

**A CRITICAL
ANALYSIS OF
THE NEW WORLD
TRANSLATION OF THE
CHRISTIAN GREEK SCRIPTURES**

**The Jehovah's
Witnesses'
New Testament**

ROBERT H. COUNTESS

Chapter 3

THE DIVINE NAME

The singular importance of the Divine Name for the Jehovah's Witnesses is to be seen in the appellation they have chosen for themselves: they are witnesses for *Jehovah*. The strict monotheism of the group is further emphasized by this Divine Name when it is realized that one is not to be content with the mere use of the name "God" with its widespread popularity and corresponding ambiguity, but that one must press for the employment of the divinely revealed name of the one true GOD, JEHOVAH.

All such desire to set off the true God of Christianity from the myriads of "gods" worshiped in the world today finds welcome reception among orthodox Christians. The ambiguity of the term "God" in the nebulous theologies and existential philosophies that pervade the religious thinking increases the demands upon the true Christian to define God in the most meaningful terms possible.

In his *By What Standard?* Rushdoony captures the signal importance of God's absolute differentiation from all other concepts of "God" when he says:

While Scripture gives many titles to God, it records one name; the titles constitute man's recognition, in terms of a theophany usually, of a particular aspect of His being; the name Yahweh or Jehovah, is God's self-identification and constitutes His revelation of His nature and being. God declared Himself to be I AM THAT I AM, or HE WHO IS, the self-sufficient, self-contained, and absolutely sovereign and independent God. In declaring Himself to be Yahweh, God plainly declared, I do not explain myself, nor can I explain myself except in terms of My own being and self-sufficiency, I AM THAT I AM, HE WHO IS. . . . Not only must we assert that Christian orthodoxy is impossible without "the notion of the self-contained God" but that all things are impossible and inexplicable apart from Him.¹

Christians, then, will not be reticent to commend Jehovah's Witnesses and

1. Rousas J. Rushdoony, *By What Standard?*, pp. 151-52.

NWT for enunciating this absolute differentiation between God and the many gods of this world. This commendation, however, is not to be taken so as to imply that their unitarian view of God is acceptable. But now it is incumbent to note what NWT has to say about the Divine Name and what results stem from this.

I. *The Foreword of NWT*

Of the thirty-three pages comprising the Foreword of NWT, twenty-four, or about two-thirds, are taken up with the discussion of the Divine Name. In the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, the complete Bible published in one volume in 1961, this entire Foreword is missing. Hence, the reader without knowledge of Witness dogmatics is left without explanation for the presence of "Jehovah" in the New Testament.

The NWT contention in its discussion of the Divine Name begins thus. One striking fact so patent about the extant manuscripts of the original Greek text and also of so many versions, both ancient and modern, is the absence of the Divine Name. That name was represented in the Hebrew Scriptures by the tetragrammaton written יהוה, occurring 6,823 times. Although the exact pronunciation of the name is unknown today, its most popular vocalization is "Jehovah."²

Since the Christian Greek Scriptures were an inspired addition, the Foreword continues, to the sacred Hebrew Scriptures, it seems grossly inconsistent that this name should disappear from the Greek text, especially when the Apostle James addressed the other apostles and disciples in Jerusalem about the year A.D. 50, saying:

"Symeon has related thoroughly how God for the first time turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name" (Acts 15:14). Then in support James made a quotation from the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs twice. If Christians are to be a people for God's name, why should his name, represented by the tetragrammaton, be abolished from the Christian Greek Scriptures?³

"The usual traditional explanation for this no longer holds." For a long time it was thought that the reason for this absence of the Divine Name in

2. *New World Translation*, p. 10.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

extant manuscripts was the corresponding absence of it in the Septuagint.⁴ This line of thinking, to be sure, was based upon the *copies* of the LXX found in the great manuscripts of the fourth and fifth centuries A. D. In these manuscripts—Codices Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, and Ambrosianus—God’s name is rendered by the Greek words ΚΥΠΙΟΣ, “with or without the definite article,” and ΘΕΟΣ. “This namelessness,” write the translators of the NWT, “was viewed as an aid to teaching monotheism.”⁵

NWT continues. The recently found remains of a papyrus roll of the LXX containing the second half of Deuteronomy have flatly disproved this popular theory. Dated by authorities to have been written in the second or first century B. C., the fragments of this papyrus *nowhere* show that either ΚΥΠΙΟΣ or ΘΕΟΣ was used instead of the tetragrammaton. This proves that

. . . the original LXX did contain the divine name wherever it occurred in the Hebrew original. Considering it a sacrilege to use some substitute as *ky’-ri-os* or *the -os’*, the scribes inserted the tetragrammaton (יהוה) at its proper place in the Greek version text.⁶

So important is this papyrus, technically designated P. Fouad 266, that NWT devotes two pages of the Foreword to photographic reproduction of some of its fragments.⁷

Did then Jesus and the disciples, the writers of the Christian Greek Scriptures, have copies available of the LXX with the Divine Name written in the tetragrammaton form, the translators ask? “Yes! The tetragrammaton

4. Hereinafter referred to as LXX.

5. *New World Translation*, p. 11.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

7. Footnote “a” on page 12 of the Foreword reads: “The papyrus belongs to the Société Royale de Paprologie du Caire. It bears the Inventory Number 266, and forms part of the collection of Fouad Papyri, of which Nos. 1-89 were published in 1939 in one volume (*P. Fouad I*, 1939). The nearest parallel in date to P. Fouad Inv. No. 266 is P. Rylands iii. 458, of the 2nd century B. C., which also contains fragments of the second half of Deuteronomy; but its scanty remains unfortunately preserve no use of the divine name or its equivalent.” The importance of this footnote is not so much in its content as in the fact that it is a verbatim quotation from W. D. Waddell’s “The Tetragrammaton in the LXX” in the *Journal of Theological Studies* XLV, 158-61, written in 1944. *NWT does not place this paragraph in quotation marks or cite its source.* (Several attempts at securing clear copies of these originals for inclusion here have proved unsuccessful.)

persisted in copies of LXX for centuries after Christ and his apostles.”⁸

Further evidence is adduced by citing Jerome in his *Prologus Galeatus*, where he prefaces the books of Samuel and Malachi by saying, “We find the four-lettered name of God (i.e., יהוה) in certain Greek volumes even to this day expressed in the ancient letters.”⁹ And in his twenty-fifth letter to Marcella, which he penned at Rome in the year 384, he discusses the ten names of God and states:

The ninth [name of God] is a tetragrammaton, which they considered ἀνεκφώνητον [an-ek-pho'ne-ton], that is, unspeakable, which is written with these letters, Iod, He, Vau, He. Which certain ignorant ones, because of the similarity of the characters, when they would find them in Greek books, were accustomed to pronounce Pi Pi.¹⁰

According to NWT the evidence is incontrovertible, and one matter is now certain: whether Jesus and the disciples read Scripture in Aramaic or Greek, they would find the Divine Name in its tetragrammaton form.

One must now query whether Jesus followed the traditional Jewish custom of the day and vocalized *Adonai* for the tetragrammaton. The answer is simple if one accepts NWT reasoning: “Not if Jesus followed his usual disregard for the unscriptural traditions followed by the Jewish scribes.”¹¹ For Jesus taught with authority and not as the scribes. In John 17:6, 26, he says: “I have made your name manifest to the men you gave me out of the world. . . . I have made your name known to them and will make it known.”¹² Why even the Jewish Talmud, continues the Foreword, accuses Jesus of performing miracles by pronouncing the Divine Name. This in itself indirectly proves that he vocalized the tetragrammaton.¹³

The line of argument to this point has been simply groundwork, an attempt to establish solidly a basis upon which the crucial superstructure might find support:

The question now before us is: Did Jesus' inspired disciples use the divine name in their writings? That is, Did God's name appear in the

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., p. 16.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid., pp. 338, 340.

13. Ibid., p. 17.

original writings of the Christian Greek Scriptures? We have basis for answering Yes.¹⁴

“In recent years some have claimed that Matthew’s gospel account was at first written in Hebrew rather than in its kindred language, the Aramaic.” Now, it is contended by some that Matthew and other early Christians intended this writing to take its place as the last book of the Hebrew canon. At that time a canon of Christian Greek Scriptures was not contemplated. Jerome is again cited in partial support of this hypothesis:

Matthew, who is also Levi, and who from a publican came to be an Apostle, first of all the Evangelists, composed a Gospel of Christ in Judaea in the Hebrew language and characters, for the benefit of those of the circumcision who had believed. Who translated it into Greek is not sufficiently ascertained. Furthermore, the Hebrew itself is preserved to this day in the library at Caesarea which the martyr Pamphilus so diligently collected. I also was allowed by the Nazarenes who use this volume in the Syrian city of Beroea to copy it. In which it is to be remarked that, wherever the Evangelist makes use of the testimonies of the old Scripture, he does not follow the authority of the seventy translators, but of the Hebrew.¹⁵

More than one hundred times did Matthew quote from the Hebrew Scriptures, and “where these quotations included the Divine Name, he would be obliged faithfully to include the tetragrammaton in his Hebrew gospel account.”¹⁶

How this relates to the other writers of the Christian Greek Scriptures is explained thus:

But all the writers of the Christian Greek Scriptures quoted from the Hebrew Scriptures or from the LXX at verses where the Name appears, and they could follow the style then true of copies of the LXX by using the tetragrammaton in their Greek writings.¹⁷

In this fashion the gamut of the New Testament is run and the tetragrammaton is conclusively “discovered” to have been part of the autographa.

One further question begs to be asked by any thoughtful reader: Why is there no extant manuscript of the New Testament containing the tetragram-

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., p. 18.

maton? And by no means have the NWT translators been remiss in supplying an answer to this desideratum:

The evidence is, therefore, that the original text of the Christian Greek Scriptures has been tampered with, the same as the text of the LXX has been. And, at least from the 3d century A.D. onward, the divine name in tetragrammaton form has been eliminated from the text by copyists who did not understand or appreciate the divine name or who developed an aversion to it, possibly under the influence of anti-Semitism. In place of it they substituted the words *ky·ri·os* (usually translated "the Lord") and *the·os*, meaning "God."¹⁸

And *since*—not "if"—such has been the case, the modern translator is duty bound to restore the name of Jehovah to the text of the New Testament, the NWT argument runs.

Appendix to Matthew 1:20

Of the numerous appendices in the back of NWT the one appended to Matthew 1:20 is entitled "Jehovah's." It lists as a concordance every place in the NWT where the translators have substituted "Jehovah" for the Greek *Kyrios* or *Theos*. In the body of NWT, "Jehovah" has been inserted 237 times, and "Jah"—the abbreviated form—four times. The lower margin or apparatus contains Jehovah 72 times. These were not considered to be genuine enough to be taken up into the text. The total number of times, then, that the Divine Name appears in the body of the translation is 241.¹⁹

Where Jehovah appears, there is a footnote which gives the Greek reading of *Kyrios* or *Theos* and the chief manuscript evidence supporting it. Usually, this evidence consists of the uncials A B ⋈ C D and the Latin, Syrian, and Coptic Versions.

Medieval Hebrew Translations of the New Testament

In view of the "conclusive" evidence,

What is the modern translator to do? Is he justified, yes, authorized, to enter the divine name into a translation of the Christian Greek Scrip-

18. Ibid. One observes here, in an aside, that NWT translators have used "anti-Semitism" for "anti-Jewishness." This imprecise use of terminology is widespread still. *Real* anti-Semitism includes an animus against Arabs.

19. For the listing of "Jehovah's" see pages 759-62 of the NWT.

tures? Every Greek reader must confess that in the LXX the Greek words *ky·ri·os* and *the·os* have been used to crowd out the distinctive name of the Supreme Deity.

Then it is stated that all comprehensive Greek-English lexicons agree that these two Greek words have been employed as equivalents for the Divine Name. Therefore,

. . . the modern translator is warranted in using the divine name as an equivalent of those two Greek words, that is, at places where Matthew, etc., quote verses, passages and expressions from the Hebrew Scriptures or from the LXX where the divine name occurs.²⁰

Since insertion of the name has been justified in the minds of NWT translators, the transition from the sole use of Greek manuscripts to Hebrew translations of the New Testament must likewise be seen to be justified.

On page 101 of this thesis a table of these Hebrew translations is given. The earliest, dated in the year 1385, and designated by NWT as J², marked the inception of many translations of parts or all of the New Testament into “the ancient classical Hebrew.” The total number of appearances of the sacred tetragrammaton in the nineteen Hebrew versions available to NWT is 307. “These have thus restored the divine name to the inspired Christian Scriptures.”²¹

Immediately, one notices that NWT substitutes Jehovah 237 times in the text and “Jah,” its abbreviation, four times, sixty-six times fewer than the total number in the versions cited. The grave question raised is, “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?” The solution proffered is thus:

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.²²

The translators, realizing that the time has come for restoring the Divine

20. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

22. *Ibid.*

Name, have followed this procedure in rendering their version. Also, realizing the danger of overstepping the limits of a translator and moving into the field of exegesis,

. . . we have looked for some agreement with us by the Hebrew versions we consulted to confirm our own rendering. Thus, out of the 237 times that we have rendered the divine name in the body of our version there are only two instances where we have no support or agreement from any of the Hebrew versions.²³

From these admissions the NWT awareness of subjectivism is apparent; and a concerted attempt has been made to be objective and to substantiate the insertions with tangible textual support.

Although *The Emphatic Diaglott*, issued in 1864 as an interlinear English/Greek version based on Griesbach's text, was the first American translation to insert the name Jehovah into the English text, the *New World Translation* is the version having inserted Jehovah that has commended itself to more people and has made the greatest impact. The translators are convinced that "no reasonable mind can find Scriptural objection" to their treatment of the text in this fashion. Instead, it is said that readers who become familiar with NWT "will rejoice over the added clearness it imparts to many scriptures not distinctly discerned before."²⁴

II. Vocalization of the Divine Name

In the preceding portion of this chapter in which was presented the NWT Foreword as it attempted to justify the "restoration" of the Divine Name, there is no questioning of the pronunciation of "Jehovah" or, more basically, vocalization of the tetragrammaton itself.²⁵ If the Witnesses are to be a people of God's name, and if His name had been preserved in the Greek autographa in ancient Hebrew letters, then it seems reasonable to expect that pronunciation of His name would be preserved also.

The importance of vowels must be squarely faced, especially by the Witnesses, who vociferate their status as witnesses for Jehovah God. A cursory perusal of any Hebrew lexicon soon demonstrates that one set of radicals can admit of widely divergent meanings. For example, the radi-

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid., p. 25.

25. The tetragrammaton also is spoken of as the "ineffable sacrosanct."

calls \aleph when pointed \aleph mean “teat,” when \aleph mean “demon,” when \aleph , “breast” or “violence.” If it would be an impropriety to mispronounce someone’s name or to call a “breast” a “demon,” then how much more of an impropriety to vocalize incorrectly the name of the true God?

In this section will be treated the “ineffable sacrosanct” in the LXX, prohibition and the name, both leading up to the pronunciation of the name.

The Tetragrammaton in the LXX

The contention by the NWT translators that the autographa of the LXX contained the tetragrammaton solely has been presented as it was set forth in the Foreword of that version. Admittedly on every hand, if the autographa were extant and able to be inspected, this matter would be settled with the utmost expediency. But, as is the case with the autographs of the New Testament, the original manuscripts of LXX long ago perished. In all candor the NWT translators ought to admit that their line of reasoning is held together by more dogmatism than fact, by more conjecture than textual evidence.

Evidence in support of NWT contention. One statement preserved in the works of the third-century Church Father Origen supports to some extent the position adopted by NWT. Commenting on Psalm 2, Origen states:

Καί ἐν τοῖς ἀκριβεστάτοις δὲ τῶν ἀντιγράφων Ἑβραίοις χαρακτηῖρσιν κείται τὸ ὄνομα Ἑβραϊκοῖς δὲ οὐ τοῖς νῦν ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀρχαιοτάτοις.²⁶

Translation: Now in the most exact copies the name is situated in Hebrew characters, though not in current but in the most ancient ones. Swete then comments that “the most exact copies” to which Origen alludes must be those of Aquila’s version of the LXX. For, he continues, there is no reason to suppose that any of the copyists of the LXX version stemming from Alexandria ever hesitated writing δ \aleph s or \aleph s for \aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph .²⁷

In this same vein Waddell says that the Cairo palimpsests of parts III and IV Kings corroborates fully Origen’s statement quoted above.²⁸

26. Henry B. Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, p. 39.

27. *Ibid.*

28. W. D. Waddell, *Journal of Theological Studies* XLV (1944), p. 158.

Thus alongside the citation by the NWT Foreword of Jerome's knowledge of the tetragrammaton in Greek manuscripts may be placed Origen, who preceded Jerome by two centuries. Going back another century to the work of Aquila itself, Swete remarks that a noticed difference between Aquila's version and the LXX is that the tetragrammaton is not transliterated nor is κύριος translated for it; it is written in archaic Hebrew letters: **קָוָוָו** and not **קָוָוָו**.²⁹

While in the Aquila version the tetragrammaton was archaically written, it appears that κύριος was read for it. In adducing evidence to support this, Swete cites F. C. Burkitt:

Mr. Burkitt acutely points out (p. 16) that **קָוָוָו** (and doubtless also **קָוָוָו**) was read as κύριος, since in one place in the Aquila fragments there was no room to write the Hebrew characters, "instead of **οἰκω** **קָוָוָו** we find **οἰκω** **κῦ**."³⁰

The rule, then, for the Aquila version was that the Divine Name should be preserved in its four-letter form. Translating it by κύριος was an exception.

In view of this combined testimony, there is some evidence to support the NWT Foreword when it alleges that Jesus and His disciples *might* have had copies of the LXX at hand containing the tetragrammaton.

Evidence against NWT contention. Contrary evidence might best begin with the latter issue, the version of Aquila. For to say that his version, which is dated in the first quarter of the second century of the Christian era, contained the Divine Name in ancient Hebrew characters is not to establish that such was the practice of all copyists who worked with the Greek Old Testament. In other words, can or must Aquila's version be normative?

In the opinion of the present investigator the answer to this question is clearly, No. Würthwein, discussing "later Greek translations," states concerning Aquila and his version:

. . . from Sinope in Pontus, was a proselyte and, according to Jewish tradition, a pupil of Rabbi Akiba, in whose spirit he produced a slavishly literal translation. As he carried the principle of literal accuracy to the absurd point at which the intelligibility of the text suffered, he frequently produced a version which did not sound at all like Greek, although his vocabulary reveals that he had a good knowledge of the

29. Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, p. 39.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

language. But it was just this ruthless adherence to the text, and its rather precious quality, as for example in its use of similar sounding words, which endeared his work to his Jewish contemporaries, and his version thus enjoyed considerable popularity among the Jews.³¹

In light of this knowledge alone one must conclude the precariousness of alleging that the presence of the tetragrammaton in Aquila implies—even less proves—the same presence in the autographs of the LXX, which were produced some three hundred years earlier.³² Also, Aquila could not have completed his version before *ca.* A.D. 130, *many* years after the completion of all—or at least most—of the NT writings. Thus, NWT infers from a *later* work by extrapolation backwards that NT writers *in fact* had a LXX with Hebraic entries for the tetragrammaton.

Though the *possibility* of the latter must be conceded, there is no hard evidence to justify NWT dogmatism on behalf of a Jehovah's Witness prior religious view.

One more piece of evidence contrary to NWT contention shall be adduced, and consideration of it should be made in view of Papyrus Fouad 266.

31. Ernst Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, pp. 137f.

32. Further elucidation of Aquila's style comes from a leading LXX scholar, Alfred Rahlfs: ". . . Aquila . . . did not shrink from perpetrating the most appalling outrages to the whole essence of the Greek language. We are provided in the very first verse of the Bible with a classical example of his translating. The LXX has rendered it into correct and good Greek by ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν. This translation was, however, very far from being accurate enough for Aquila's tastes. The etymology of the Hebrew אֱרֵץ did not find expression in ἀρχή; Aquila, however, aimed at providing a rendering of all Hebrew derivatives which should be accurate, even in regard to etymology. He therefore translated אֱרֵץ as a derivative of אֵץ by κεφάλαιον, being a derivative of κεφαλή. It did not matter that the Greek word κεφάλαιον did not mean 'Beginning' but 'Chief point' or 'Sum,' etc. Neither was Aquila able to use the classical Greek word ἐποίησεν; for he used different renderings in Greek for different Hebrew words, and, consequently, ποιεῖν being to him the equivalent of אֱרֵץ, he sought for another translation for אֱרֵץ, and this he found in κτίζειν, a word already frequently used in the LXX to render אֱרֵץ. The next word in the LXX was ὁ θεός = אֱלֹהִים; Aquila omitted the article, his reason being that it was not there in the Hebrew text. Finally, there came in the LXX the words τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν. Aquila, in order to have a special Greek rendering even for אֱרֵץ, wrote σύν τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ σύν τὴν γῆν. At this point he was plainly influenced by his teacher Akiba, who, as has been mentioned above, had taken אֱרֵץ in this context as meaning 'with.' All the same, in order to contradict previous inaccurate statements of the fact, it needs emphasizing that Aquila does not in every case render אֱרֵץ by σύν, but only on occasions when in the Hebrew text אֱרֵץ is followed by the article; should, however, a Hebrew word have no article preceding it, as, for example, in the case of a status constructus, or of a proper name, then Aquila translates אֱרֵץ by the Greek article." Alfred Rahlfs, *Septuaginta*, I, p. XXV.

Among the manuscripts found in the Qumran region beginning in 1947 is the Leviticus Scroll Fragment 4 Q LXX Lev.^a. Dated as having been written around 100 B.C., it contains Leviticus 26:2-16. The present writer observed this manuscript on display at the University of Pennsylvania Museum in 1965, where it was featured along with other Dead Sea Scroll materials. A statement appended to the fragment read, “. . . this fragment is now the oldest copy of the Septuagint.” This fragment produces the crux for the NWT contention because this Leviticus portion contains verses which in the Hebrew Massoretic text have the Divine Name in tetragrammaton form. Verses two and thirteen have the Divine Name once each and in neither instance did יהוה or יהוהוה appear. The copyist maintained his usage of the Greek language throughout.

Conclusion. This treatment of the LXX has not attempted to be exhaustive, and there exists additional evidence, to be sure, that might be used pro and con.³³ One may conclude that NWT dogmatism has been to some extent emasculated by the foregoing evidence. And furthermore, the NWT position elicits a *petitio principii*—even if it were incontrovertibly established that the LXX originals employed the tetragrammaton in Hebrew characters, by no means would this establish such usage in the New Testament by the apostolic writer. Hence, the NWT circuitous reasoning by way of the LXX to New Testament autographa results in a futility.

Prohibitions Regarding the Divine Name

The sanctity which the name of God was accorded by both pre-Christian and post-Christian Jews is axiomatic. Among other testimony surviving to the present era is that of the first-century historian Flavius Josephus. Remarketing on the general prohibition of vocalizing this name, he wrote:

Καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτῷ σημαίνει τὴν αὐτοῦ προσηγορίαν οὐ πρότερον εἰς ἀνθρώπους παρελθοῦσαν, περὶ ἧς οὐ μοι θέμιτον εἰπεῖν.³⁴

33. “Darüber hinaus ergibt sich aus der Art des Artikelgebrauchs bei κύριος dass in der ursprünglichen Septuaginta das Tetragramm nicht in hebräischen Buchstaben beibehalten, ebensowenig mit ἄδωναι umschrieben war und dass dafür nicht erst später κύριος substituiert worden ist.” Worf W. G. Baudissin, *Kyrios als Gottesname im Judentum*, 1929, II, p. 15, cited by W. D. Waddell, op. cit., p. 159. Translation: “Further, there results from the manner of usage of the article with κύριος that in the original Septuagint the tetragram was not retained in Hebrew letters, just as little was it rewritten with ἄδωναι, and for that not until later did κύριος become substituted” [i. e., for ἄδωναι]. Waddell argues against this statement.

34. Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, English translation by H. St. J. Thackeray, 1930, II, xii,

In a footnote he states that only the High Priest was allowed to pronounce the tetragrammaton. J. Z. Lauterbach, citing Rabbinic sources, supports Josephus by saying that "In the Temple, especially on the Day of Atonement, the Name was pronounced by the High Priest."³⁵ One further allowance was made: "Also at the final stage of a court trial for blasphemy the witnesses were allowed to pronounce the Name used by the blasphemer."³⁶

The tangent issue as touches the NWT is the statement of the Foreword regarding this prohibition:

Did Jesus follow the traditional Jewish custom of the day and read *A·do·nai* at such places out of fear of profaning the name and violating the Third Commandment (Exodus 20:7)?³⁷

The assumed and stated answer, of course, is "Not if Jesus followed his usual disregard for the unscriptural traditions followed by the Jewish scribes."³⁸

In the first place, the wording of the question is very subtle. To be sure, Jesus did not conduct His tenure upon earth in superstitious fear. In the second place, and admittedly drawing from the silence of the New Testament record, nowhere is Jesus' profanation of the Divine Name cited. In the opinion of this investigator the accusers of Jesus would not have overlooked such incriminating evidence, for at His trial He is accused of βλασφημία.

In the same paragraph NWT cites what appears to them as incontrovertible proof that Jesus pronounced the Name:

In the hearing of his faithful apostles Jesus prayed to Jehovah God, saying: "I have made your name manifest to the men you gave me out of the world. . . . I have made your name known to them and will make it known." (John 17:6, 26)³⁹

The clear implication of the Foreword is *that part of Jesus' mission to earth was to restore to the lips of men a Name that had hitherto had its pronuncia-*

4, 276, p. 284. Translation: "And God shows him [Moses] His name not formerly having come forth to men, concerning which [name] I am not permitted to speak."

35. J. Z. Lauterbach, "Substitutes for the Tetragrammaton," *American Academy for Jewish Research*, Proceedings, 1931, p. 39.

36. Ibid.

37. *New World Translation*, p. 16.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid.

tion obscured and lost. The Witnesses show a defective knowledge of biblical theology at this point.

Geerhardus Vos, discussing the name of God in the Old Testament, says that the Bible usage of the word "name" differs considerably from current usage. "In the Bible the name is always more than a conventional sign. It expresses character or history." He further states that there is a threefold significance of the term "name" in Scripture in its religious connections: (1) It may express a divine attribute. For example, God is holy. But the adjective becomes a proper noun when the prophet speaks of God as "The Holy One of Israel"; (2) next, God's name may "stand abstractly and comprehensively for all that God has revealed concerning Himself"; and, (3) God's name may stand in a real way for God Himself. It becomes equivalent to God in theophany.⁴⁰

Jesus, then, when having prayed that He made the Father's name known in the world, *was not indicating a philological concern*, but a theological one.⁴¹

Pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton

Greater impasse can be reached here than at any other point in this chapter, for the ages of antiquity have completely effaced the vowel pointing of an originally "pointless" Hebrew word. Since modern scholarship has not yet solved this enigma, one can perhaps do no better than turn to the opinion of one who wrote in the nineteenth century, Gustaf Oehler.

Oehler avers that Exodus 3:13-15 provides the decisiveness necessary for the pronunciation and grammatical explanation of the name. When Moses queries who it is who sends him to the people of Israel, God replies, *אֲנִי הוּא אֲנִי*. "Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, Ehyeh has sent me unto you." In verse 15, "Thus shalt thou say, *יהוה*, the God of your fathers has sent me unto you," leads Oehler to conclude that the word *יהוה* is to be taken as a noun formed from the third person of the imperfect *יְהוֹה*, and older form of *יְהוָה*. Hence, the tetragrammaton

40. Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology*, 1959, pp. 76f.

41. In the Gospels there is frequently a euphemistic substitute for the name of God. Readily, one observes that the phrase "kingdom of heaven," especially in Matthew, is the best example of such usage. Parallel Gospel passages usually use "kingdom of God." In Luke 15:18-21, the prodigal son is recorded as having confessed his sinning against God and his father: "I sinned against heaven and against thee."

must be pointed יהוה (יהוה), or, what is not impossible, יהוה (יהוה). The testimony of tradition produces Ἰαβέ, Samaritans; Ἰα, Jews; Ἰωωα, Origen; – Ἰωω, Diodorus; Ἰεωω, Sanchoniathon; Ἰωω, Clement of Alexandria; *Jaho*, Jerome; and *Jeve*, Joachim de Floris in the thirteenth century.⁴²

The educated guesses are few in number, and the present prospects for solving the mystery with finality do not appear to be impressive.

III. *The Real Issue: The Identification of Jesus with Jehovah*

In this the final section of the presentation of the Divine Name, the real issue is reached. The writer is thoroughly convinced that the translators of NWT were not merely intending to restore to the pages of the New Testament God's name, which name, it is alleged, was perhaps excised due to anti-semitism or ignorance on the part of early Christian scribes. NWT has introduced "Jehovah" into the Greek Scriptures for the sole purpose of wiping out any vestige of Jesus Christ's identity with Jehovah. From the Witnesses' standpoint the "ambiguous" employment of κύριος and θεός in the Greek Scriptures would lend weight to trinitarians who assert the deity of Christ.

No attempt will be made here to present a case for Christ's deity, since that will form the substance of chapter 5. However, in connection with this section there will be presented tables demonstrating the inconsistency of NWT in not adhering to their stated principle on page 20 of the Foreword. That principle dealt with how to determine where to insert Jehovah:

By determining where the inspired Christian writers have quoted from the Hebrew Scripture. 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 κύριος and θεός.⁴³

Secondly, herein will be passages which clearly show an identity of Jesus with Jehovah *on the basis of text alone*. Again, no attempt will be made to follow out the implications. The sole purpose of the investigator at this point will be to demonstrate that the inspired Scriptures *textually* make Jesus and Jehovah correlative in some way at these places. Then it will be shown that

42. Gustav F. Oehler, *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 93.

43. *New World Translation*, p. 20.

NWT has manifestly departed from its stated principle in order to avoid this identification.

Inconsistent Application of Principle

The principle to have been followed by NWT has already been stated, and a check of its application has not been difficult. Table II on page 102 contains a listing of κύριος in the New Testament where the Old Testament reference behind it contains the tetragrammaton. It will be immediately evident that NWT has been faithful to its principle the majority of times—in fact about ninety-five percent faithful. In table III on page 103 θεός is similarly listed, and there, involving fewer entries, NWT has been fifty-six percent faithful to its principle. One is compelled to posit the question, Why did not NWT follow its principle 100 percent of the time? The question is a valid one and demands an answer. Table IV on page 104 lists by books the occurrences of “Jehovah” in the main text of NWT and shows the actual number of times that the tetragrammaton occurs in quotation behind κύριος and θεός. The totals are extremely worthy of study. According to Moulton and Geden the Divine Name appears only 50 times in passages quoted by New Testament writers. When one re-reads the Foreword of NWT and notes that in order to

. . . avoid overstepping the bounds of a translator into the field of exegesis, we have tried to be most cautious about rendering the divine name, always carefully considering the Hebrew Scriptures,⁴⁴

one must wonder how the translators can account for the 187 other times they have inserted Jehovah into the sacred text!

Textual Identification of Jesus with Jehovah

The investigator presents this section of the chapter firmly believing that here objectivity immeasurably dominates subjectivity. Therefore, meaningful conclusions—and vital conclusions—will pregnantly manifest themselves. The first passage has been selected to head the others because it stands as the clearest of them all.

I Peter 2:3. Εἰ ἐγεύσασθε ὅτι χρηστὸς ὁ κύριος. Westcott and Hort place this phrase in uncials in order to show it to be a quotation; Nestle places

44. Ibid.

it in heavy type for the same reason. Psalm 34:8a (33:9a in LXX) furnishes the source and reads γεύσασθε καὶ ἴδετε ὅτι χρηστός ὁ κύριος. The Massoretic text reads הַיְהוָה יְיָ-מֵי-בְרַחֲמָיִם וְיִשְׁמַח לָנוּ. On the basis of NWT contentions that LXX retained the tetragrammaton, Psalm 34:8 would have read γεύσασθε καὶ ἴδετε ὅτι χρηστός **יהוה** [or יהוהי]. Continuing on this contention, Peter would have written Εἰ ἐγεύσασθε ὅτι χρηστός **יהוה** or יהוהי. Therefore, the translation of I Peter 2:3 in NWT could be expected to read, “providing YOU have tasted that Jehovah is kind.” *But such is not the case in NWT*, which reads, “providing YOU have tasted that the Lord is kind.” *Certainly there must be a footnote that elucidates for the reader this departure from the established principle he has read in the Foreword.* But one will search in vain for any relevant footnote—and NWT abounds in footnotes on each page.

Why is the fervor of the Witnesses to restore the Divine Name not evidenced in this passage whose lucidity must be admitted by all? The answer is found in the next verse. Peter continues, πρὸς ὃν προσερχόμενοι, λίθον ζῶντα, ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων μὲν ἀποδοκιμασιαμένον παρὰ δὲ θεῶν ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον. There is no possible way aside from sheer chicanery to circumvent the grammatical construction of this verse, for πρὸς ὃν can refer to *no one* but Jesus Christ. He alone is the One to whom the addressees of I Peter have come, the Living Stone, the One rejected by men. Is it any wonder then that NWT translates the verse with “Lord” instead of “Jehovah” and tacitly avoids any comment at all?⁴⁵

45. After having pointed out this passage and its implications to a Jehovah’s Witness who had accused this investigator, the Witness answered in typical rationalistic fashion, “But do you think that Jesus and Jehovah God are really the same?” I then emphasized that such a question was irrelevant in view of the principle set forth for restoring “Jehovah” in the Foreword of NWT. The Witness refused to admit any inconsistency whatsoever. The following reply indicates the refusal to face squarely the issue elicited by this passage: “Yes, I Peter 2:3 is one of the verses where in the Greek text the word *Kyrios* or Lord occurs. However, it is not anarthrous *Kyrios* such as is used to represent the divine name Jehovah, that is, preceded by the definite article, the same as in the English text. So it is not in the list of those Hebrew versions where the word Jehovah occurs. If you will turn to page 762 of the appendix found in the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* you will find there a list of texts that you request, namely, those verses of the Christian Greek Scriptures where Hebrew versions do contain the name Jehovah, but in which verses the *New World Translation* does not present the name Jehovah in the main text, but only in the lower margin of the page.” Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (personal letter, unsigned; New York, August 16, 1965). *I include this so that*

I Peter 3:15a. Here the Apostle Peter again quotes the Old Testament where the tetragrammaton is used. Westcott and Hort—the affirmed basic text of NWT—and Nestle read Peter's imperative: κύριον δὲ τὸν χριστὸν ἀγιάσατε ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν. NWT translates it thus: "But sanctify the Christ as Lord^b in YOUR hearts." It is passing strange that the translators could have overlooked this quotation (Isa. 8:13), where the Hebrew reads "sanctify" $\text{קִדְּשׁוּ} \text{לַיהוָה}$. The particle 'eth denotes the accusative, the sign of the direct object. Hence, it is Jehovah God who is to be set apart. Peter, apparently following LXX, wrote κύριον δὲ τὸν χριστὸν ἀγιάσατε. He clearly places "Christ" in the accusative with, if you will, the tetragrammaton. Κύριον and τὸν χριστὸν are separate only because the postpositive δέ cannot appear first in a sentence or clause.

There is a footnote to this part of verse 15. It reads:

^bSanctify the Christ as Lord, LXX BAVgSyP; sanctify the Messiah our Lord, J¹⁸; sanctify the Lord God, Textus Receptus; sanctify Jehovah God, J^{7, 8, 12-14, 16, 17, 46}

At best the data cited in this footnote are misleading. First, the evidence in favor of the text, though weighty enough by itself, should have been accompanied by *plerique* or *reliqui* or at least *permulti* to indicate further the status of this reading. Secondly, "sanctify the Messiah our Lord," which comes next, ought not to have preceded that of Textus Receptus, for it will be noted that J¹⁸ is a Hebrew translation which was begun in the modern year of 1885! And thirdly, the final variant reading, "sanctify Jehovah God," found in seven medieval Hebrew translations, is a conflate reading based upon the great body of medieval manuscripts underlying Textus Receptus. The combined effect of all these citations upon the untrained reader may induce him to conclude that the greater evidence favors "Jehovah God."

In keeping with the aim of the Foreword for an "honest" translation, this footnote ought to have included a candid acknowledgement of the presence

the reader can observe how the Society refuses to acknowledge that the divine tetragrammaton stands in the Hebrew behind the LXX which Peter cites.

The grossness of NWT inconsistency in *not* following their theory—that the tetragrammaton was represented in LXX by the *anarthrous* κύριος—they fail to tell the reader that in Aquila's LXX he used $\text{קִדְּשׁוּ} \text{לַיהוָה}$ interchangeably with both κύριος and ὁ κύριος (cf. e.g. Ps. 91:5-10 [92:5-10 in most English versions], Swete, *ibid.*, p. 38).

46. *New World Translation*, p. 679.

of the tetragrammaton. *As it now stands NWT is guilty of a flagrant violation of its dogmatically stated principle as touching the Divine Name.* Further evidence of not presenting *all* the facts is to be seen in the marginal reference in verse 14 to Isaiah 8:12 without referring the reader to 8:13 somewhere in verse 15 of Peter. Had this been done, the reader might have realized that “Jehovah” stands behind “Lord” and is placed in juxtaposition with “Christ.” *Caveat emptor!*

John 19:37. This passage differs from the preceding two in that the Divine Name is not involved immediately but only mediately by way of being the antecedent. NWT reads, “And, again, a different scripture says: ‘They will look upon the one whom they pierced.’ ” The Apostle John is quoting from Zechariah 12:10—which reference appears in the margin of NWT—and he sees its fulfillment in the thrusting of a Roman soldier’s spear into the side of Jesus.

The Greek of John 19:37 is not identical with that of LXX but, according to a marginal note by Nestle, is similar to the Greek in Zechariah 12:10 of the versions of Aquila and Theodotion. Actually, this is of no consequence. The importance of the quotation is seen in that the antecedent of “the one” in the phrase “the one whom they pierced” can be none other than Jehovah God.

As the matter stands in NWT, Jehovah is *not* seen to be the antecedent. The *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, published in 1961 and containing the Old Testament as well as the “Christian Greek Scriptures,” which are the subject of this dissertation, reads in Zechariah 12:10:

And I will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of favor and entreaties, and they will certainly look to the One whom they pierced through, and they will certainly wail over him as in the wailing over an only [son]; and there will be a bitter lamentation over him as when there is bitter lamentation over the first-born [son].

In general the translation of this verse is acceptable. In one small, and insignificant point, however, the translators have erred greatly. The phrase, “and they will certainly look to the One whom they pierced through” reads in the King James Version and the American Standard Version, “and they shall look upon/unto me whom they have pierced.” The American Standard used “unto” instead of “upon.” The only real difference with NWT is the

person to whom these “piercers” look. In agreement with its translation, NWT has the Revised Standard Version, whose rendering of the phrase under study is, “so that when they look on him whom they have pierced. . . .”

The LXX reads καὶ ἐπιβλέψονταί πρὸς με ἄνθ' ὃν κατωρχήσαντο and the Massoretic text, $\text{וְיִבְרְכּוּ-רַבְּבָנִים בְּיָמֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּנֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ}$, both supporting KJV and ASV. The basis for this peculiar variant found in NWT and RSV is apparently the reading of Zechariah 12:10 in a Greek version by Theodotion, a second-century A.D. Jewish proselyte. *This is not cited by NWT*, but it is placed in a footnote by RSV. The more difficult and better attested reading is that of the Massoretic text, “unto me,” and it is readily seen that “to the One whom” could be a dogmatic correction on the part of a Jewish scribe who *knew* that Jehovah could not be “pierced through.” And, if tradition be correct, Theodotion *was* a proselyte to Judaism and could have introduced such a variation.

Commenting on the apparent difficulty produced by this “piercing of Jehovah,” C. F. Keil says:

The suffix in בְּיָמֵי (to me) refers to the speaker. This is *Jehovah*, according to ver. 1, the creator of the heaven and the earth. . . . It is true that we have not to think of a slaying of Jehovah, the creator of the heaven and the earth, but simply of the slaying of *Maleach* Jehovah, who, being of the same essence with Jehovah, became man in the person of Jesus Christ.⁴⁷

The difficulty is really no difficulty at all when the biblical view of the Godhead is allowed to assert itself, which trinitarian doctrine the Witnesses reject with anathemas. In summary of this passage, it ought to be lucidly plain that—and, to use a phrase from the NWT Foreword—“a preferred religious view” provided the impetus for NWT’s selecting a most poorly attested variant in Zechariah 12:10 in order to weaken the biblical presentation of the person of the Messiah of Jehovah. When one sees this passage applied to the Savior in John 19:37, there can, then, be no denying His identification *in some way* with Jehovah.

The several passages taken under discussion here by no means exhaust the list of those which serve to enhance further this Jesus/Jehovah identification.

47. C. F. Keil, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. XXV, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, pp. 387f.

Others might include (1) II Peter 3:9, 15, where NWT reads in verse 15 “the patience of our Lord” and refers this to Christ, and verse 9, where patience or longsuffering is ascribed to Jehovah; (2) Revelation 1:8 and 2:8, where Jehovah is Alpha and Omega and Jesus is First and Last, respectively; and, (3) Revelation 17:14; 19:16; and I Timothy 6:15, where Jehovah and Jesus Christ come under the appellation “King of Kings and Lord of Lords.” A marginal reference in Nestle gives Daniel 2:47 and Deuteronomy 10:17 as the source of this phrase, and, upon reading each, one cannot deny that Jehovah is the One so depicted; and, (4) a comparison of Romans 14:10f. with Philippians 2:6-11; for in the latter Jesus Christ is said to have been given “the name which is above every name.” Could there be any name above God’s name itself? If in Isaiah 42:8 God states: “I am Jehovah; that is my name; and my glory I will not give to another,” how can Jesus be named with *the* name par excellence unless He be identified in some way with Jehovah ontologically?

Conclusion

In this chapter the investigator has attempted to set forth fairly the Foreword of NWT regarding the Divine Name. It was contended on the part of NWT that, since Christians are to be a people for God’s name, it is a strange matter not to find God’s only real name on the pages of the Christian Greek Scriptures. Then, by working forward from the Hebrew Scriptures to the Septuagint and attempting to establish the presence of the Divine Name in tetragrammaton form in that Greek version, it was asserted that this tetragrammaton *must* also have been present in the autographa of the Christian Greek Scriptures.

Afterwards were presented certain Hebrew translations of the New Testament and the manner in which NWT used them to support the restoration of the Divine Name to the pages of the Christian Greek Scriptures and, of course, to the pages of the English translation.

How to pronounce the Divine Name formed the next major division. Within this section was discussed the evidence existing for and against the presence of the tetragrammaton in the LXX, and it was concluded that even with evidence pro and con the whole matter was of no real signification. *There exists for NWT a missing link—manuscript evidence—showing that the apostles actually used the Divine Name as alleged.* Also, prohibitions

concerning the use of God's name and the impasse regarding the vocalization of the name were presented.

The final division presented the heart of the whole matter: the Jesus/Jehovah identification. By means of several tables it was shown by the writer that NWT employed its principle for restoring the name in an inconsistent fashion. Finally, three passages were discussed exegetically and shown objectively and textually to make certain the identification between Jesus and Jehovah.

Thus it has been the desire of the investigator to demonstrate that the greatest single peculiarity of NWT—the “restoration” of Jehovah—is based not upon a foundation of “gold, silver and precious stones,” but upon that of “wood, hay and stubble.”