all available by the end of the third century C.E. See *Insight on the Scriptures*, Vol. 2, page 9 for more information regarding Aquila's version.

⁴ In this book we will repeatedly refer to the Greek word **Kyrios** which has the meaning *Lord*. However, rather than using Greek letters, we will transliterate it by using English letters. For a more complete discussion of the use of the Greek word **Kyrios**, see *The Divine Name That Will Endure Forever*, Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1984. Note especially the article starting on page 23, "God's Name and the 'New Testament.'"

generally used in copies of the *Septuagint* that were intended for Jewish readers.⁵ On the other hand, the *Septuagint* that was circulated in the Gentile world used the Greek word **Kyrios** as a translation of the divine name.⁶ *Aid to Bible Understanding* (page 886) quotes Dr. Kahle from *The Cairo Geniza* as saying,

We now know that the Greek Bible text [the *Septuagint*] as far as it was written by Jews for Jews did not translate the Divine name by *Ky'rios*, but the Tetragrammaton written with Hebrew or Greek letters was retained in such MSS [manuscripts]. It was the Christians who replaced the Tetragrammaton by *ky'rios*, when the divine name written in Hebrew letters was not understood any more.

5. Finally, we must make a clear distinction between the *Septuagint* and the Christian Greek Scriptures. The *Septuagint* is a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. The translation work began in approximately 280 B.C.E.⁷ The books of the Law (the writings of Moses) were probably completed by 180 B.C.E.; the translation of the entire Hebrew Scriptures was probably not complete until the second century C.E. On the other hand, the Christian Greek Scriptures were written no earlier than 41 C.E. (Matthew) and no later than 98 C.E. (the Gospel of John and 1, 2, 3 John).⁸ Despite the fact that the early Christian congregations extensively used the *Septuagint*, the two Scriptures are distinctly separate. One cannot surmise that if a true statement can be made of one, it will be equally true of the other. Stating that the Tetragrammaton

⁵ According to "*All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial*," (pages 307 and 310) the *Septuagint* manuscripts containing the Tetragrammaton are principally the Fouad papyrus collection from the second or first century B.C.E. For a more complete discussion of the *Septuagint*, see the entry in *Insight on the Scriptures*, Vol. 2, page 9 under the heading, "In the Christian Greek Scriptures." For a photographic reproduction of the Fouad manuscript showing the Hebrew lettering, see *Insight on the Scriptures*, Vol. 1, pages 324 and 326.

⁶ See the *New World Translation Reference Edition* (pages 1562-1564) for a partial list of these manuscripts.

⁷ "*All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial*," page 307. Also see *Insight into the Scriptures*, Vol. 2, page 1152.

⁸ *Aid to Bible Understanding*, page 318.

was used in certain *Septuagint* versions is not evidence that the Tetragrammaton was present in the Christian Greek Scriptures. The presence of the Tetragrammaton in the Christian Scriptures must be established by a thorough study of ancient Christian Scripture manuscripts themselves. Nonetheless, the *Septuagint* greatly influenced the Christian Scriptures. Both Jesus and the Christian Scripture writers extensively quoted the *Septuagint*.

The *Septuagint* was the Bible of the early Christian congregations. In most cases where the Christian Scripture writers quoted Hebrew Scripture, they used the *Septuagint* version rather than Hebrew documents. However, important as the *Septuagint* is to the history and study of the Christian Scriptures, it is incorrect to treat textual variations that are found in one as though they must also be present in the other. *The two documents are entirely independent entities, separated in time by over 200 years, and set apart by different cultures.*



Chapter 3: A Trustworthy Bible Text

The Christian Scriptures were written in Greek. The first Christian Scripture book (Matthew) may have been written as early as 41 C.E.,¹ and the last book (the Gospel of John) was written in approximately 98 C.E. None of the handwritten original manuscripts are known to have survived. Only handwritten copies of the originals remain. Nonetheless, Bible scholars have access to over 5,000 ancient Greek manuscripts of the Christian Scriptures. The oldest extant copies (meaning currently existing manuscripts) were made within a relatively few years—to at most 150 years—of the writing of the Christian Scriptures. In one case, a very small manuscript portion of the Gospel of John is available which was copied about 125 C.E. This was about 25 years after the original was written.² Other surviving manuscripts were copied from 200 to 500 years after the originals were written.

Today, if we were not certain of the exact words the Christian Scripture writers used, then we could not be certain of what Jesus and others actually said. If that was true, neither could we be certain that our faith is correct. As we will see later, it is very important

¹ Scripture writing dates are not precisely known. In order to establish a consensus throughout this book, we will use the writing dates given in the table "Christian Greek Scriptures (C.E.)," *Insight on the Scriptures*, Vol. 1, page 310.

² "All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial," pages 316-317. From other sources (*The Text of the New Testament* by Bruce Metzger) we have a description of this very small manuscript portion. (It measures only about 2¹/₂ by 3¹/₂ inches and contains portions of John 18:31-33 on one side and John 18:37-38 on the other.) It is called the John Rylands fragment, and is classified as P⁵². It is important because of its date and location. It was written—as determined by the style of its script—in the first half of the second century, and was discovered in the Nile River area of Africa. Contrary to claims made by German scholars during the first half of the twentieth century, it establishes that the Gospel of John was written early enough to have been circulated from Ephesus and copied in Africa by this early date. See *Insight on the Scriptures*, Vol. 1, page 323 for a color photograph of P⁵².

whether the inspired Christian writers used *Lord* or *Jehovah*.

Therefore, we must be certain that the Greek text used by translators today is a faithful reproduction of the text written by the original Bible authors.

Because you may not be aware of how ancient Bible manuscripts are studied, we want to evaluate how scholars verify the exact words that were used by the original writers of the Christian Scriptures.

Finding a trustworthy Christian Greek Scripture text

If we believe that Scripture was inspired by God, then we want to know the exact words the Scripture authors wrote. For this reason, we desire Scripture manuscripts that are free of all scribal error and corruption. Will we ever obtain these perfect documents?

Far from being a hopeless situation, the possibility of reconstructing the Christian Scripture text as originally written is great. In fact, the task has already been largely completed. This is true because a large number of early Christian Greek Scripture manuscripts have been found. First, however, we need to briefly review a branch of study called *textual criticism*. Textual criticism is the study of the *text* (that is, the written words themselves) to determine the most likely wording of the original texts. Textual critics work with the oldest obtainable Greek manuscripts.

"*All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial*" succinctly defines textual criticism on page 318. The authors say, "Textual criticism is the method used for reconstruction and restoration of the original Bible text." (*Textual criticism* and *higher criticism* are two entirely different areas of study. For comments regarding so-called "higher criticism" see the book *The Bible—God's Word or Man's?* pages 31-32 and 38-43.)

The following illustration will help explain textual criticism. Say, for instance, that the original copy of an important historical document had been destroyed. Imagine that printing presses did not exist before its loss. Thus, only handwritten copies—or copies of the copies—of the document would be available for examination. As you would expect, there would be occasional errors made in the copying process. If you were assigned the responsibility of producing the most accurate reproduction of the original document, could you do it? You certainly could. First, you would gather as many copies as you could find. Secondly, you would attempt to determine the date when each copy was made because you would want to find the oldest

manuscripts. Then you would establish guidelines for determining the reliability of each copy. Finally, you would compare the copies to each other in order to reconstruct the original document.

The oldest manuscripts would probably be the most accurate because there would be fewer copies between them and the original. An old copy could be a copy made from a copy of the original. If it was very old, it could feasibly be a copy made from the original itself. A more recent copy could have a large number of copies between it and the original. The greater the number of copies between it and the original, the greater the possibility of error. Conversely, the older the manuscript, the more likely its accuracy. (We say *likely* because there could be exceptions. If, for example, it could be proven that a more recent copy was made directly from a very early copy, then that recent copy might be the most accurate.)

Returning to the subject of Bible manuscripts, we find that many ancient copies of the Greek Scriptures exist today.³ Furthermore, many were made as early as the third century C.E. Some of these manuscripts are referred to in the footnotes of the *New World Translation* and are extremely important references in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*.

Again, consider the illustration above. How would you compare the copies after you had assembled them chronologically? Could you determine the actual words written in the original? Again, the answer is *yes*. Say, for instance, that each copy had ten copying errors. You would soon find that the errors differed from copy to copy. That is, the errors in each copy would be random—the errors would not always be found in the same word or location in each of the manuscripts. (On the other hand, if you found an identical error in several different manuscripts, you might assume that they had all been copied from a common source containing that error.) Now you would calculate the highest frequency of agreement (that is, copies which were the same for a given sentence or word) in order to determine the most likely wording of the original. (Again, there are exceptions. One exception to the highest frequency of agreement is made when a large number of copies can be traced to an earlier copy that has proven errors.)

Needless to say, we have oversimplified the problem of identifying errors. In practice, there are many steps that must be

³ See the table on page 313 in "*All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial*."

taken to determine the authenticity of any variation within a Greek manuscript. However, a high degree of certainty has been achieved.

In this way, biblical scholars (such as Westcott and Hort, the textual critics who produced the Greek text used in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*) have been able to compare the available manuscripts and determine the content of the original Christian Scriptures with amazing accuracy. A concise summary of the reliability of our Greek text is given in "*All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial*,"⁴ where the writers say:

F. J. A. Hort, who was co-producer of the Westcott and Hort text, writes: "The great bulk of the words of the New Testament stand out above all discriminative processes of criticism, because they are free from variation, and need only to be transcribed...If comparative trivialities...are set aside, the words in our opinion still subject to doubt [in the Greek text] can hardly amount to more than a thousandth part of the whole New Testament."

Why has this [subject of the accuracy of the transmission of the Christian Greek Scriptures] been given such exhaustive treatment? The purpose has been to show conclusively that the texts of both the Hebrew and the Greek Scriptures are essentially the same as the authentic, original text that Jehovah inspired faithful men of old to record. Those original writings were inspired. The copyists, though skilled, were not inspired....Hence, it has been necessary to sift through the vast reservoir of manuscript copies in order to identify clearly and unmistakably the pure waters of truth as they originally poured forth from the Great Fountainhead, Jehovah.

What confidence we may have today that the Christian Greek Scriptures, as they are now available to us, do indeed contain 'the pattern of healthful words' as written down by the inspired disciples of Jesus Christ.



⁴ "*All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial*," 1990, pages 315-320.

Chapter 4: *The Kingdom Interlinear Translation*

The *Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*¹ contains much information concerning the 237 occurrences of the name *Jehovah* in the *New World Translation Christian Scriptures*. The Watch Tower Society published both a 1969 and a 1985 edition.

The footnote and reference system used in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* is comprehensive and easy to use. Nonetheless, a brief explanation will make them more useful. The *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* contains three complete Christian Scripture texts. The main section contains both a faithful reproduction of the original Greek text and an interlinear word-for-word English translation. The right-hand column consists of a parallel *New World Translation* text.

Each time the divine name appears in the *New World Translation* text, an attached asterisk (i.e. *Jehovah**) identifies a footnote for that verse. *In each footnote, the reader is given a first group of citations consisting of Hebrew translations containing the Tetragrammaton, and a second group of citations identifying early Greek manuscripts which use **Kyrios** (Lord).*

1. The first group of textual sources consists of Hebrew translations that use the Tetragrammaton in that verse. These occurrences of יהוה are given to substantiate the English translation *Jehovah*. The Hebrew translations are identified as J¹, J², J³, and so on, continuing to J²⁷. Each of the letter and superscript symbols are known as "J" references because they support the name *Jehovah* in the *New World Translation*.
2. The second group of textual sources consists of a select number of early Greek manuscripts and Armenian, Syriac, and Latin versions which substantiate the Greek word **Kyrios** (or, on occasion, **Theos**). The Greek manuscripts are identified by a unique symbol assigned to each as Ⲡ, A, B, C, D, L, P⁴⁵, P⁴⁶, P⁴⁷, P⁶⁶, P⁷⁴, and P⁷⁵. The Latin and other language versions are identified as Arm, It, Sy, Sy^p, Sy^c, Sy^h, Sy^{hi}, Sy^p, Sy^s, Vg, Vg^c, and Vg^s. These manuscripts

¹ Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1969 and 1985.

support the word *Lord* (from **Kyrios**) in both the Greek and English portions of the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*.

In a helpful introductory section of the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*, each of these footnote reference texts is enumerated with a brief description and publication date. For example, J⁷ of Group 1 above (which is the document cited most frequently) is listed as the "Greek Scriptures in Hebrew." This is a translation (version) of the original Greek Scriptures into Hebrew published by Elias Hutter of Nuremberg in 1599. Thus, the footnote reference "J⁷" in the *New World Translation* tells us that the choice of the name *Jehovah* in a particular verse is based in part on the use of God's name in this 1599 Hebrew translation.

This same *Jehovah* footnote also lists Greek manuscripts identified in Group 2 that support the choice of Westcott and Hort in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*. In most cases, their choice from the best extant manuscripts was the Greek word **Kyrios** and is translated *Lord*. If, for example, the footnote lists "B" as the Greek manuscript evidence, it refers to a Christian Scripture manuscript called the *Vatican MS. No. 1209* which is a fourth century Greek manuscript. (That is, the evidence supporting the Greek word used in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* indicates that **Kyrios** was known to have been used as early as the fourth century—between 301 and 400 C.E.)

In almost all cases, both the "J" references and the **Kyrios** references will cite multiple Hebrew versions or Greek manuscripts.

The *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* format

It is possible that some readers are unfamiliar with the format of an interlinear Bible. It may be helpful to the reader to see a reproduction of the actual format consisting of the Greek text, the word-for-word English translation beneath each corresponding Greek word, and the *New World Translation* column on the right. The footnotes for all verses are grouped together at the bottom of the page. Figure 1 shows Matthew 1:22-24 as these verses appear in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*.

22 τοῦτο δέ ὅλον γέγονεν ἵνα
 This but whole has happened in order that
 πληρωθῆ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ Κυρίου
 might be fulfilled the (thing) spoken by Lord
 διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος **23** Ἴδου
 through the prophet saying Look!
 ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει καὶ
 The virgin in belly will have and
 τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσιν τὸ
 will give birth to son, and they will call the
 ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ ὃ ἐστίν
 name of him Immanuel; which is
 μεθερμηνεύμενον Μεθ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός.
 being translated With us the God.
24 Ἐγερθεὶς δέ ὁ Ἰωσήφ ἀπὸ
 Having been awakened but the Joseph from
 τοῦ ὕπνου ἐποίησεν ὡς προσέταξεν αὐτῷ ὁ
 the sleep did as directed to him the
 ἄγγελος Κυρίου καὶ παρέλαβεν τὴν
 angel of Lord and he took along the
 γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ
 woman of him;

22 All this actually came about for that to be fulfilled which was spoken by Jehovah* **23** "Look! The virgin will become pregnant and will give birth to a son, and they will call his name Immanuel," which means, when translated, "With Us Is God."

24 Then Joseph woke up from his sleep and did as the angel of Jehovah* had directed him, and he took his wife home.

22* Jehovah, J1-4, 7-14, 16-18, 22-24, 26; Lord, NB.

24* Jehovah, J1-4, 7-14, 16-18, 22-24; Lord, NB.

Figure 1: Format of the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*.



Chapter 5: An Emphasis on the Tetragrammaton

The use of the Tetragrammaton in the original writings of the Christian Scriptures is a central teaching of the Watch Tower Society. The Society teaches that Jehovah's name—written in Hebrew letters as יהוה—was used by the original writers of the Christian Scriptures, and that the present content of the Greek text (which does not use the Tetragrammaton) took form as a result of heresy and subsequent changes made by the scribes who copied the Scriptures. These scribes presumably changed the four Hebrew letters (YHWH) to the Greek word **Kyrios**.

A concise summary of this teaching is given in Appendix 1D of the *New World Translation* Reference Edition (page 1564). We quote in part:

Matthew made more than a hundred quotations from the inspired Hebrew Scriptures [in his gospel written in Hebrew¹]. Where these quotations included the divine name he would have been obliged faithfully to include the Tetragrammaton in the Hebrew Gospel account. When the Gospel of Matthew was translated into Greek, the Tetragrammaton was left untranslated within the Greek text according to the practice of that time.

Not only Matthew but all the writers of the Christian Greek Scriptures quoted verses from the Hebrew text or from the *Septuagint* where the divine name appears. For example, in Peter's speech in Ac 3:22 a quotation is made from De 18:15 where the Tetragrammaton appears in a papyrus fragment of the *Septuagint* dated to the first century B.C.E. As a follower of Christ, Peter used God's name, Jehovah. When Peter's speech was put on record the Tetragrammaton was here used according to the practice during the first century B.C.E. and the first century C.E.

Sometime during the second or third century C.E. the scribes removed the Tetragrammaton from both the *Septuagint* and the

¹ In this same section, Jerome is quoted as stating that there was a gospel written in Hebrew by Matthew. The testimony of Jerome must be accepted as being reliable. There is no reason to doubt that Matthew wrote a parallel gospel in Hebrew.

Christian Greek Scriptures and replaced it with *Ky'ri-os*, Lord or *The-os*; "God."

Concerning the use of the Tetragrammaton in the Christian Greek Scriptures, George Howard of the University of Georgia wrote in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 96, 1977, p. 63: "Recent discoveries in Egypt and the Judean Desert allow us to see first hand the use of God's name in pre-Christian times. These discoveries are significant for N[ew] T[estament] studies in that they form a literary analogy with the earliest Christian documents and may explain how N[ew] T[estament] authors used the divine name. In the following pages we will set forth a theory that the divine name, יהוה (and possibly abbreviations of it), was originally written in the NT quotations of and allusions to the O[Id] T[estament] and that in the course of time it was replaced mainly with the surrogate $\overline{\text{K}\overline{\text{S}}}$ [abbreviation for *ky'ri-os*, *Lord*]. This removal of the Tetragram[maton], in our view, created a confusion in the minds of early Gentile Christians about the relationship between the 'Lord God' and the 'Lord Christ' which is reflected in the MS [manuscript] tradition of the NT text itself."

We concur with the above, with this exception: We do not consider this view a "theory," rather, a presentation of the facts of history as to the transmission of Bible manuscripts.



Chapter 6: J²⁰ — יהוה in the Greek Concordance

In Chapter 1 we said that the New World Bible Translation Committee proposed two translation guidelines and a third historical hypothesis that, when combined, support the use of *Jehovah* in their Christian Scripture translation.

In this chapter we will evaluate the first of these translation guidelines. This first guideline says that *quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures using the divine name will guide the decision to use Jehovah in the Christian Scriptures for that same quotation*. Simply stated, if a first-century Christian Scripture writer quoted a verse from the Hebrew Scriptures that used the Tetragrammaton, then the Translation Committee would restore the name *Jehovah* to that verse.

The J²⁰ reference

Two important “J” documents are reference sources rather than Hebrew versions. One of these is a concordance for the Greek “New Testament” which lists all quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures. This concordance is particularly valuable because it quotes the Hebrew Scripture verse in the Hebrew language, allowing the reader to verify the Tetragrammaton or other form of the divine name. The 1969 edition of the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* (page 30) describes this “J” reference as follows:

J²⁰

A Concordance to the Greek Testament, by W. F. Moulton and A. S. Geden published by T. & T. Clark in 1897 at Edinburgh, Scotland. Principally in the Scripture references under ΘΕΟΣ and ΚΥΡΙΟΣ it intersperses parts of the Hebrew text containing the Tetragrammaton (יהוה) to which the Greek text refers or from which it makes a quotation.

J²⁰ cites all 714 of the *Kyrios* references in the entire Christian Scriptures. In this chapter, however, we will only list the entries in which J²⁰ cites a Hebrew Scripture reference. (J²⁰ cites no Hebrew Scripture references for 2 Peter, any of John's Epistles, Jude, or the book of Revelation.)

The table at the end of this chapter consists of six columns. The first is the verse location, which is always a *Jehovah* reference in the *New World Translation*. Columns 2 and 3 are taken directly from the text of the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*. Column 2 is the Greek word, and Column 3 is the English translation. Columns 4 and 5 show the entries from J²⁰. Column 4 is the reference to the Hebrew Scripture verse quoted by the Christian Scripture writer and Column 5 is the entry in Hebrew designating the Hebrew name of God. (The divine name is in the form of either the Tetragrammaton alone or a composite word including the Tetragrammaton.) The final column shows the word used in the *New World Translation*.

Read through the table carefully. You will see evidence of the following:

1. In at least 44 instances (including 1 Peter 2:3 and 3:15), יהוה appears in a Hebrew Scripture verse that is quoted by the first-century Christian writer in the Christian Scriptures.
2. Where the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* always gives the Greek word **Kyrios** as the best textual choice and translates it as *Lord*, the *New World Translation* usually inserts the divine name *Jehovah*.
3. Though there are only 44 occurrences of the divine name in the J²⁰ citations in Column 1, the remaining verses in Column 1 also fit this category. When the context of each of the remaining Hebrew Scripture references is evaluated, the appropriateness of using the verse as a quotation of, or a reference to, *Jehovah* could be substantiated. Thus, this table would indicate 76 instances (discounting the two 1 Peter verses) in which a *Jehovah* reference in the *New World Translation* Christian Scriptures has an identifiable quotation source from the Hebrew Scriptures.
4. The table does not include the four Christian Scripture references to *Jah* in Revelation 19 because J²⁰ does not list them. They are neither **Kyrios** passages nor quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures.
5. The table lists only 78 instances (or 76 when the 1 Peter references are omitted) in which a Christian Scripture quotation can be traced directly to a Hebrew Scripture reference. Careful cross-reference examination of all *Jehovah* references in the *New World Translation* of the Greek Scriptures indicates that there are probably at least 154 quotations in the Christian Scriptures which can be traced to any one of: 1) a direct use of the divine name, 2) an action attributed to Jehovah, or 3) a context in which Jehovah is

the one referred to in the Hebrew Scriptures.¹ J²⁰ is a conservative rather than an exhaustive source of Hebrew Scripture quotations.

6. It is nonetheless surprising to realize that the remaining 83 *Jehovah* references in the *New World Translation* Christian Scriptures were not derived from Hebrew Scripture quotations.

The following table indicates all Christian Scripture passages which are common to both J²⁰ and the 237 *Jehovah* references in the *New World Translation*.

Matthew	KIT	KIT	J ²⁰ Documentation		NWT
			Heb. Script.	Hebrew word	
1:22	Κυρίου	Lord	Is 7:14		Jehovah
2:15	Κυρίου	Lord	Ho 11:1		Jehovah
3:3	Κυρίου	Lord	Is 40:3	יהוה	Jehovah
4:7	Κύριον	Lord	Dt 6:16	אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה	Jehovah
4:10	Κύριον	Lord	Dt 6:13	אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה	Jehovah
5:33	Κυρίω	Lord	Lv 19:12	Note 1	Jehovah
21:9	Κυρίου	Lord	Ps 118:26	יהוה	Jehovah
21:42	Κυρίου	Lord	Ps 118:23	יהוה	Jehovah
22:37	Κύριον	Lord	Dt 6:5	יהוה	Jehovah
22:44	Κύριος	Lord	Ps 110:1	יהוה	Jehovah
23:39	Κυρίου	Lord	Ps 118:26		Jehovah
27:10	Κύριος	Lord	Zc 11:13		Jehovah

¹ This tabulation comes from the book *Jehovah's Witnesses Defended*, second edition, by Greg Stafford, Elihu Books, 2000, pages 31-32. Read the entire section between pages 18 and 36. Stafford has produced a scholarly book. Nonetheless, note that Stafford does not ultimately appeal to the authority of the Greek text for his Bible translation recommendation. Rather, he appeals to an unverifiable textual corruption and reliance on the work of translators' appeal to the Hebrew versions. All of us are ultimately faced with this same decision. Do we accept the most reliable Greek Scripture textual evidence, or do we accept another, unverifiable explanation of history because it fits our theological position? The point of view of our book is that the best reconstruction of the Scripture text is the highest authority for Bible translation.

Mark

1:3	Κυρίου	Lord	Is 40:3	יהוה	Jehovah
11:9	Κυρίου	Lord	Ps 118:26		Jehovah
12:11	Κυρίου	Lord	Ps 118:23		Jehovah
12:29	Κύριος	Lord	Dt 6:4	יהוה	Jehovah
12:29	Κύριος	Lord	Dt 6:4	יהוה	Jehovah
12:30	Κύριον	Lord	Dt 6:5	יהוה	Jehovah
12:36	Κύριος	Lord	Ps 110:1		Jehovah

Luke

2:23	Κυρίου	Lord	Ex 13:2	Note 1	Jehovah
2:23	κυρίω	Lord	Ex 13:2	Note 1	Jehovah
2:24	Κυρίου	Lord	Lv 12:8		Jehovah
3:4	Κύριον	Lord	Is 40:3	יהוה	Jehovah
4:8	Κύριον	Lord	Dt 6:13		Jehovah
4:12	Κύριον	Lord	Dt 6:16		Jehovah
4:18	Κυρίου	Lord	Is 61:1	יהוה	Jehovah
4:19	Κυρίου	Lord	Is 61:2	יהוה	Jehovah
10:27	Κύριον	Lord	Dt 6:5		Jehovah
13:35	Κυρίου	Lord	Ps 118:26		Jehovah
19:38	Κυρίου	Lord	Ps 118:26		Jehovah
20:42	Κύριος	Lord	Ps 110:1		Jehovah

John

1:23	Κυρίου	Lord	Is 40:3		Jehovah
12:13	Κυρίου	Lord	Ps 118:26		Jehovah
12:38	Κύριε	Lord	Is 53:1	Note 1	Jehovah
12:38	Κυρίου	Lord	Is 53:1	יהוה	Jehovah

Acts

2:20	Κυρίου	Lord	Jo 3:4	יהוה	Jehovah
2:21	Κυρίου	Lord	Jo 3:5	יהוה	Jehovah
2:25	κύριον	Lord	Ps 16:8	יהוה	Jehovah
2:34	Κύριος	Lord	Ps 110:1		Jehovah
3:22	Κύριος	Lord	Dt 18:15	יהוה	Jehovah
4:26	κυρίου	Lord	Ps 2:2	על־יהוה	Jehovah
7:49	Κύριος	Lord	Is 66:1,2	נא־יהוה	Jehovah
15:17	κύριον	Lord	Am 9:12	Note 1	Jehovah
15:17	Κύριος	Lord	Am 9:13	יהוה	Jehovah

Romans

4:8	Κύριος	Lord	Ps 32:2	יהוה	Jehovah
9:28	Κύριος	Lord	Is 10:23	יהוה	Jehovah
9:29	Κύριος	Lord	Is 1:9	יהוה	Jehovah
10:16	Κύριε	Lord	Is 53:1		Jehovah

11:3	Κύριε	Lord	1 Ki 19:10	Note 1	Jehovah
11:34	Κυρίου	Lord	Is 40:13	יהוה	Jehovah
12:19	Κύριος	Lord	Dt 32:35	Note 1	Jehovah
14:11	Κύριος	Lord	Is 14:23		Jehovah
15:11	κύριον	Lord	Ps 67:1	אֱהֱיָהּ	Jehovah

1 Corinthians

1:31	Κυρίω	Lord	Jr 9:23		Jehovah
2:16	Κυρίου	Lord	Is 40:13		Jehovah
3:20	Κύριος	Lord	Ps 44:11	יהוה	Jehovah
10:26	κυρίου	Lord	Ps 24:1	לַיהוָה	Jehovah
14:21	Κύριος	Lord	Is 28:12	Note 1	Jehovah

2 Corinthians

6:17	Κύριος	Lord	Is 52:11		Jehovah
10:17	Κυρίω	Lord	Jr 9:23		Jehovah

2 Timothy

2:19	Κύριος	Lord	Nm 16:5	יהוה	Jehovah
2:19	Κυρίου	Lord	Is 52:11		Jehovah

Hebrews

1:26	κύριε	Lord	Ps 110:4	Note 1	Lord
7:21	Κύριος	Lord	Ps 110:4	יהוה	Jehovah
8:8	Κύριος	Lord	Jr 31:31	נְאֻם־יְהוָה	Jehovah
8:9	Κύριος	Lord	Jr 31:32	נְאֻם־יְהוָה	Jehovah
8:10	Κύριος	Lord	Jr 31:33	נְאֻם־יְהוָה	Jehovah
8:11	κυρίου	Lord	Jr 31:34	אֱהֱיָהּ	Jehovah
10:16	Κύριος	Lord	Jr 31:34		Jehovah
10:30	Κύριος	Lord	Ps 135:14	יהוה	Jehovah
12:5	Κυρίου	Lord	Pr 3:11	יהוה	Jehovah
12:6	Κύριος	Lord	Pr 3:12	יהוה	Jehovah
13:6	Κύριος	Lord	Ps 118:6	יהוה	Jehovah

1 Peter

1:25	Κυρίου	Lord	Is 40:5	יהוה	Jehovah
2:3	Κύριος	Lord	Ps 34:8	יהוה	Lord
3:12	Κυρίου	Lord	Ps 34:16	יהוה	Jehovah
3:12	Κυρίου	Lord	Ps 34:17	יהוה	Jehovah
3:15	Κυρίον	Lord	Is 8:13	אֱהֱיָהּ	Lord

Note 1: The citation is a Hebrew entry that does not include יהוה.

The divine name (יהוה) at I Peter 2:3 and 3:15

The New World Bible Translation Committee established a fundamental principle that guided them in their use of the divine name in the Christian Greek Scriptures. This principle is stated repeatedly in numerous *New World Translation* editions and elsewhere. The foreword of the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*, pages 18-19 of the 1969 edition,² says:

How is a modern translator to know or determine when to render the Greek words Κύριος and θεός into the divine name in his version? By determining where the inspired Christian writers have quoted from the Hebrew Scriptures. Then he must refer back to the original to locate whether the divine name appears there. This way he can determine the identity to give to *ky'ri-os* and *the-os'* and he can then clothe them with personality.

Realizing that this is the time and place for it, *we have followed this course in rendering our version of the Christian Greek Scriptures.* (Emphasis added.)

Have the translators "followed this course in rendering [their] version of the Christian Scriptures"?

The test for translation integrity must examine *every* Christian Scripture reference that quotes Hebrew Scripture using the divine name.

From the above quotations, we understand that the name *Jehovah* will be inserted into a Christian Scripture verse in locations at which one or more of the following conditions are met:

1. When the original writer quoted a Hebrew Scripture source that used the divine name.
2. By inference, when the viability of the reference as a quotation is confirmed by the J²⁰ *Jehovah* reference.
3. Finally, when any of the Hebrew versions use יהוה at this same reference.³

² Also see *Aid to Bible Understanding*, page 1016, and *Insight on the Scriptures*, Vol. 2, page 267.

³ The Bible Translation Committee says (*Kingdom Interlinear Translation*, 1985 edition, page 12),

Out of the 237 times that we have restored Jehovah's name in the body of our translation, there is only one instance wherein

Look at 1 Peter 2:3 in the table above. Notice that the J²⁰ reference source that has been relied upon by the translators of the *New World Translation* clearly lists this verse as one that quotes the divine name (יהוה) with modern vowel points. The Hebrew Scripture quotation is found at Psalm 34:8:

Taste and see that Jehovah is good, O YOU people;
Happy is the able-bodied man that takes refuge in him.

Therefore, according to the stated translation policy of the *New World Translation*, 1 Peter 2:3 *should* read:

...that through [the word] YOU may grow to salvation, provided YOU have tasted that Jehovah is kind. Coming to him as to a living stone, rejected, it is true, by men, but chosen, precious, with God.

The "living stone...rejected...by men" in this passage is most certainly Jesus.⁴

we have no support or agreement from any of the Hebrew versions. But in this one instance, namely, at 1 Corinthians 7:17, the context and related texts strongly support restoring the divine name.

⁴ In the study of 1 Peter, the authors of *"All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial,"* affirm that this passage is referring to Jesus when they say on page 252, "([1 Peter] 2:1-3:22). As living stones, Christians are built up a spiritual house, offering up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, the foundation cornerstone, who became a stone of stumbling to the disobedient."

The reader may also wish to consult the lengthy footnote quotation of F.J.A. Hort referred to at this reference (1 Peter 2:3) in the *New World Translation Reference Edition*, in which that writer argues against identifying this passage with **Kyrios**. Hort's comments may be correct from a commentator's point of view. However, they are moot from the perspective of selection between **Kyrios** and יהוה because the New World Bible Translation Committee is not presenting its translation policy as one which is optional or discretionary. The translators have led us to believe that *each quotation of the Hebrew Scriptures that uses the divine name will be translated using "Jehovah" in the Christian Scriptures*. That translation policy would *require* 1 Peter 2:3 to be rendered as *Jehovah* because of its Hebrew Scripture source, irrespective of

Again, the Translation Committee did not follow their stated translation policy at 1 Peter 3:15.

Isaiah 8:13 says:

Jehovah of armies—he is the One whom YOU should treat as holy, and he should be the object of YOUR fear, and he should be the One causing YOU to tremble."

The two Hebrew words translated "Jehovah of armies" are אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה זָבָאוֹת. Appendix 1E on page 1567 (*New World Translation Reference Edition*, 1984) lists this word combination as 'Adho-nai' Yehwih' tseva-ohth'.⁵ The first word in this group אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה is Adho-nai' Yehwih' which is translated as "Jehovah the Sovereign Lord." (This composite word is also given in Appendix 1E.)

Because of the English translation, it is not readily apparent that 1 Peter 3:15 is a quotation of Isaiah 8:13. However, the word translated "treat as holy" comes from the Hebrew word קָדַשׁ (qadash) which means "to make, pronounce or observe as clean: to consecrate, dedicate, hallow or sanctify."⁶ With that definition in mind, it is plain to see that Peter is quoting this Hebrew Scripture when he writes:

But sanctify the Christ as Lord in YOUR hearts, always ready to make a defense before everyone that demands of YOU a reason for the hope in YOU.⁷

As already noted, the *Jehovah* reference J²⁰ also identifies this as a direct quotation in which the divine name is used (Isaiah 8:1). The J²⁰ reference, by the New World Bible Translation Committees' own

Hort's comment to the contrary.

⁵ However, Appendix 1E does not list Isaiah 8:13 as one of the 16 references using this word combination. Inasmuch as the verse is translated as "Jehovah of armies," and the entry is shown in J²⁰, it is assumed that this specific reference was inadvertently omitted in the footnote.

⁶ Strong's *Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, page 135 in the Hebrew Dictionary, entry 6942.

⁷ The *American Standard Version* published by the Watch Tower Society, translates Isaiah 8:13 as, "Jehovah of hosts, him shall ye sanctify." The King James version translates the same verse as, "Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself."

translation policy, indicates that 1 Peter 3:15 must be translated using the divine name *Jehovah*.

However, the strongest evidence that 1 Peter 3:15 quotes Isaiah 8:13 comes from the footnote for this verse (1 Peter 3:15) found on page 1459 in the *New World Translation Reference Edition*. The footnote reads:

15* "The Christ as Lord," אABC; TR, "the Lord God"; J7,8,11-14,16,17,24, "Jehovah God."

This footnote gives us the following information:

1. The wording, "The Christ as Lord," is supported by the four Greek manuscripts identified as א (*Sinaitic*), A (*Alexandrine*), B (*Vatican 1209*), and C (*Codex Ephraemi rescriptus*).
2. The wording, "the Lord God," is supported by Erasmus' Greek text known as the *Textus Receptus*.
3. The wording, "Jehovah God," is supported by nine Hebrew versions listed as J7,8,11-14,16,17,24. Thus, based on the precedent of 237 *Jehovah* references, the translators by their own agreement are bound to render **Kyrios** as *Jehovah* in this verse.

The translators do not list J²⁰ in this footnote. Nonetheless, the reference is verified by the source itself. Thus, the footnote in conjunction with the J²⁰ reference indicates that this verse meets all the criteria of one in which the New World Bible Translation Committee says they will reinstate the divine name.⁸

Why then, did the translators of the *New World Translation* again alter their own translation policy by not using the divine name

⁸ Even more troubling is the presence of the footnote itself. This verse was not translated as *Lord* rather than *Jehovah* through mere oversight. The fact that the translators realized its significance is indicated by their footnote. In spite of this verse's fulfillment of the criteria for the reinstatement of *Jehovah*, they made a discretionary decision to alter their own translation policy by using the word *Lord* rather than *Jehovah*. The reader should not be confused at this point. The author believes that **Kyrios** should be translated as *Lord*. However, he also believes that it is unacceptable to claim adherence to a stated translation policy designed to preserve a theological position, only to then alter that same translation policy in certain instances because it challenges the very theological position it was intended to support.

at 1 Peter 3:15 where Peter quotes a Hebrew Scripture passage which used the divine name? According to the *New World Translation* policy, this verse *should* have been translated:

But sanctify the Christ as Jehovah in YOUR hearts, always ready to make a defense before everyone that demands of YOU a reason for the hope in YOU.

The reader may answer, "It would be improper to use Jehovah's name interchangeably with Christ's." Yet, the translators of the *New World Translation* have established a policy that says that they will reinstate the divine name *when a Christian Scripture writer quotes a Hebrew Scripture verse that contains the divine name* (יהוה). If that is a valid translation principle, *then it is not the translators' option to be selective in omitting the divine name in passages that identify Jesus*. The translators must allow the first-century Christian Scripture writer to communicate exactly what he intended his readers to understand. *If the Christian Scripture writer intended the reader to understand the verse to mean **Jehovah** when he quoted a verse containing the divine name, then he intended that meaning **each time** he copied a Hebrew Scripture verse.*⁹



⁹ On the other hand, we would also say that if, under inspiration of God, the Christian Scripture writer intended his reader to understand the passage to read **Kyrios**, then the translator would have to impart—without alteration—the meaning as *Lord* to the English reader.

Chapter 7: Hebrew Versions

In Chapter 1, we said that the New World Bible Translation Committee proposed two translation guidelines and a third historical hypothesis that, when combined, would support the use of *Jehovah* in their Christian Scripture translation.

In the last chapter, we reviewed the first translation guideline that evaluates passages coming from the Hebrew Scriptures. That is, *if an inspired Christian Scripture writer quoted a Hebrew Scripture passage that used the Tetragrammaton, then the Translation Committee would restore the name **Jehovah** to that verse.* On the other hand, their second guideline evaluates passages from recent Hebrew translations of the Christian Scriptures. In summary, the second guideline states that *if a Hebrew version used יהוה, the New World Bible Translation Committee would restore **Jehovah** to that Christian Scripture passage.*

In this chapter we will evaluate the second of these translation guidelines.

Why does the *New World Translation* use Hebrew versions?

As we know, the Christian Scriptures were written in Greek. We also know that the publishers of the *New World Translation* truthfully admit that there are no ancient Christian Scripture manuscripts of any kind that used the Tetragrammaton. This is true in spite of numerous instances in which the Tetragrammaton was used in the Greek *Septuagint* Hebrew Scriptures.

However, because many Hebrew versions used the Tetragrammaton in the Christian Scriptures, the translators of the *New World Translation* used these Hebrew translations of the Christian Scriptures in 237 instances as the basis for reinstating the divine name *Jehovah* to their Christian Scriptures.

What are Hebrew versions?

Hebrew versions are simply Hebrew language translations of the Greek Scriptures for use by Hebrew-speaking readers. In fact, most were published with one of the underlying purposes being the conversion of Jews to Christianity. For that reason, some of these Hebrew versions were published by a Trinitarian Bible Society. Because the Tetragrammaton (יהוה) is a word understood by Hebrew

speakers, it is frequently found in these Hebrew versions.¹ The *New World Translation* uses 25 Hebrew versions (and two non-version sources) as footnote references citing יהוה in the Christian Scriptures.

Are Hebrew versions ancient texts?

Most assume that these Hebrew versions are ancient texts. In fact, they are not. The earliest complete Hebrew version cited by the *New World Translation* was translated from the King James Greek text in 1599. The most recent Hebrew version cited in the *New World Translation* was translated in 1979 from a “New Testament” Greek text published in 1975. Of course, all of the Greek texts from which these versions were translated can be readily examined today. None of these Greek texts contain a single occurrence of either יהוה in Hebrew letters or the divine name transliterated into Greek letters.

An example of a Hebrew version

J18 is one of the Hebrew versions used by the New World Bible Translation Committee to substantiate their use of the

¹ The reader may be surprised to realize that the Tetragrammaton is frequently used by the Christian Jewish translators to identify Jesus with יהוה in these Trinitarian Hebrew versions. Other terms used for deity are often applied to Jesus in these same Hebrew versions. For instance, J17 has Saul saying, “And when we had all fallen to the ground I heard a voice say to me in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’...But I said, ‘Who are you, Lord (אֲדֹנָי—*Master*)?’ And the Lord (הַאֲדֹנָי—*Sovereign Lord [Jehovah God]*) said, ‘I am Jesus (יֵשׁוּעַ—*Jesus*), whom you are persecuting.’” (Acts 26:14-15) Literally translated according to the Hebrew language rules established for the *New World Translation* (see Appendix 1E in the *NWT Reference Edition*, 1984) this Hebrew version says, “And Jehovah God said ‘I am Jesus.’” A Hebrew-speaking reader of many of these Hebrew versions would recognize that Jesus is being closely identified with deity. The use of these Hebrew versions to *separate* the identity of Jesus and יהוה is contrary to their intent. When they are studied carefully, it can clearly be seen that these Hebrew versions *unite* the identities of Jesus and יהוה. For further information regarding both this passage and the general intent of Hebrew versions, see the book, *The New World Translation and Hebrew Versions* at, www.Tetragrammaton.org.

Tetragrammaton. The 1969 edition of the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* gives the following information regarding this version:

J18

Greek Scriptures in Hebrew. In London, England, in 1885, a new Hebrew translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures was published. This new translation was commenced by Isaac Salkinson and completed after his death by Christian David Ginsburg. Our oldest copy is of the third edition published in 1891. This has been compared with the small edition published by the Trinitarian Bible Society, London, England, in 1939, and also with the Hebrew-English New Testament published in 1941 by the same Society (page 29).

When we study the 237 *Jehovah* references, a large number of the footnotes cite J18. As expected, we will find confirmation of the presence of the Tetragrammaton in this Hebrew version exactly as listed in the *New World Translation*.

On the other hand, the title page of J18 gives information we would not anticipate:

**THE
NEW TESTAMENT
OF
OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR
JESUS CHRIST**

Translated out of the original Greek: and with
the former translations diligently compared
and revised, by His Majesty's special command

THE TRINITARIAN BIBLE SOCIETY
Instituted in London in the Year 1831
Depository
7 BURY PLACE, LONDON, W.C.1

Notice the reference to the source material for this Hebrew version that says, "Translated out of the original Greek." The word *version* simply means *translation*. Yet, while studying the Tetragrammaton in the Christian Scriptures of these Hebrew versions, it seldom occurs to us that we are talking about *translations* from a Greek text that plainly does not use the Tetragrammaton. Also notice the name of this Hebrew version's publisher: The Trinitarian Bible Society.

Manuscript dates in the *Jehovah* footnotes

The footnotes for any *Jehovah* reference in the *New World Translation Christian Scriptures* give meaningful information regarding both version and manuscript dates.

Revelation 4:11 is one of the important *Jehovah* verses. The verse appears in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* as follows:

11 Ἄξιός εἶ, ὁ κύριος καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν,
 Worthy you are, the Lord and the God of us,
 λαβεῖν τὴν δόξαν καὶ τὴν τιμὴν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν,
 to receive the glory and the honor and the power,
 ὅτι σὺ ἔκτισας τὰ πάντα, καὶ διὰ
 because you created the all (things) and through
 τὸ θέλημά σου ἦσαν καὶ ἐκτίσθησαν.
 the will of you they were and they were created

The *New World Translation* quoted in the right-hand margin translates the verse:

11 "You are worthy, Jehovah,* even our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because you created all things, and because of your will they existed and were created."

At the bottom of the page, the *Jehovah* footnote is given:

11* Jehovah, J7,8,13,14,16,18; Lord, ⲚAV_gSy^h.

The verse footnote lists six Hebrew versions (J7,8,13,14,16,18) that are used as evidence for restoring *Jehovah*; two early Greek manuscripts (Ⲛ *SinaiticMS* and A *AlexandrineMS*) that have *Lord* in the Greek manuscript; and two versions (the Latin *Vulgate* and a Syriac version) that substantiate *Lord*. The six Hebrew versions in this list are:

J ⁷	<i>Christian Greek Scriptures in Hebrew;</i> Elias Hutter.	1599
J ⁸	<i>Christian Greek Scriptures in Hebrew;</i> William Robertson.	1661
J ¹³	<i>Christian Greek Scriptures in Hebrew;</i> A. McCaul and others.	1838
J ¹⁴	<i>Christian Greek Scriptures in Hebrew;</i> John Christian Reichardt.	1846
J ¹⁶	<i>Christian Greek Scriptures in Hebrew;</i>	1866

	John Christian Reichardt and Joachim H. R. Blesenthal.	
J ¹⁸	<i>Christian Greek Scriptures in Hebrew</i> ; Isaac Salkinson.	1885

From this same verse, a similar (though shorter) list² is given citing Greek manuscripts that contain the Greek word **Kyrios** (*Lord*).

Ⲛ	<i>Sinaitic MS</i> ; an uncial Greek manuscript.	4 th cent.
A	<i>Alexandrine MS</i> ; an uncial Greek manuscript.	5 th cent.
V _g	<i>Latin Vulgate</i> ; a revision of Old Latin by Eusebius Jerome.	405 CE
Sy ^h	<i>Syriac Peshitta Version</i> .	464 CE

² The Greek word **Kyrios** is translated *Lord* in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*. The number of references to **Kyrios** (or *Lord*) passages is fewer in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* only because the editors have chosen to cite so few of the more than 5,000 ancient Greek manuscripts that are available today. These manuscripts are uniform in their use of **Kyrios** (or **Theos**, which is translated *God*) rather than the Tetragrammaton. The United Bible Societies' Christian Greek Scripture textual apparatus (*A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* which shows all textual variants in cited Greek manuscripts) was consulted for each of the 237 *Jehovah* references. This volume lists *all* major Christian Scripture manuscript variations from which translators must choose. The following tabulation was made for each of the *Jehovah* references. 71 of the 237 references are specifically discussed in this textual apparatus. *The presence of the Tetragrammaton is never mentioned at any of these 71 verses, and is therefore not considered as a textual variant in any known Greek manuscript.* Furthermore, because the remaining 166 references are not mentioned, we are assured that no basis for textual variants exists in any of the 237 *Jehovah* references. However, a debate between **Kyrios** [*Lord*] and **Theos** [*God*] as the choice for the specific verse does occur 31 times.

What do these dates tell us?

The *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* cites six Hebrew version sources for Revelation 4:11. The date of the earliest version is 1599 C.E., while the latest version is dated 1885 C.E. Two Greek manuscripts of the fourth and fifth centuries (301-400 C.E., and 401-500 C.E. respectively) are cited for this verse in support of the Greek word **Kyrios**.

The translators of the *New World Translation* chose to use the divine name in 237 selected verses by virtue of supporting evidence from Hebrew translations of 1385 C.E. and later. By way of contrast, the earliest evidence available for the Greek word **Kyrios** (*Lord*), referred to in the footnotes of the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* was from reliable Greek manuscripts dating as early as 300 C.E. None of these manuscripts contain the Tetragrammaton. These are the same Greek texts from which the Hebrew versions were translated.

We must ask ourselves if these Hebrew versions prove that the original writers of the Christian Scriptures used the Tetragrammaton in these 237 locations. It is clear that they do not. These Hebrew translators used the same Greek texts that any of their contemporaries used to translate all other English Christian Greek Scriptures that use *Lord*.

The Hebrew versions' textual source

Figure 2 summarizes the information given in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* footnotes. Nothing has been added or changed from the information given by the Watch Tower Society except to represent it graphically. The reader must be aware, however, that this figure deals only with the restoration of *Jehovah* to the Christian Scriptures. With this exception, the translators generally (though not always) followed the Westcott and Hort Greek text that is traceable to early Greek manuscripts.

There would be no reason to doubt that *all* Hebrew versions, unless otherwise noted, were translated from Greek manuscripts. Further, all but the most recent would have been translated from the text produced by Erasmus. However, in the absence of doing independent research on each "J" document, we can make two statements. First, with the possible exception of the Shem-Tob Matthew and its revisions, no ancient Hebrew Christian Scripture documents are known to exist today. Secondly, the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* (in both its 1969 and 1985 editions) lists the following: J⁵ is "translated from the Greek;" J⁷ is a "translation from

versions under the symbols "J" with a superior number (page 319).

On page 309 of the same text, a box on the chart describing the *New World Translation* says, "23 Hebrew Versions (14th-20th centuries) translated either from the Greek or from the Latin Vulgate..." As we will see later, however, J² may be a recension of an actual Christian Hebrew Gospel, and J³ and J⁴ may be a revision of this recension.

As a result of our present evaluation of textual material, we now realize that 25 (or possibly 22)³ Hebrew translations used to verify the presence of the Tetragrammaton were themselves translated from known Greek texts *that do not contain the Tetragrammaton*.

Reliance on Hebrew versions

We need to review a portion of the New World Bible Translation Committee's translation guidelines where they say,

To avoid overstepping the bounds of a translator into the field of exegesis, we have been most cautious about rendering the divine name in the Christian Greek Scriptures, *always carefully considering the Hebrew Scriptures as a background*. We have looked for agreement from the Hebrew versions to confirm our rendering. Thus, out of the 237 times that we have rendered the divine name in the body of our translation, there is only one instance [1 Co 7:17] where we have no agreement from the *Hebrew versions*. (Emphasis added.)

From the last chapter, we saw that only 78 (or 76) *Jehovah* references in the Christian Scriptures are cited by J²⁰. Since, however, J²⁰ can be counted as a conservative reference source, we can justifiably appeal to as many as 154 instances in the Christian Scriptures where the inspired writer quoted verses which properly can be understood as referring to *Jehovah* in the Hebrew Scriptures. Nonetheless, according to Greg Stafford's tabulation given in the last chapter, this leaves 83 *Jehovah* references in the *New World Translation* Christian Scriptures that had their sole source in Hebrew versions rather than Hebrew Scripture quotations.

³ The 1985 *KIT* identifies 27 "J" references. However, J²⁰ and J²¹ are reference sources. "*All Scripture Is Inspired...*", 1990, may be classifying an additional three of the shorter "J" references in another category.

It may be surprising to many that such a large number of the *Jehovah* references in the Christian Scriptures are *not* quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures.

The startling reality is that in these instances the Translation Committee relied more on the relatively recent Hebrew translations than they did on the best ancient Greek manuscripts. Look carefully at the quotation above. The translators say that they were "...always carefully considering the Hebrew Scriptures as a background." Nonetheless, it was not the Hebrew Scriptures, but rather the Hebrew versions from which they found agreement for their translation work when they say, "We have looked for agreement from the Hebrew versions to confirm our rendering. Thus, out of the 237 times that we have rendered the divine name in the body of our translation, there is only one instance [1 Co 7:17] where we have no agreement from the Hebrew versions." Very simply, they relied more on the inspiration of certain translations than on the Greek text itself.

The Translation Committee's use of Hebrew versions

The New World Bible Translation Committee has been forthright in their statements regarding Hebrew versions as a source of יהוה references within the Christian Scriptures. One merely needs to compare the "J" footnote for any *Jehovah* reference with the corresponding Hebrew version to verify that a given Hebrew version does, in fact, use the Tetragrammaton where it is cited.

Nor does the Translation Committee in any way attempt to hide the source texts of these Hebrew versions. The Committee tells us plainly that the translation sources of these Hebrew versions are Greek texts that we can readily examine. Surprisingly, however, we discover that these Greek source texts do not use the Tetragrammaton. What is unusual, moreover, is that the magnitude of this inconsistency seems to go unrecognized by the worldwide literature work of the Watch Tower Society and with its leaders, writers, or individual readers of Watch Tower publications.

Has it occurred to you that the Hebrew Christian versions are translations from Greek source texts? Do you realize that the entire footnote evidence given in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* for the "restoration of the divine name" to the *New World Translation* is based upon the very Greek texts that the translators are disputing?



Chapter 8: Searching for the Tetragrammaton—Part 1

We will now evaluate the third reason proposed by the New World Bible Translation Committee for allowing restoration of the divine name to the Christian Scriptures. This third hypothesis states that God's name should be restored because a heresy in the second and third centuries C.E. resulted in the removal of the Tetragrammaton from the Christian Scriptures.

In order to establish the validity of this charge of heresy, this and the following two chapters will briefly answer two questions. The first question is, "Do early Christian Scripture manuscripts show evidence that the inspired Christian writers used the Tetragrammaton?" The second question is, "Is there evidence that a heresy arose in the second and third centuries C.E., resulting in the removal of the Tetragrammaton?"

The basis of the study

Our study exploring the presence of the Tetragrammaton in the original Christian Scriptures will evaluate six topics. This evaluation will begin with the most important topic and end with the least important.

If the search for information from the first topic can be verified from ancient manuscripts, the presence of the Tetragrammaton in the original Christian Scriptures can be accepted without further evidence. If the information from the first topic cannot be verified, the second topic, if substantiated, would give strong evidence of the Tetragrammaton's original existence. The third and fourth topics are natural consequences that would be obvious had the original Scriptures been so radically changed in the second and third centuries. The fifth topic, if true, would merely suggest the *possibility* that the Tetragrammaton was used in the Christian Scriptures written in Greek. The sixth topic is simply a practical concern that addresses geographical diversity. In no case, however, can supporting evidence alone establish the Tetragrammaton's presence in the absence of verifiable use of the Tetragrammaton in early manuscripts.

1. The majority of the earliest extant Christian Scripture manuscripts should show the Tetragrammaton or a reasonable derivative

embedded in the Greek text.

All discussions of the inspiration of Scripture and its inerrancy are based on an important premise. *For any portion of Scripture to be accepted as authoritative, it must be verified by authentic, ancient manuscripts.* We cannot validate the original words of Scripture on any other basis than the most exacting manuscript study. If the Tetragrammaton was used in the original writings of the first-century Christian authors, we must be able to find the Hebrew letters יהוה embedded¹ in the earliest extant copies of these Greek manuscripts. There is no other information or tradition that can take precedence over the earliest and most accurate Greek copies of the Christian Scriptures.

The reader must be aware that there are no extant Greek manuscripts of the Christian Scriptures that contain the Tetragrammaton. We can appropriately require the same degree of manuscript evidence for the existence of the Tetragrammaton that we would demand for any other correction of variants in the Greek text. Since the Tetragrammaton does not appear in any of the 5,000 extant Greek manuscripts of the Christian Scriptures, we can conclude that all discussion of the Tetragrammaton in the Christian Scriptures is mere speculation.²

Furthermore, neither is there any evidence of Greek lettering used as a substitute for the Hebrew letters יהוה. The Watch Tower Society reports no Christian Greek Scripture manuscripts containing the Greek letters ΠΙΠΙ (PIPI) which *are* found replacing יהוה in certain copies of the *Septuagint* and Origen's *Hexapla*.

Finally, as we close this first topic dealing with the presumed removal of the Tetragrammaton from the Christian Scriptures, we must be reminded of an important fact in biblical research. *There is not a single instance of a word that has been reinstated to the Greek text in use today that does not have textual support from ancient Greek manuscripts. This is true both of the Westcott and Hort text*

¹ *Embedment* precisely expresses this Hebrew word's placement into a Greek text. It would not be a *translation* because it would be an exact importation of the Hebrew word, including its meaning and orthography, into the Greek text. The uppercase Greek letters ΠΙΠΙ (PIPI) would be a *graphic symbol* of the Hebrew name of God.

² Of the total 5,000 whole or partial Christian Greek Scripture manuscripts that are known to exist, the Watch Tower Society has not identified a single document using the Tetragrammaton.

used in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*, and the *United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament*.³ Could the Hebrew letters יהוה represent the first and only case when this is permissible?

2. Early and numerous extant manuscripts of the Christian Scriptures should show evidence of the Tetragrammaton's removal.

No original Greek Scripture writings remain. For that reason, all evidence for the content of the Greek Scriptures comes from subsequent copies.

Regardless of the word used by the original writers in these 237 instances, the word would be firmly established in the manuscripts within the first 30 years of the Christian congregation.⁴ Many copies were made because congregations were widely separated and needed their own manuscripts. There is no basis for accurately estimating the number of copies that were in circulation 30 years later. However, considering that the Christian congregation was dispersed by severe persecution, that rapid growth took place, and that both congregation- and privately-held copies were in use, the numbers must have been in the hundreds, if not thousands, of separate copies for each book.

Presuming now that the Hebrew word יהוה was changed to *Kyrios*, what would have needed to occur? In the first place, it would have been impossible to gather *all* existing manuscripts containing יהוה in order to destroy them simultaneously. There would simply have been too many manuscripts in too many places for this to have taken place. Initially, only a few manuscripts in selected locations could have been destroyed. Willful destruction of manuscripts would have been even more difficult because many Christians had preserved them despite times of persecution.

³ The book *"The Word," Who is He? According to John* refers to the false "and these three are one" passage at 1 John 5:7b (KJ). It is an example of a passage that was "planted" into the King James' Greek text in order to promote a theological preference, but was later removed because no ancient Greek manuscripts support it.

⁴ We have stated 30 years as an absolute minimum time simply because the Apostle John wrote at least 30 years after the circulation of Matthew's Gospel and Paul's letters. In all probability, John's epistles would have reflected a warning if the Tetragrammaton had been altered in his lifetime.

Thus, a *textual variant*⁵ rather than an abrupt and complete change would have resulted. That is, there would have emerged a mix of manuscripts with some using יהוה and others using **Kyrios**.⁶ As time went on, assuming a consensus among a strong faction advocating the heresy, a larger percentage of manuscripts would have now contained the variant form **Kyrios**. However, because of the resistance to alteration of Scripture and the diversity of geographical location, copies containing the original יהוה would have remained in circulation.

There are numerous examples of manuscript longevity recorded in history. For example, Jerome, who died in 420 C.E., reports having personally used Matthew's Hebrew Gospel. Therefore, it is clear that this document (or copies of it) was available for at least 300 years after its writing.

Therefore, if יהוה was changed to **Kyrios**, we would expect to see a progressive change with older documents containing the original form and newer copies containing the variant.⁷ The distribution would have been mixed even more because recent copies would have occasionally been made from older documents, and יהוה would have randomly reappeared.

However, the change would not always have been as simple as going from יהוה to **Kyrios**. Because the Christian Scriptures were primarily circulated in Gentile territory, we would expect to see variants resulting from language confusion rather than theological bias. Thus, we would probably find early variants that attempted to reproduce the Hebrew word with Greek lettering such as the ΠΙΠΙ (PIPI) variant found in the *Septuagint*, or the Greek phonetic reproduction ΙΑΩ (YAW). Further, if the original יהוה had been corrupted, it would not have *universally* changed to **Kyrios**. We

⁵ "All Scripture is Inspired of God and Beneficial" explains that textual variants are repeated errors in copies found in a particular location. See the entire section TEXTUAL VARIANTS AND THEIR MEANING on page 319.

⁶ In actuality, there would also be a mix expected *within* a single manuscript. Not all of the 237 passages would be uniformly altered in each manuscript.

⁷ Because subsequent users of a manuscript frequently made corrections, we would also expect to find a small number of manuscripts in which the Tetragrammaton was overwritten with **Kyrios** or a Greek substitution for the divine name.

would expect to find a variety of Greek words which could have been traced back to the יהוה source, but which would have differed from the Greek word chosen in other manuscripts. For that reason, in each of these 237 references, we would find a *variety* of Greek words in extant manuscripts rather than the single word **Kyrios**.

Consequently, we would expect a change of the Tetragrammaton to **Kyrios** in the second and third centuries to leave identifiable manuscript evidence. Even if all copies containing the Tetragrammaton itself were lost, significant evidence of the alteration would remain in extant Greek manuscripts.

This is not a mere hypothetical possibility. This exact phenomenon is frequently seen in manuscript studies. Textual critics often trace variants through successive periods of time by observing the influence they exerted on other extant manuscripts. This is why the writings of the patristics⁸—which we will examine later—are such an important element of textual study. Scripture quotations made by men known to have been living during certain periods of time indicate the content of the Christian Scripture manuscripts that were available during their lifetime.

The Watch Tower Society teaches that, prior to the copying of any manuscripts of the Christian Scriptures that are known today, the Tetragrammaton was changed to **Kyrios** by copyists and scribes. This argument is seriously flawed. The rapidity and completeness of such a change would have been unprecedented. The *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* amply establishes that Greek manuscripts of the fourth century (300 C.E. and later) carried only the word **Kyrios** with no reference to the Tetragrammaton. In the book "*All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial*" (page 313), several examples of leading papyrus manuscripts are cited, moving the date of known occurrences of **Kyrios** even closer to apostolic times. One important early manuscript identified as P⁴⁷ includes four passages from Revelation 9:10-17:2 which are translated as *Jehovah* in the *New World Translation*. This manuscript was copied by 300 C.E. John wrote the book of Revelation in about 96 C.E., so that these four uses of **Kyrios** are verified within 204 years of the original writing.

Another manuscript from the third or fourth century identified as P⁷² contains 12 **Kyrios** passages translated as *Jehovah* in the *New*

⁸ The word *patristics* identifies those men of the early Christian religious community who are known today by their writings. In other religious literature they are often called the *church fathers*.

World Translation. This manuscript, which contains Jude and 1 and 2 Peter, was copied between 201 and 399 C.E.

A third manuscript that the Watch Tower Society uses as a reference is identified as P⁶⁶. It contains five *Kyrios* passages that are translated in the *New World Translation* as *Jehovah*. This manuscript is identified as *circa* 200 C.E. Since these five passages come from the Gospel of John (which was written about 98 C.E.), these copies were made approximately 102 years after the original writing. The inescapable truth is, that between 102 and 204 years after the Christian Scriptures were written, we have substantial evidence that the Christian congregation fully accepted *Kyrios* (*Lord*) as the appropriate word in these passages.

According to the information published by the Watch Tower Society, it is left entirely to speculation as to how the original Christian Scriptures could have been written using the Tetragrammaton, only to have it be so completely changed within a mere 102 to 204 years, leaving no trace of the corruption. (That is, according to the best dates available to us, John probably wrote Revelation in 96 C.E. and his Gospel in 98 C.E.) That means that between 98 and 200 C.E., the entire heresy would have arisen, altered all documents which have remained today, altered all documents of which we have copies today, and so completely established itself as the corrupted theology that there was no surviving written debate between the patristics. Yet the book "*All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial*" moves the dates even closer together when it says,

...but discoveries of older Bible manuscripts during the past few decades take the Greek text back as far as about the year 125 C.E., just a couple of decades short of the death of the apostle John about 100 C.E. These manuscript evidences provide strong assurance that we now have a dependable Greek text in refined form (page 319).

That a heresy of such radical proportions could have swept the entire Roman Empire during even the short period between 96 and 300 C.E., and that it could have been so complete as to remove all traces of the change, is difficult to imagine. Could we then imagine that it happened "just a couple of decades" after the apostle John's death?



Chapter 9: Searching for the Tetragrammaton—Part 2

A study exploring the existence of the Tetragrammaton in the original Christian Greek Scriptures should consider six specific topics. We considered the first two in the last chapter. We will evaluate two dealing with non-biblical manuscripts in this chapter.

3. If there was a debate over the removal of the Tetragrammaton, the writings of the early patristics should record it.

The development of the Christian congregation was marked by writing. In many cases, this writing was in the form of letters or epistles. (The Christian Scriptures owe much to letter writing. The Gospel of Luke, the book of Acts, all of Paul's writings using his name, Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude, and the three epistles of John are all addressed as letters to Christian congregations or individuals. Even the book of Revelation is addressed to "the seven congregations that are in the [district of] Asia." [Revelation 1:4.]) The early non-biblical writings of the Christian congregation consisted of commentaries and polemics from numerous Christian congregation writers as well as non-canonical *devotional* writings. We would expect these two important sources to mention the presence of the Tetragrammaton in the original Christian Scripture writings.

By the second century, the writing of letters of instruction as well as considerably longer works of philosophy and theology had become an accepted part of the new Christian congregation. A significant sampling of that writing has been preserved for us today.¹

In 325 C.E. the First Council of Nicaea was convened. For our purposes, the content of that council is not important. However, the writings of the patristics are categorized on the basis of this council. A group called the "Ante-Nicene fathers" wrote before 325 C.E.²

¹ All the writings of the patristics were transmitted to us today in the same manner as the Christian Scriptures. That is, we have only copied materials, never original writings.

² *Ante-Nicene* simply means, "Before the Nicene council," which was convened in 325 C.E. This is a simple chronological classification of the writers rather than a statement of their theological position.

Though we are not obligated to accept their individual points of view, these writers are reliable reporters of the theological debates following the establishment of the early Christian congregations between 100 and 325 C.E. (The writings of the early patristics are widely recognized by the Watch Tower Society. The testimony of Jerome regarding Matthew's Hebrew Gospel, the work and commentary of Origen concerning the *Septuagint*, and the reluctance of the Jews to pronounce the divine name are examples of information given by the Ante-Nicene writers. A cursory glance through *Aid to Bible Understanding* shows numerous quotations from both secular and Christian writers of that era. Examples abound from Tacitus and Josephus [cf. page 317], Origen [cf. page 456], Jerome [cf. page 520], Irenaeus, Africanus, and Eusebius [cf. page 640], Augustine [cf. page 671], and many others.)³

Through these writings, much is known about the early Christian congregation and the world in which it existed. It is reasonable to assume that the importance of any issue in the life of the early Christian congregation would be displayed by the amount of contemporary material written.

Before going further, we need to appreciate the volume of written material and subject matter of these writers. The author evaluated a standard encyclopedic reference which is available in most large public libraries. The nine-volume set entitled, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, is published by Charles Scribners' Sons. These volumes contain writings of men living in the Common Era. Among them were Justin Martyr (who lived from 110 to 165),⁴ Irenaeus (120 to 202), Polycarp (? to 155), Tatian (a student of Justin), Theophilus (? to ?; one book was known to be written in 181), Tertullian (150 to 220), and many others.

These nine volumes make an important contribution to the study of the Tetragrammaton. First, notice that these men typically wrote within 20 to 120 years of the original writing of the Christian Scriptures. (Polycarp was actually a student of the Apostle John.)

The writings of the "church fathers" are divided by the time of writing into *Ante-Nicene*, *Nicene*, and *Post-Nicene*.

³ Examples of this familiarity with the writings of the patristics and secular authors from the era are common in readily available publications as well. For example, see the reference to Josephus' writings on page 11 of the *Watchtower* magazine, April 15, 1996.

⁴ Most birth and death dates for these writers are approximations.

These men would certainly have been aware of a heresy as significant as the removal of the Tetragrammaton from the Christian Scriptures.⁵ This would have been particularly true if this alteration had elevated Jesus to a position of one possessing the essential nature of Jehovah himself (by using **Kyrios** as an all-inclusive term) rather than showing Jesus to be a created being (by distinguishing between **Kyrios** and יהוה).

Secondly, with so much being written, such a heresy would most certainly have been mentioned. The nine-volume set to which we have referred has a total of 5,433 pages of translated material. (Indices and biographical material were not included in this count.) With some 1,000 words per page, these writers have given us approximately 5,400,000 words. For the sake of comparison, the 1984 reference edition of the *New World Translation* has 1,494 Scripture pages with approximately 750 words per page. Consequently, there are about 1,120,000 words in the entire *New World Translation* Bible. Therefore, *the writings of the patristics between the apostolic period and 325 C.E. represented in this encyclopedic set alone amount to the equivalent of approximately five complete Bibles.* There are additional writings that are not included in these volumes such as the extensive *Commentaries* by Origen. Certainly, in this number of pages, the heresy of the Tetragrammaton's removal would have been mentioned.

As an example, one section of these nine volumes was evaluated. An important early writer named Irenaeus wrote a book in the second century entitled *Against Heresies*. This work has 258 pages in the English translation. Conveniently, the publisher of this nine-volume set included a comprehensive Scripture index for each volume. Thus, a particular Scripture passage cited by any of the patristics can be located. Consequently, some of the pertinent 237 *Jehovah* passages

⁵ Equally, the patristics would also have been aware of the alteration that *did* occur when Christians recopied יהוה to **Kyrios** in the Hebrew Scriptures. Their lack of comment that this was a heresy is also significant. This is particularly true of Origen who used both יהוה and **Kyrios** (as well as ΙΙΙΙΙ and ΙΑΩ) in his own writing. For more information on this subject, see Chapter 13 *But if not Heresy, Then What?* and Appendix J: *Origen's Hexapla* in the book *The Tetragrammaton and the Christian Greek Scriptures*. This and other free downloadable books are available at www.tetragrammaton.org.

were located in Irenaeus' *Against Heresies* to determine his awareness of the presumed substitution of **Kyrios** for the Tetragrammaton. No indication was found that Irenaeus expressed concern with the presumed change in the verses he quoted. Instead, he quoted these verses with full acceptance of the word *Lord*.⁶

The following citations give examples of Irenaeus' work. The Scripture paraphrases and brief commentary by Irenaeus in the left-hand column are from *Against Heresies* as translated into English and published in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* by Charles Scribners' Sons, copyright 1899. In the right-hand column the verse which Irenaeus cited is quoted from the *New World Translation*.

Against Heresies

New World Translation

The Lord then, exposing him [the devil] in his true character, says, "Depart, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the **Lord** thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."
(Vol. 1, page 549)

Then Jesus said to him: "Go away, Satan! For it is written, 'It is **Jehovah** your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service.'
(Matthew 4:10 NWT)

Then again Matthew, when speaking of the angel, says, "The angel of the **Lord** appeared to Joseph in sleep."
(Vol. 1, page 422)

But after he had thought these things over, look! **Jehovah's** angel appeared to him in a dream.
(Matthew 1:20 NWT)

⁶ The volume used for this study was in *English* not Greek. Therefore, we can only assume that **Kyrios** or its equivalent was used. (For complete substantiation of **Kyrios** in Greek, see the preceding comments regarding *First Clement*, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, and the *Didache*.) However, our objective at this point is to discern any comment by Irenaeus of an improper word substitution for the Tetragrammaton. He makes no such comments. Rather, he uses the passages as they appear in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* and adds no comments regarding an alleged Tetragrammaton corruption.

For in no other way could we have learned the things of God, unless our Master, existing as the Word, had become man. For no other being had the power of revealing to us the things of the Father, except His own proper Word. For what other person "knew the mind of the **Lord**, or who else "has become His counselor?"
(Vol. 1, page 526)

For "who has come to know **Jehovah's** mind, or who has become his counselor?"
(Romans 11:34 NWT)

When he says in the Epistle to the Galatians: "...Even as Abraham believed **God** and it was accounted unto him for righteousness."
(Vol. 1, page 492)⁷

Just as Abraham "put faith in **Jehovah** and it was counted to him as righteousness."
(Galatians 3:6 NWT)

For Peter said "...For David speaketh concerning Him, I foresaw the **Lord** always before my face."
(Vol. 1, page 430)

For David says respecting him, "I had **Jehovah** constantly before my eyes."
(Acts 2:25 NWT)

Irenaeus indicates no awareness that copyists and scribes conspired to remove the divine name from the Christian Greek Scriptures, even in those instances where the *New World Translation* inserts the name of Jehovah.⁸ Thus, a man writing a mere 50 years after the death of the Apostle John was content with Jesus' title **Kyrios** in the same passages which the translators of the *New World*

⁷ This is an interesting example of agreement. Irenaeus and the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* both use *God* (*theos*), whereas the *New World Translation* uses *Jehovah*.

⁸ We believe this to be an accurate portrayal of Irenaeus' work. However, the few brief quotations we are able to give in this limited space are far from comprehensive. The reader would do well to personally evaluate these citations in a local library. In this way, entire sections can be checked for content.

Translation believe were altered from the Tetragrammaton by carelessness or fraud. It is significant that Iranaeus was particularly concerned with the heresies of his day and most certainly would have made comments irrespective of which opinion he held.

4. Early non-canonical writings should include reference to the Tetragrammaton.

Numerous early *devotional* writings are available from the first century. An interesting example is the *Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians*. This epistle is regarded as a genuine writing of the Apostle Paul's companion Clement who is mentioned at Philippians 4:3.⁹ The epistle was written sometime between 75 and 110 C.E., with the greater probability that it was written shortly after 100 C.E. Therefore, Clement's use of either the Tetragrammaton or **Kyrios** would reflect both the practice of the first century congregations, and presumably that of Paul himself. (Based on the date of this epistle, this assertion would be true of at least the practice of the early Christian congregations even if the author was not the companion of the Apostle Paul.)

Clement universally used **Kyrios** as the designation for Jesus when he referred to him as *Lord*. However, he also frequently quoted (or alluded to) Hebrew Scripture references in which the *New World Translation* inserts *Jehovah*. The following quotations from the *Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians*¹⁰ are taken from the book entitled *The Apostolic Fathers*,¹¹ which gives the Greek text with

⁹ The historical and textual evidence strongly attributes the authorship of the *First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians* to Paul's companion. We will accept the author as this Clement. On the other hand, the reader should understand that the biblical Clement is not accepted unequivocally among all historians as being the true author. Further background on the book and author is available in the preface material to this epistle. (See footnote 11 for the reference.) A so-called *Second Epistle of Clement* is generally regarded as being the work of another (and later) author rather than Clement himself. Therefore, only the first epistle can be relied upon for our purposes here.

¹⁰ This is not to be confused with the canonical book of 1 Corinthians.

¹¹ Published by Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., copyright 1912. The English translator is Kirsopp Lake. The

an English translation. Where Clement used a word which was translated into English as *Lord*, the actual Greek word, which is always a form of *Kyrios*, will be shown parenthetically. The chapter and verse designation within *First Clement* precedes the quotation. The Hebrew Scripture reference is given following the quotation. The Hebrew Scripture verse is quoted from the *New World Translation* in the right-hand column.

*First Clement**New World Translation*

1 Clement 8:2 And even the Master of the universe himself spoke with an oath concerning repentance; "For as I live, said the **Lord** (κύριος), I do not desire the death of the sinner so much as his repentance." (Ezek. 33:11)

Say to them, "As I am alive," is the utterance of the **Lord Jehovah**. "I take delight, not in the death of the wicked one, but in that someone wicked turns back from his way." (Ezek. 33:11)

1 Clement 13:5 "I know assuredly that the **Lord God** (κύριος ὁ θεός) is delivering to you this land..." (Josh. 2:9)

"I do know that **Jehovah** will certainly give you the land..." (Josh. 2:9)

1 Clement 15:5-6 "May the **Lord** (κύριος) destroy all the deceitful lips . . . Now will I arise, saith the **Lord** (κύριος), I will place him in safety." (Ps. 12:3, 5)

"**Jehovah** will cut off all smooth lips... I shall at this time arise," says **Jehovah**. "I shall put [him] in safety...." (Ps. 12:3, 5)

1 Clement 16:2-3 For it says, "**Lord** (Κύριε), who has believed our report, and to whom was the arm of the **Lord** (κυρίου) revealed?" (Isa. 53:1)

"Who has put faith in the thing heard by us? And as for the arm of **Jehovah**, to whom has it been revealed?" (Isa. 53:1)

information in the following paragraphs regarding the *Epistle of Barnabas* and the *Didache* is also taken from *The Apostolic Fathers*.

In no case did Clement use the Tetragrammaton in his Epistle to the Corinthians. Thus, we know that Clement—a first century leader in the early Christian congregations and presumably a disciple and companion of the Apostle Paul—consistently used **Kyrios** rather than the Tetragrammaton when quoting the Hebrew Scriptures.¹²

We are left to conclude that either Clement—notwithstanding his probable leadership role in the first century Christian congregation and his association with the Apostle Paul—was a heretic because he abandoned the use of the Tetragrammaton, or that the Gentile first century Christian congregations did indeed use **Kyrios** in their Scriptures.

Was Clement alone, or did others follow his use of **Kyrios** when quoting from the Hebrew Scriptures?

We find a similar pattern among other writers of the time. Another epistle from the end of the first century or early part of the second is called the *Epistle of Barnabas*. Though tradition credits Paul's companion, Barnabas, as being its author, this epistle is probably the work of someone else. Nonetheless, the early congregations held it in high esteem. We are not concerned with inspiration, but simply whether **Kyrios** or the Tetragrammaton was used in these early writings when they quoted Hebrew Scriptures. Again, the *Epistle of Barnabas* followed the same pattern as *First Clement*. The writer of the epistle quoted Isaiah 1:11 as saying:

"What is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me?" saith the **Lord** (κύριος). "I am full of burnt offerings..." (Barnabas 2:4)

This same verse is given in the *New World Translation* as,

"Of what benefit to me is the multitude of your sacrifices?" says **Jehovah**. "I have had enough of whole burnt offerings..." (Isaiah 1:11 *NWT*)

Many similar examples are found in this epistle when the Greek word **Kyrios** is used in verses such as Psalm 118:24, Jeremiah 7:2,

¹² In addition to the five passages from the Hebrew Scriptures given above, Clement also quoted 17 verses using **Kyrios** in which the *New World Translation* uses *Jehovah* (Ex. 32:31; Deut. 4:34; Deut. 32:9; Ps. 22:6-8; Ps. 24:1; Ps. 32:2; Ps. 32:10; Ps. 34:11, 15, 16, 17; Ps. 69:31; Ps. 118:20; Prov. 3:12; Prov. 20:27; Isa. 6:3; and Isa. 40:10). Clement quoted two additional verses which the *New World Translation* renders as *Jah* (Ps. 118:18 and 19).

Isaiah 1:10, Isaiah 45:1, and Deuteronomy 5:11 rather than the Tetragrammaton. We have given only a single example. However, the reader is encouraged to study the *Epistle of Barnabas* and the *Didache* for other examples.

A similar pattern of using *Kyrios* rather than the Tetragrammaton is found in a document called the *Didache*, or *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*. This writing comes from the first half of the second century. It was written as the teachings of the 12 disciples of Christ, though the anonymous author did not claim that they wrote it. Again, we are not referring to the *Didache* because it has any merit as inspired Scripture. However, it does reflect the understanding and practice of the early Christian congregations. The *Didache* quoted Hebrew Scripture passages using *Kyrios* rather than the Tetragrammaton in a manner similar to *First Clement* and *Barnabas*.

The question might be asked, "If there was, indeed, a heresy which resulted in the removal of the Tetragrammaton, could *all* the writings of the patristics have been altered?" As we will see in the final discussion of geography in the next chapter, the enormity of the task would have made alteration of the writings of these men next to impossible. *A second, but more formidable obstacle, however, would have been the planning needed to orchestrate such an undertaking. The need to change the writings of the patristics in such a way that a future generation would not know of the heresy would never have occurred to a group of copyists in the second or third century. After all, if it had been a theological controversy, contemporaries would have been aware of it. It is totally unreasonable to think that such a concerted effort would have been made to recopy vast numbers of manuscripts in order to mask a controversy that was already common knowledge.*

From this brief examination of early Christian congregations non-canonical devotional writings we find that the writers never used יהוה in their own renditions of Hebrew Scripture citations that contain the Tetragrammaton.



Chapter 10: Searching for the Tetragrammaton—Part 3

A study exploring the existence of the Tetragrammaton in the original Christian Scriptures should evaluate six specific topics. We considered the first four in the last two chapters. In this chapter we will evaluate a final manuscript topic and then consider the geographic setting in which the earliest manuscripts were copied.

5. The Tetragrammaton should be identifiable in Christian Scriptures written in the Hebrew language during the early Christian congregation era.

Inasmuch as the Watch Tower Society cites the presence of the Tetragrammaton in Matthew's Hebrew Gospel as evidence for the restoration of *Jehovah* in the Christian Scriptures, we must turn to the Shem-Tob Matthew for evaluation.

Shem-Tob was a Jewish physician who published a polemic¹ entitled *Eben Bohan* (אבן בוהן "The Touchstone") in the 1380s. In the final portion, Shem-Tob reproduced a complete Gospel of Matthew in the Hebrew language. This manuscript is one of the "J" documents listed in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* footnotes. J² is the actual Shem-Tob Matthew, while J³ and J⁴ are identified as revisions. J² is summarized in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* (1969 edition, page 28) as follows,

J²

Matthew in Hebrew. About 1385 a Jew named Shem Tob ben Shaprut of Tudela in Castile, Spain, wrote a polemical work against Christianity entitled *Eben Bohan* in which he incorporates Matthew in Hebrew as a separate chapter. (Cursive manuscripts of Shem Tob's *Eben Bohan* are found at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York City.)

Shem-Tob's Matthew does not, in fact, use the Tetragrammaton.²

¹ Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary* defines a polemic as "An aggressive attack on or refutation of the opinions or principles of another."

² This is true even though the translators make the following comment in the 1969 *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* (page 18)

Rather, J² uses the surrogate ה' (for השם, which means "The Name") as a circumlocution replacing the Tetragrammaton (יהוה). (A *surrogate* is the abbreviation of a commonly occurring word in ancient handwritten documents. A *circumlocution* is an evasion in speech of a word that should not be pronounced.) This does not mean that Matthew himself may not have used the Hebrew letters יהוה.³ It

"The Shem Tob version of Matthew into Hebrew was made about A.D. 1385. When coming upon quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures where the Name appeared, the translators into Hebrew had no other recourse than to render ky'rios or theos' back into its original Tetragrammaton form יהוה. Thus in that early Shem Tob version of Matthew the Tetragrammaton occurs 16 times. All together, the appearances of the sacred Tetragrammaton in the 19 Hebrew versions to which we have had access total up to 307 distinct occurrences." This statement was not repeated in the greatly shortened Foreword of the 1985 edition. However, it seems strange that these translators who had such an intimate knowledge of the 19 Hebrew versions could overlook the presence of a circumlocution in place of the Tetragrammaton. They even included it in their final tabulation of occurrences of the Tetragrammaton in the Hebrew versions that were available to them at that time. This statement was not corrected until after the publication of George Howard's book which reproduced the entire text of the Shem-Tob Matthew in Hebrew.

³ We need to be careful, however, that we not assume too quickly that Matthew would have used the Tetragrammaton because he was a Jew writing for fellow Jews. In fact, Matthew was the only gospel writer who used a circumlocution for the word "God" in the expression "kingdom of God." (Matthew used the circumlocution "kingdom of the heavens" 32 times. He used the expression "kingdom of God" only four times [12:28, 19:24, 21:31, and 21:43] and the expression "kingdom of my Father" once [26:29].) The other three Gospels, which were addressed to Gentiles, used the same expression without the circumlocution as the "kingdom of God." (Parallel passages most clearly show this difference between the Gospel writers' use of the "kingdom of God" and the "kingdom of the heavens." See Matthew 5:3 with Luke 6:20, Matthew 13:31 with Luke 13:19, and others.) In reference to this expression, "the kingdom of God," we see that Matthew tended to *avoid* using the word "God" presumably because he was writing to Jews.

merely means that any indication that he did so is now lost.

In 1995, Professor George Howard published a useful and interesting book entitled *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew* (Mercer University Press, Macon, Georgia). In his book, Howard gives compelling evidence that Shem-Tob's Matthew was not a translation, but was rather a recension of an older Matthew representing the actual Gospel as Matthew wrote it in Hebrew. (A biblical manuscript *recension* is the text resulting from deliberate analytical work by an early—and generally unknown—editor for the sake of correcting presumed errors in the text from which it was copied.) If it is correct that Shem-Tob's Matthew is a recension, Howard's scholarly work gives the New World Bible Translation Committee a much stronger reference tool than they were aware of from 1947 to 1949 when they were completing the translation work.

Inasmuch as J² is the only potential extant Hebrew language Gospel or Epistle from the Apostolic era, we must conclude this section of the study by acknowledging that the Tetragrammaton is not presently identifiable in *any* Christian Scriptures written in the Hebrew language during the early Christian congregation era. The single extant manuscript cited, however, uses a surrogate for a circumlocution meaning "The Name." This circumlocution certainly has the meaning of the Tetragrammaton, but it is not, in fact, the Tetragrammaton itself.

6. *The geography in which the early Christian congregations were located must be considered in the Tetragrammaton's removal.*

This last topic is merely a practical matter concerning the *preservation* of Christian Scripture manuscripts. It is not a major issue since many anomalies occur in any large number of ancient manuscripts. Therefore, this topic does not bear heavy weight, but it must be considered because of the connection that a geographical setting would have had upon the removal of the Tetragrammaton.

A cursory evaluation of the earliest manuscripts and the places where they were found will reveal an obvious relationship between climatic conditions and manuscript preservation. The common writing material in the first century was papyrus. It was made in Egypt from reeds and was exported throughout the Roman Empire. Papyrus was a fragile material and did not survive in the cold, wet climates where the Christian congregations first began.⁴ The oldest known Christian

⁴ Parchment (animal skin) was used long before the time of Christ.

Scripture manuscripts have almost always come from places with warm, dry climates. For this reason, the oldest surviving Christian Scripture manuscripts have largely come from northern Africa and the Sinai Peninsula.

The papyrus fragments of the Chester Beatty collections (P⁴⁵, P⁴⁶, and P⁴⁷) came from this area. As mentioned earlier, they have been dated *circa* 200 C.E.

All of this has an important bearing on our discussion of the presumed removal of the Tetragrammaton from the original writings. Even though Christianity spread quickly throughout the Roman world (which included parts of the three continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa), there is significance to both the geographical and cultural isolation of northern Africa. The early Christian congregations in Africa developed their own unique character and experienced the rise of their own leaders. They did not necessarily duplicate the ecclesiastical perceptions of the Christian congregations in the Middle East, Europe, and Asia Minor.

Consider what the removal of the Tetragrammaton from the Christian Scriptures would imply. It would mean that the early Christian congregation in Africa understood the distinction between **Kyrios** and יהוה in their Scriptures. (This is true unless it could be argued that the African congregation was not a *true* Christian congregation because they did not know God's name as *Jehovah*.) It would then require us to believe that this distinction was lost in the African Christian congregation with no mention in the biblical and non-canonical writings that have survived until the present. Further, it would require us to believe that this unprecedented change took place so quickly that יהוה came to Africa and was then lost less than 110 years after the Apostle John wrote!

More than anything else, however, the loss of the Tetragrammaton would require us to believe that this divisive heresy could have been planned so thoroughly that *all traces of the original teaching of the Apostles could have been eliminated by 200 C.E. from manuscripts found on **three continents**.*

However, the Egyptian trade in less costly papyrus assured this less durable material's predominant place as the common writing material until the third or fourth century. The oldest manuscripts from Europe and Asia have survived on parchment (also known as vellum) because of its greater durability.

Chapter 11: “Hallelujah” in the Christian Scriptures

After reading the full length book from which much of this material was taken, a perceptive Witness reader said that the divine name does, in fact, occur in the Christian Scriptures.

She was correct.

Look at the quotation from the entry “HALLELUJAH” on page 1022 of *Insight on the Scriptures*, Volume 1. We will quote the entire entry.

HALLELUJAH (Hal-le-lu'jah). A transliteration of the Hebrew expression *ha-lelu-Yah'*, appearing first at Psalm 104:35. In the *New World Translation* it is nearly always translated “praise Jah, you people.” The expression occurs 24 times in the Hebrew Scriptures and, with the exception of Psalm 135:3 (“praise Jah,” *NW*), introduces and/or concludes the Psalms in which it is found. (See Ps 112:1; 115:18; 146:1, 10; 147:1, 20; 148:1, 14; 149:1, 9; 150:1, 6.) This expression stands alongside “Amen” at the close of Book Four of Psalms (Ps 106:48), and a Greek form of it appears four times at Revelation 19:1-6, where the reference is to the joy experienced over the destruction of Babylon the Great and that associated with Jehovah’s beginning to rule as King.

Revelation 19:1, 3, 4, and 6 clearly use the divine name. Allelujah was originally a Hebrew word that was transliterated into Greek. To Jews living in the early Christian congregation period who could speak both Hebrew and Greek, the word would certainly have conveyed its Hebrew meaning “Praise Jehovah.” It would have been entirely justifiable for the *New World Translation* to render these passages “Praise Jehovah, YOU people.” (In English, Jehovah’s name without contraction would be more meaningful than “Jah.”)

“Hallelujah” in most English Bibles is a transliteration that has now entered into the English vocabulary with few understanding its original meaning. If the phrase had been translated as “Praise Jehovah” in all English Bibles, the meaning would be more understandable.

However, the presence of the divine name in the Christian Scriptures is not the point of this book. Rather, we are concerned with whether or not the inspired Christian writers used the four Hebrew letters of the Tetragrammaton in their writing. There is often confusion between the words "divine name" and "Tetragrammaton." The meaning of the word "Tetragrammaton" is strictly limited to an identification of the four Hebrew letters יהוה . If these four letters are transliterated or otherwise represented by Greek letters, (such as ΙΩΑ or ΠΙΠΙ) it is no longer the Tetragrammaton. It then becomes a Greek transliteration, even though it certainly represents the divine name.

Revelation 19 in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*

Notice these verses at Revelation 19 as they appear (with some phrases omitted) in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*. Look carefully at the highlighted English and Greek words for hallelujah.

^{19:1} Μετὰ ταῦτα ἤκουσα ὡς φωνὴν μεγάλην
 After these (things) I heard as voice great
 ὄχλου πολλοῦ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ λεγόντων
 of crowd much in the heaven of (ones) saying

³ Ἀλληλουιά, καὶ δεύτερον εἶρηκαν Ἀλληλουιά
 Hallelujah; And second (time) they have said Hallelujah:

⁴ καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ θεῷ λέγοντες Ἀμήν,
 And they worshiped to the God . . . (they) saying Amen,

⁶ Ἀλληλουιά. Καὶ ἤκουσα ὡς φωνὴν ὄχλου πολλοῦ
 Hallelujah. And I heard as voice of crowd much
 λεγόντων Ἀλληλουιά, ὅτι ἐβασίλευσεν Κύριος
 . . . of (ones) saying Hallelujah, because reigned Lord

ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, ὁ παντοκράτωρ.
 the God of us, the Almighty.

From this material reproduced from the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*, you can see that John wrote a word that clearly means "Praise Jehovah" with Greek letters. He did not use the

Tetragrammaton. Look carefully at the word hallelujah (Ἀλληλουϊά). John transliterated YAH with the two Greek letters iota and alpha (...ιᾱ). Also notice that John did not use the Tetragrammaton in verse 6. He used the word *Lord (Kyrios)*.

The ancient Greek manuscripts

In both Chapter 1 and Chapter 7 we mentioned the book *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. This book lists all noteworthy variants (alternate readings) from any of the 5,000 known Greek manuscripts for each verse in the Christian Scriptures. Any time there is a different choice of words in ancient Greek manuscripts, the word differences are identified. (The *Textual Commentary* also lists ancient versions because the word chosen by the version translator will often indicate the word he saw in the Greek text.) The *Textual Commentary* is not concerned with theology or Bible translation. It is a commentary on the authenticity of the Greek text based solely on evidence obtained from examining all known ancient Greek manuscripts.

There are only two entries in the *Textual Commentary* for the entire section at Revelation 19:1-6.

At Revelation 1:5, the word “and” in the phrase “The small ones and the great” (English, *New World Translation*) is in question. The *Textual Commentary* says,

The presence of *kai* [the Greek word “and”] is attested by A [an important fifth century manuscript from which the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* was produced] 046 [a tenth century manuscript] and 051 [also a tenth century manuscript] and almost all other witnesses; on the other hand the word is absent from \aleph [another important fourth century manuscript used in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*] C [a fifth century manuscript] P [a ninth century manuscript] [and] cop^{sa,boma} [a coptic version].

From this evidence, the New World Bible Translation Committee used the word “and” because it was supported by the majority of the ancient Greek texts.

The second variant is the pronoun “our” in verse 6. The *New World translation* reads,

They said: “Praise Jah, you people, because Jehovah our God, the Almighty, has begun to rule as king.”

The *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* (in Greek word order) reads,

Of (ones) saying Hallelujah, because reigned Lord the God of us,
the Almighty.

The *Textual Commentary* has a lengthy discussion of the evidence both supporting and denying the possessive pronoun “our” (or “of us”). We will not repeat that discussion here, because it pertains only to the pronoun with no reference to “Jah” or the Tetragrammaton. It cites ten major Greek manuscripts and three important ancient versions that omit the pronoun. However, the *Textual Commentary* gives the greater significance to the reading in seven important ancient Greek manuscripts and a number of versions that include the pronoun. With this evidence, the New World Bible Translation Committee chose to use the pronoun.

However, we note two important omissions in the discussion of verse 6 in the *Textual Commentary*.

1. There is no reference to any ancient Greek manuscript that used the Tetragrammaton. Had the Tetragrammaton been used in even one of the more than 5,000 ancient Greek manuscripts that are now available, the *Textual Commentary* would have noted that variant. Had there been any surviving evidence that the Tetragrammaton had been removed, that also would have been included in the discussion. However, there is no such reference—the word *Lord* (**Kyrrios**) is the only choice given within all extant Greek manuscripts.
2. We find no discussion that “Jah” was ever written in Hebrew letters in any Greek manuscripts. It is clearly verified that John used a contraction of the divine name in this verse. Yet, the evidence is equally clear that he transcribed it into Greek letters. It is also interesting to note that the oldest manuscript identified in the *Textual Commentary*’s discussion is none other than one of two principle manuscripts used to produce the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*; the fourth century א (*Aleph*) manuscript. That is, because John wrote Revelation in 96 C.E., the earliest evidence for a Greek transcription of the word “Jah” (and for **Kyrrios** rather than the Tetragrammaton) cited in the *Textual Commentary* comes a mere 104 to 204 years after Revelation was written.

Thus, there is no evidence in any of these four occurrences of “Hallelujah” that Hebrew letters were used.

Please do not misunderstand

We said earlier that the *New World Translation* appropriately translated the divine name *Jehovah* in the Hebrew Scriptures. We are also saying that a more understandable translation for the four occurrences of *hallelujah* in Revelation 19 would be “Praise Jehovah” which is the meaning of the *New World Translation* rendering.

In no way do we want you as a reader to feel that the holy name of Jehovah should not be honored and used. It should be used, and we commend Witnesses for their practice of doing so.

Our concern in this book is merely to determine whether or not the inspired Christian writers used the Tetragrammaton in the 237 instances in which the *New World Translation* inserts *Jehovah* into the Christian Scriptures.

Through the earlier chapters of this book we found that there is no evidence to show that the inspired Christian writers used the Tetragrammaton. In this chapter we discovered that even though the Apostle John used a compound word that includes the divine name, he transliterated the Hebrew word into Greek letters. Just as we saw earlier, there is no indication in any of the ancient Christian Scripture manuscripts that the Hebrew letters for YAH (יהוה) were used at Revelation 19. Nonetheless, the divine name is undeniably used four times at Revelation 19:1-6.

It is also interesting to note that the divine name was *not* removed from these four verses. To anyone familiar with the language background during the second and third centuries C.E., these four occurrences of the word *hallelujah* were obviously a reference to Jehovah. Why then, if there had been a heresy aimed at removing his name, were these verses overlooked?



Chapter 12: A Conclusion

From the study we just finished, we see that there is no manuscript evidence of any kind showing that the Tetragrammaton was used in the original Christian Scripture manuscripts. Secondly, we understand the futility of using Hebrew versions to prove that the Christian Scripture writers used the Tetragrammaton because these versions are merely translations from a Greek text that does *not* use the Tetragrammaton. Finally, we realize that there is no evidence from history to support the theory that a heresy in the early Christian congregations resulted in the removal of the Tetragrammaton from the Christian Scriptures.

In this concluding chapter we must consider the implications of this information.

An irreconcilable conflict

The Watch Tower Society introduces an irreconcilable conflict in its *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* footnote material. If the Greek text published by the Watch Tower Society is truly inspired by Jehovah and therefore absolutely reliable, then the correct word in these 237 Christian Scripture “Jehovah” passages in the *New World Translation* is **Kyrios**.¹ Generally, **Kyrios** is translated as *Lord*, and would be a reference to Jesus. (This is the preferred choice of the *New World Translation* in 406 cases.²) On the other hand, the *New World Translation* uses the divine name *Jehovah* in these same 237 instances. If *Jehovah* is indeed the word used by the inspired Christian writers, then the Greek text is in error.

This irreconcilable conflict is evident in three viewpoints that cannot coexist without compromise. Yet, the Watch Tower Society

¹ This statement does not overlook the many copying errors made during the transmission of the Christian Scriptures. However, it recognizes that today, through the careful work of textual critics such as Westcott and Hort, we have an almost exact reproduction of the original Christian Scriptures.

² Refer to Appendix C, page 235 of *The Tetragrammaton and the Christian Greek Scriptures*. This and other downloadable books are available through the web site www.tetragrammaton.org.

independently defends each of these viewpoints:

1. **We possess faithful copies of the Christian Scriptures.** We agree with the authors of "*All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial*" that the Greek Scriptures we have today are substantially the same as they were when originally written. Sir Frederic Kenyon says, "The interval then between the dates of original composition and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed."³
2. **The text of the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* is trustworthy.** This Greek text demonstrates that ***Kyrios* (Lord)** was the word used by the inspired Christian writers. Manuscripts from the third and fourth centuries C.E. substantiate its presence. The *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* clearly demonstrates that ***Kyrios* (Lord)** was accepted as the proper word from as early as 105 years—and no later than 301 years—from the time of its writing. (John wrote Revelation about 96 C.E. The third century began in 201 C.E., or 105 years after John wrote Revelation.)
3. **The "J" reference sources are from a much later period of time.** The Hebrew versions used to substantiate the inspired Christian writers' use of the Tetragrammaton were translated no earlier than 1385 C.E.

If the Greek text is reliable, then its words must be reliable. But if the Greek text is reliable, how can the Tetragrammaton in a 14th century C.E. Hebrew translation have precedence over a fourth century C.E. Greek text that uses ***Kyrios* (Lord)**? We could not argue that all of the words in the Greek text are reliable except for 237 instances that have no manuscript or historic evidence of change. Inasmuch as the evidence for the use of the Tetragrammaton is far less verifiable than that for any other word in the original Christian Scriptures, if these 237 instances of the use of ***Kyrios*** are doubtful, then no part of the Christian Scriptures can be regarded as reliable.

Yet, this is not a mere issue of scholarly research or distant debates about ancient manuscripts. It has a very practical application to each of us. If the written word of Jehovah was so fragile and tenuous that the divine name could be lost without any trace in less than 200 years, can we continue to trust it today?

³ "*All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial*," Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1990, page 319.

Followers of Jehovah's word, the Bible, are unique. Unlike other religions, true Christianity is not a mere philosophy of good acts and kindnesses. Rather, true Christianity is based upon specific truths that are precisely recorded in Jehovah's word. If our Bible is not a trustworthy translation of reliable Greek (and Hebrew) manuscripts that can be traced directly back to the inspired writers, we cannot be certain as to the trustworthiness of our faith.

Jehovah does not intend that we be have an uncertain faith. He did not "lose" his written word only to have it reappear 1300 years later in Hebrew versions translated from Greek manuscripts in which the lost words had not yet been "found."

Hebrew Scripture quotations

In some instances, the Christian Scripture writers used **Kyrios** in such a way as to convey the thought that they were referring to the Jehovah of the Hebrew Scriptures. There is no doubt but that this is the case in such verses as:

In the course of one of the days [Jesus] was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law who had come out of every village of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem were sitting there; and (**Jehovah's** power—*NWT* or, the power of **Lord [Kyrios]**—*KIT*) was there for him to do healing. (Luke 5:17)

Clearly, this verse does not say that *Jesus' own power was there in order that he could heal*. That would be an unlikely statement inasmuch as Jesus' power was *always* present. Luke is drawing our attention to Jehovah's power. Luke used **Kyrios** in a way that conveyed the thought as expressed in the *New World Translation*: "...and Jehovah's power was there for him [Jesus] to do healing." Nonetheless, Luke did not use the word his reader Theophilus (Luke 1:3) would know as the Hebrew name of God. Instead, Luke used **Kyrios**. The reader today must be able to grasp that same meaning by reading the word *Lord* rather than *Jehovah*.

There are *many* passages throughout the Christian Scriptures that identify Jehovah as the subject.⁴ We will quote just two such

⁴ The reader should understand that we are not excluding the person of Jesus from this statement. For more information, see Chapter 14 "The Indistinct Meaning of **Kyrios**" in the book *The Tetragrammaton and the Christian Greek Scriptures*, available as a downloadable book at www.tetragrammaton.com.

verses. Matthew 1:22-23a (with an identifiable quotation from Isaiah 7:14 that is attributable to Jehovah) says:

All this actually came about for that to be fulfilled which was spoken (by **Jehovah**—*NWT* or, by **Lord [Kyrios]**—*KIT*) through his prophet, saying: "Look! The virgin will become pregnant and will give birth to a son..."

Even though Matthew used the Greek word **Kyrios**, he certainly must have intended the reader to understand it to mean, "which was spoken by Jehovah..." (*New World Translation*).

The third illustration of a **Kyrios** passage clearly referring to *Jehovah* also comes from Luke. When the angel Gabriel was sent to Mary with the announcement of the birth of Jesus, she responded according to Luke 1:38:

Then Mary said; "Look! (**Jehovah's** slave girl!—*NWT* or, The slave girl of **Lord [Kyrios]**—*KIT*) May it take place with me according to your declaration."

Certainly Luke indicated that Mary was addressing *Jehovah* when she offered herself in humble obedience. It would be most unusual to explain this passage by saying that Mary was addressing her yet unborn son.

These verses show us that in certain instances, Christian Scripture writers used the word **Kyrios** when referring to *Jehovah*. That is, *since there is no historical or biblical record to indicate that they used the Tetragrammaton in the inspired writings, we know from the best ancient manuscript evidence that they used the Greek word Kyrios⁵ when referring to Jehovah.*

In conclusion, we must briefly consider two issues resulting from

⁵ Again, at this point we must make a strong statement affirming the inspiration of Scripture. As we have seen, there is no evidence that the original manuscripts contained the Tetragrammaton. Therefore, unless we deny the inerrancy and inspiration of the Christian Scriptures, we can only conclude that God directed the inspired writers to use the Greek word **Kyrios** rather than the Hebrew word יהוה. If—in our desire to protect a theological position—we still must insist that the Tetragrammaton from Hebrew versions has precedence, then we must be willing to relinquish our claim that the Scriptures we have today are "inspired of God."

the inspired authors' use of the word **Kyrios**.

We must let the inspired writers speak

On the surface, it seems as though the inspired writers made a mistake when they used the single word **Kyrios** to refer to both *Jehovah* and *Lord*. Yet, all the evidence shows us that that is exactly what they intended to do.

At this point we must be honest with ourselves. Often, we want the inspired writers to say that which will support our own group's theological beliefs. Listen to any group explaining what they think an inspired writer meant and you will realize how much they want to show that the Scripture writer used words that validate their doctrinal position.

It is understandable that the Watch Tower Society would prefer to have the inspired writers separate the identity of *Jehovah* and the *Lord Jesus* in the Christian Scriptures. If these writers had used the Tetragrammaton 237 times, we would be able to see a clear distinction between *Lord* and *Jehovah*.

But they did not. They used the single work **Kyrios** for both. In some instances it is clear that they were speaking of *Jehovah*. In others, it is clear that they were speaking of the *Lord Jesus*. There are, however, a large number of verses in which they appear to have purposely allowed the identities of *Jehovah* and *Jesus* to overlap. Notice the sharp contrast between the sense of the following verses in the *New World Translation* and the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*. The translators of the *New World Translation* have made it appear as though the verse is identifying *Jehovah*. On the other hand, the inspired writer used the word **Kyrios**, thereby conveying an entirely different meaning. (The quotation from the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation* comes directly from the interlinear portion. Consequently, the word order is that of the Greek sentence itself.)

New World Translation

Kingdom Interlinear Translation

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says **Jehovah** God,

I am the Alpha and the Omega, is saying **Lord**, the God, The (one)

<p>"the One who is and who was and who is coming, the Almighty." Revelation 1:8</p>	<p>being and the (one) was and the (one) coming, the Almighty. Revelation 1:8</p>
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<p>"We thank you, Jehovah God, the Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and begun ruling as king." Revelation 11:17</p>	<p>We are giving thanks to you, Lord, the God, the Almighty, the (one) being and the (one) was, because you have taken the power of you the great and you reigned. Revelation 11:17</p>
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<p>And I heard the altar say: "Yes, Jehovah God, the Almighty, true and righteous are your judicial decisions." Revelation 16:7</p>	<p>And I heard of the altar saying Yes, Lord, the God, the Almighty, true and righteous the judgment of you. Revelation 16:7</p>
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<p>"Praise Jah, you people, because Jehovah our God, the Almighty, has begun to rule as king." Revelation 19:6</p>	<p>Hallelujah, because reigned Lord the God of us, the Almighty. Revelation 19:6</p>
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The book of Revelation alone has many similar examples. (See Revelation 4:8 and 11, 15:3, 18:8, 19:6, 21:22, and 22:5-6.) There are many other examples throughout the Christian Scriptures as well. In fact, all of the 237 Jehovah references should be examined.

In all of these instances, we must allow the inspired writer to say to us exactly what he said to the readers of his day. In turn, that is what Jehovah wants us to understand today.

The translator must communicate the writers' thoughts

In the first chapter we stated a principle that all Bible translators must follow. We said, "The translator must choose words that communicate the same idea to the reading audience today that the inspired writer communicated to the reader of his day." We then made the application that a present-day Bible translator must allow the "Old Testament" writers' words to communicate the revered name of God to the reader. An English Bible translator today must therefore identify God by name to his English reading audience just as the Hebrew Scripture author had.

Applying this same principle to the Christian Scripture

translator is no different. Irrespective of the word used by the original Christian Scripture writers, the translator of an English Bible today must convey the same meaning to his readers that the authors did. This is true even if a word they used has a less sharply defined meaning than the word (or words) we would prefer today.

Inasmuch as the Tetragrammaton is *not* used in the Greek Scriptures, all passages translated as *Jehovah* in the *New World Translation Christian Scriptures* must rightfully be translated as *Lord* where *Kyrios* is found in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*.⁶

The translator must communicate the exact thoughts of the original writers to his reading audience. The translator cannot become a commentator, explaining what he (the commentator) believes the Scripture writer intended to say.⁷ A commentator may do that later, using properly translated Scripture passages. Even the translator may do that later. But the translator is not free to use his translation as a statement of personal opinion.



⁶ It is important that we not be misunderstood. The Tetragrammaton was used almost 7,000 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. The author holds in high regard those translators who have made the effort to use a proper translation of יהוה rather than *LORD*. However, inasmuch as the Tetragrammaton is *not* found in any existing manuscripts of the Greek Scriptures, it is a violation of inspiration to insert the name where there is no evidence that the original Christian writers used it.

⁷ This does not ignore the fact that a translator must often make subjective choices when translating a word or a phrase from Greek into English. In many instances, that decision will involve the personal opinion of the translator regarding word meanings according to the context. *Kyrios* was a common secular word in the Greek language of Jesus' day. It is appropriately translated in the *New World Translation* as *Sir* [Mark 7:28], *owner* [Matthew 21:40], *master* [Matthew 25:26], a protocol form of address for an emperor [Acts 25:26], and *slave master* [Ephesians 6:5]. However, this does not give the translator the privilege of substituting one known word for another with an entirely different meaning as would be the case in substituting the divine name for *Lord*.