

Chapter 13: BUT IF NOT HERESY, THEN WHAT?

In the previous ••164•• chapters, we asked—and answered—the important question, "Was the Tetragrammaton removed from the Christian Greek Scriptures during the third and fourth centuries?"

We have thoroughly documented the presence of *Kyrios* in the earliest Christian Greek Scripture manuscripts. There is no possibility that the Tetragrammaton was used by the inspired Christian writers and then removed at a later date.

There is no evidence from either the earliest Christian Scripture manuscripts or the writings of the church fathers of a united heresy directed at inserting *Kyrios* into the Christian Scriptures. As we saw in Chapter 10, if the removal of the Tetragrammaton was a heretical effort encompassing three continents, we would most certainly know of the controversy from early writers. Instead, there is silence.

On the other hand, there is substantial evidence that the Tetragrammaton was used in copies of Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures for Jews. (This included the *Septuagint* as well as other translations by Aquila and Theodotion.) Furthermore, there is incontrovertible evidence that Christians intentionally changed יהוה to *Kyrios* in their copies.

Clearly יהוה was used in identifiable *Septuagint*¹ versions—yet the same citations appear as *Kyrios* in later Christian copies.

If this transformation from יהוה to *Kyrios* in Hebrew Scripture translations was not evidence of heresy, then what was it?

Are we credible?

Throughout this book we have made a distinction between the *Septuagint* and the Christian Scriptures. Nonetheless, the *Septuagint* was the *Bible* of the early church and remained so even after it was supplemented by the writings of the inspired Christian authors. Even as the Christian Greek Scriptures were added, the *Septuagint* was repeatedly copied and circulated among the early churches. It was the early church—and not Judaism—which was responsible for the widespread propagation of the Hebrew Scriptures in the ancient Gentile world.

To many readers, it appears as though we are denying that the Tetragrammaton was changed to *Kyrios* in certain Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures when we discount this change in the Christian ••165•• Scriptures. Yet, there certainly was a change occurring between the second and third centuries C.E. in the number of *Septuagint* Scriptures using יהוה. (More correctly stated, the change we see today is in the number of copies containing יהוה which have *survived*. As we will see, there was a concerted effort by the Jews in the fourth century to destroy Hebrew Scriptures in Greek.)

Very simply, we will not be credible if we do not make a distinction between our conclusion that the Christian Greek Scriptures did *not* show evidence of change from the Tetragrammaton to *Kyrios*, and that the *Septuagint* and similar versions of the Hebrew Scriptures *did* show this same change.

The Jewish *Septuagint*

We have avoided an exhaustive study of the *Septuagint* and other Greek versions of the Hebrew Scriptures in this book. Consequently, we will merely affirm that the Tetragrammaton was often changed to the Greek word *Kyrios* in the early centuries of the church.

This process is shown by comparing a standard reference encyclopedia with an entry from *Aid to Bible Understanding*. The illustration concerns Aquila's translation of the Hebrew Scriptures which was completed in the early second century. The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia (Vol. 2, p. 120) says,

In 1897 for the first time a continuous portion of [Aquila's] translation came to light in a palimpsest of the Cairo Synagogue, showing the tetragrammaton written in Old Hebrew letters. The statement of Jerome that Aquila made two versions, "a second edition, which the Hebrews call 'the accurate

¹ In this chapter we will generally use the term *Septuagint* to represent all Greek versions of the Hebrew Scriptures including *Aquila* and *Theodotion*.

one," seems to be correct.

Then, on page 886 of *Aid to Bible Understanding*, a clear illustration is given of the palaeo-Hebrew characters $\aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph$ (which appear twice in the passage) embedded in Aquila's Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. (The illustration, however, is typeset rather than photographically reproduced, and the Scripture passage is not identified.)

On the same page of *Aid to Bible Understanding*, the editors quote Dr. Kahle as saying,

We 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. (*The Cairo Geniza*, pp. 222, 224.)

••166•• We will allow the above quoted material to replace an independent investigation. We can be certain, however, that the Tetragrammaton in Hebrew characters (as either יהוה or $\aleph \aleph \aleph \aleph$) was regularly used in Jewish copies of Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures. This was particularly true as a result of the non-messianic Jewish response to the Christian's use of the *Septuagint*.

Consequently, it is apparent that a change took place in the early centuries of the church. The translated Hebrew Scriptures were copied by Gentile Christians in ever greater numbers. Because they did not understand Hebrew and the written name of God, they translated² יהוה as Κύριος (*Kyrios*).

The Scriptures of the Greek-speaking church

Between 41 and 98 C.E., 27 books were added to the Scriptures. By no means, however, does this imply that the first century church lacked sufficient Scriptures until this writing process was completed.

Jesus himself, from "Moses and all the Prophets...interpreted to [Cleopas and his traveling companion] things pertaining to himself in all the Scriptures." (Luke 24:27.)

On the festival day of Pentecost, Peter's talk was from Joel 2:28-32, Psalm 16:8-11, and 2 Samuel 7:12 with references to Psalms 89 and 132.

Throughout the book of Acts, Paul taught Jews and Gentiles alike from the Hebrew Scriptures. After Priscilla and Aquila "took [Apollos] into their company and expounded the way of God more correctly to him," Apollos "thoroughly proved the Jews to be wrong publicly, while he demonstrated by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ." (Acts 18:26, 28.)

Paul reminded Timothy to "continue in the things that you learned and were persuaded to believe...and that from infancy you have known the holy writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through the faith in connection with Christ Jesus." Paul then asserted that "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:14-17.)

These are all references to the Hebrew Scriptures. The church did not wait until Matthew, Mark, Luke, Paul, James, Peter, Jude, and finally, John, wrote before they possessed the Scriptures. They had the Scriptures at the very beginning of the church.

••167•• While the church remained in Jerusalem, the Scriptures were available in either the Hebrew language or the *Septuagint* translation. Certainly, many Jews who used the Greek *Septuagint* were familiar with the presence of the Tetragrammaton embedded in the Greek text as יהוה. However, after Stephen was stoned, "On that day great persecution arose against the congregation that was in Jerusalem; all except the apostles were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria." (Acts 8:1.) Finally, in Acts 10, Jehovah used Peter to openly give the good news to Gentiles. "[Peter] said to them: "YOU well know how unlawful it is for a Jew to join himself to or approach a man of another race; and yet God has shown me I should call no man defiled or unclean. Hence I come, really without objection, when I was sent for." (Acts 10:28-29.)

² We will clarify the ideas of *word-for-word translation* and *dynamic translation* later.

As the church spread to the pagan Gentile world, Christians carried the *Septuagint* with them. The Greek text was understandable to men and women in Antioch, Iconium, and all the cities Paul and Barnabas would subsequently visit after "Jehovah...laid commandment upon [them] in these words, 'I have appointed you as a light of nations, for you to be a salvation to the extremity of the earth.'" (Acts 13:47.) Undoubtedly, there were Gentiles who saw—and even understood—the divine name יהוה in the Greek text. In time, however, it was no longer Jews who were making contact with pagan Gentiles. Gentiles began the task of proclaiming the good news to their fellow countrymen. They were Gentiles who did not have a Jewish heritage and who did not understand the Hebrew characters יהוה.

On page 887, *Aid to Bible Understanding* gives us this account:

In a letter written at Rome, 384 C.E., Jerome relates that, when coming upon these Hebrew letters of the Tetragrammaton (יהוה) in copies of the *Septuagint*, "certain ignorant ones, because of the similarity of the characters...were accustomed to pronounce Pi Pi [mistaking them for the Greek characters ΠΙΠΙ]."

The form of the Jewish Scriptures

Aid to Bible Understanding and other Watch Tower Society reference books frequently quote the important book, *The Cairo Geniza*, by Paul I. Kahle. He has carefully studied the Hebrew Scripture texts in both Hebrew and Greek.

Origen's well-known *Hexapla*, in which he produced a six-column study of the *Septuagint*, contained a second column which was a transliteration of the Hebrew Scripture text written in Greek letters. On page 158 of his book, Kahle makes this observation,

There can hardly be any doubt that this work [of transliterating the Hebrew text into Greek letters] was done by Jews who from ••168•• childhood had read the Bible and knew it almost by heart. The Jews created this text for those of their fellow believers who could not read the non-vocalized Hebrew text.

Then, on page 162, Kahle makes this application,

For reading the Hebrew original the transcription in Greek letters would surely have suited all Christians and most Jews. This theory also gives a plausible reason for the existence of a Greek transcribed text; it allowed both Jews and Christians to read the lessons from the Old Testament in Hebrew during the service, and this explains why this transcribed text was composed so carefully and consistently....

This text, like all the others assembled in the *Hexapla*, was adopted by Origen from the Jews. A clear proof of this is to be found in the fact that in all the five columns preserved to us the divine name is regularly given as the Tetragrammaton in Hebrew square letters. (Emphasis added.)

One of the important Greek translations made for Jews during the second century was done by Theodotion. Again, on page 254, Kahle makes these comments,

One of the characteristics of Theodotion's text is the transliteration of Hebrew words in Greek letters.

...How can we expect that Theodotion, in the second Christian century, should have replaced good Greek translation by transliterated Hebrew words or that such newly-made transliterations should have been substituted for Greek words in some parts of the 'Septuagint'? Obviously the transliterated Hebrew words were used in translations made for Jews. Greek-speaking Jews were familiar with such Hebrew words even if they were not generally able to speak Hebrew....Theodotion made his revisions for Jewish circles. He did not replace transliterated Hebrew words by Greek translation for he had no cause to fear that the Jews would not understand them.

On the other hand, it is obvious that in Mss [manuscripts] of the Greek Bible written for the use of Christians such transliterated Hebrew words had to be eliminated and replaced by Greek equivalents.

Clearly, Kahle is directing our attention to the importance of Greek translations made for Jews in the time period between the commencement of the *Septuagint* (circa 280 B.C.E.) through the second century C.E. Many Jews living outside of Palestine either did not know any Hebrew, or they recognized spoken Hebrew but could not read Hebrew characters.

Thus, any study of the *Septuagint* and other Greek translations of the time period, must consider their relationship to Jewish linguistic ••169•• and social culture. Many times, these translations were done by Jews for a Jewish audience. We would expect, therefore, to find the transcription of the divine name—as either יהוה, or even אֱלֹהֵינוּ—in these Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures made for Jews.

Again, Kahle says,

All Greek translations of the Bible made by Jews for Jews in pre-Christian times must have used, as the name of God, the Tetragrammaton in Hebrew characters and not κύριος, or abbreviations of it, such as we find in the Christian LXX [*Septuagint*] codices.³

Transliteration, translation, or duplication?

All Bible translators experience a quandary when dealing with the divine name. It was certainly an issue which early translators and editors of the *Septuagint* faced. How was the name to be conveyed to Jewish readers? How was the name to be conveyed to readers who did not understand Hebrew? Which was more important: form or meaning? This was also a quandary which the New World Bible Translation Committee faced when it began its work on the Hebrew Scriptures.

There are a number of options available to a translator when dealing with the divine name from the Hebrew text. (In the following illustrations, we will use only an English text. Obviously, the *Septuagint* translators encountered the same problems with their Greek text.) The simplest option is to merely *transcribe* the four Hebrew characters. That is, the translator would use the Hebrew characters rather than letters used in the target language.⁴ This choice would render verses such as Psalms 7:1, 3, 6, and 8 as follows:

○ יהוה my God, in you I have taken refuge.
Save me from all those persecuting me and deliver me...
○ יהוה my God, if I have done this, If there exists any injustice in my hands...

Or, using the older Hebrew script style,

Do arise, ○ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, in your anger;
Lift yourself up at the outbursts of fury of those showing hostility to me...

••170•• אֱלֹהֵינוּ himself will pass sentence on the peoples.
Judge me, ○ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, according to my righteousness...

Needless to say, transcription is the most precise action the translator can take from the perspective of the original text. There is no possibility of error because the Hebrew word is transported intact into the new text. On the other hand, transcription is meaningless unless the reader also understands written Hebrew.⁵

A second option which is open to the translator is to *visually duplicate* יהוה by using letters familiar to the reader. This was done in certain Greek copies of the *Septuagint* with the letters Π (P) and Ι (I). By duplicating these Greek letters, the reader saw ΠΠΠΠ (or ππππ in lower-case). English letters do not lend themselves well to this option, though something like nin' might be used. It is obvious, however, that such a symbol does nothing to preserve the divine name. Were this scheme attempted, God's name in English would simply become Nin, as it became Pipi in Greek. This would reduce Psalm 11:1 to an extremely unsatisfactory,

In nin' I have taken refuge.

³ P.E. Kahle, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, "The Greek Bible Manuscripts Used by Origen," Volume LXXIX, 1960.

⁴ The term *target language* identifies the language into which a text is translated. The term *parent language* identifies the language from which the text originates.

⁵ It could be argued that with proper instruction, the reader would learn the full meaning of the transcribed letters. That would be true only if the instruction were complete and conveyed the full meaning of the Hebrew language context. If such training were anything less than complete, then יהוה would merely become a symbol for a concept coming from the target language. In that case, the written word in the target language would become an equal—and more readily pronounceable—symbol.

The translator may choose to *transliterate* the characters יהוה into four letters in the target language. This was apparently not done in extant Greek manuscripts of the *Septuagint*, but it is occasionally done in English by using YHWH. Though this is an accurate representation of the four Hebrew characters, it lacks a reasonable guide to pronunciation because it contains no vowels. Further, it will be meaningless to a reader who does not know its function. Psalm 15:1 would become,

O YHWH, who will be a guest in your tent?

Another possibility is for the translator to *phonetically duplicate* the name in the target language. Some copies of the *Septuagint* used this approach with the Greek letter combination ΙΑΩ (IAO). (When written in lower-case Greek, a breathing mark is added to the *iota*. The word is written ἰαω, which gives the name two vowel sounds.) When read in Greek, this approximately duplicated the presumed ••171•• pronunciation of יהוה as *Yahó*.⁶ Phonetic duplication in English is achieved when the divine name is written as *Yahweh* (or, as we saw in Chapter 1, as *Yahvah*). With this phonetic duplication, Psalm 18:1-2 can be read,

I shall have affection for you, O Yahweh my strength.

Yahweh is my cry and my stronghold and the Provider of escape for me.

The translator may choose to *translate* the divine name. At this point, he will choose between a *word-for-word* translation or a *dynamic* translation. A *word-for-word* translation does not consider the sense of the parent language word combination in relationship to the target language, but simply renders each word according to a lexical (dictionary) definition. A word-for-word translation of יהוה into English is simply *He Is*. (If the translator wants to be interpretive⁷ in his translation, he may add English words which reflect the tense of the Hebrew verb. In this case, the translated name becomes *He Causes to Become*.) On the other hand, a *dynamic* translation will consider the *sense* of the word combination in the parent language and find words to express the same meaning in the target language. When the *Septuagint* was translated, the *sense* of יהוה in the Greek language was the word Κύριος (*Kyrios*) or *Lord* (with the sense of *Sovereign Master*). If the translator chose a word-for-word translation of Psalm 20:1, it would read,

May *He Is* answer you in the day of distress.

May the name of the God of Jacob protect you.

(There is another complication if the translator chooses *not* to do a word-for-word translation. The Israelite of Moses' day was not hearing a unique *name* when יהוה was spoken. If the derivation of the divine name is as described in the *New World Translation Reference Edition*, page 1561, which says,

••172•• "Jehovah" (Heb[rew] יהוה YHWH), God's personal name... is a verb, the causative form, the imperfect state, of the Hebrew verb הוה (*ha-wah'*, "to become"),

then the listener was merely hearing the third person, singular, masculine conjugation *he is*. It was only the *context* in which יהוה was used which defined it as the divine name rather than as a commonly used verb form.)

If the translator considered the tense of the verb⁸ and added some degree of interpretation, the word-for-word translation of Psalm 26:1 would be,

⁶ *Manuscripts of the Greek Bible*, Metzger, p. 35, footnote 66.

⁷ Many languages contain significantly more information in a verb tense than does English. However, an English example will illustrate what we mean by *interpretation*. If a group is asked, "Who is ready to do such-and such?" a respondent from within the group may answer, "I am." Yet, the meaning of the present tense in English is literally, "I presently am." This is understood by the English listener even when the word *presently* is not included. However, if this dialogue was translated into another language, the translator might need to insert the word *presently* in order to interpret the full meaning of the respondent to the foreign language reader. This would be particularly true if the respondent's answer was dependent on a time sequence in which the respondent would *not* be ready at a later time.

⁸ The *New World Translation Reference Edition* (Appendix 1A, p. 1561) identifies this as the *causative form* and *imperfect state* of the Hebrew verb, translating it as *He Causes to Become*. The verb is identified in this appendix as *to become*, which is the future tense of the infinitive *to be*. *He Is* is the third person, singular form of the English verb infinitive *to be*.

Judge me, O *He Causes to Become*, for I myself have walked in my own integrity,
And in *He Causes to Become* I have trusted, that I may not wobble.

If a dynamic translation were chosen, Psalm 21:1 would read,⁹

O LORD, in your strength the king rejoices;
and in your salvation how very joyful he wants to be!

Finally, the translator might choose a modified designation. As we saw in Chapter 1, the New World Bible Translation Committee chose to use a "well-known form" rather than one which was a strict phonetic duplication. They say in part in *Insight on the Scriptures*, Volume 2, page 6:

Hebrew Scholars generally favor "Yahweh" as the most likely pronunciation.... Still, there is by no means unanimity among scholars on the subject, some favoring yet other pronunciations, such as "Yahuwa," "Yahuah," or "Yehuah."

Since certainty of pronunciation is not now attainable, there seems to be no reason for abandoning in English the well-known form "Jehovah" in favor of some other suggested pronunciation.

If the translators chose the "well-known form 'Jehovah,'"¹⁰ Psalm 27:1 would read,

Jehovah is my light and my salvation.

••173•• Needless to say, each of the above means of rendering the divine name in a translation has both merit and objection, with some being better choices than others.

In this chapter, we are considering the options available to the translators and editors¹¹ of the *Septuagint* and similar ancient Greek translations. Their choices were determined by the recipients of the translation. If the translation was for Jewish readership, then use of Hebrew characters would be completely understandable; they could embed יהוה in the Greek text. On the other hand, when the *Septuagint* was used in the Gentile world where little was known of the Jewish heritage and language, a Greek language form of the divine name was preferable. It was not a simple choice.

Nor was it a simple choice for the New World Bible Translation Committee. In the end, it chose not to transcribe, transliterate, or phonetically duplicate the Tetragrammaton. Rather, it made the choice on the basis of popular recognition.

Faced with a similar kind of decision, the editors (copyists) of the Christian *Septuagint* manuscripts made their choice on the basis of a *dynamic translation* when they used *Kyrios* for the divine name.

Are there manuscript examples?

Is there any evidence that different forms of the divine name were used simultaneously? Can we point to any instance in which both יהוה and *Kyrios* are used in a single ancient *Septuagint* manuscript? If, in fact, the appearance of *Kyrios* in *Septuagint* manuscripts was the result of a heresy or schism in the early centuries, one would not expect to find competing forms of the divine name in a single manuscript.

Throughout this book we have been concerned with manuscript material which has become available since the New World Bible Translation Committee completed its work on the Christian Scriptures in 1949. There is an interesting example in the area of our immediate concern of just this kind of manuscript being published.

In 1894, Giovanni Mercati was studying a 13th or 14th century C.E. service-book of the Greek Orthodox Church. The manuscript was a palimpsest, meaning that an older book had been erased, and

⁹ Remember our comments in the last chapter, however, regarding the removal of God's name and its inappropriate replacement with *LORD* in English translations of the Hebrew Scriptures.

¹⁰ See the addendum at the end of Chapter 1 for W.F. Carr's comment that *Jehovah* is an English translation rather than a Hebrew approximation.

¹¹ Prior to the invention of the printing press, each copy of a manuscript could be edited. In the early centuries, of course, this frequently happened. In some cases, it was done carefully to correct previous errors. In the case at hand, we are looking at the single editorial process wherein either יהוה or Κύριος was copied with the intended reading audience in mind.

a liturgical text had been written over the faint early manuscript. After carefully recovering the material which was first written on the ••174•• parchment, Mercati discovered an important example of Origen's *Hexapla* containing approximately 150 verses from the Psalms. His findings were eventually published in 1958. In this manuscript—known as the *Ambrosianae* O 39—we have conclusive evidence that Origen used יהוה extensively in the *Hexapla*. Interestingly, however, we also find that Origen used Κύριος, ΚΣ, τω, and ΠΙΠΙ in the same text. In his other writings (such as his commentary on Psalm 2) we also find that Origen used Κύριος extensively in place of the divine name.

Origen, it seems, used either the Tetragrammaton or Κύριος (or one of its variant forms) within the text of the *Septuagint*. This would not have been possible if one form or the other was perceived as the result of heresy. Nor would it have been possible if the earlier Tetragrammaton had become unknown.

(Because of its importance to the subject of a presumed heresy in the third and fourth centuries, Origen's *Hexapla*, his commentary on Psalm 2, and Mercati's work are all evaluated in Appendix J.)

The greater issue

In this book we have continually emphasized that the *Septuagint* and the Christian Greek Scriptures are distinct writings. We must reiterate that emphasis regarding translation of the Tetragrammaton. Whether we are talking about the Greek *Septuagint*, or a modern English version of the Hebrew Scriptures, the translators must take special care in translating the Tetragrammaton. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, however, the translator does not have license to introduce the Tetragrammaton into the text if it was not placed there by the inspired Christian writers.

The translators of any Hebrew Scripture must determine the best way to communicate the meaning and/or pronunciation of יהוה to the target language reader. No single word, however, will adequately convey *both* meaning and pronunciation. Thus, every translator must make a choice regarding which of the two he wishes to emphasize.

The *Septuagint* was a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. Though the large majority of extant *Septuagint* manuscripts contain the Greek word Κύριος, a number of ancient manuscripts which use יהוה incontestably remain. (The Christian Greek Scriptures are an entirely different matter. There is no textual or historical data to suggest that the Tetragrammaton was ever used by the inspired Christian writers.)

We will not repeat the material from earlier chapters. Nonetheless, we must be aware that the issue with the Christian Scriptures is one of *inspiration*. Any discussion of translation must be limited to that which the inspired Christian authors actually wrote. ••175•• *We cannot bring the Tetragrammaton into the Christian Scriptures merely because it occupied such a prominent place in the Hebrew Scriptures.*

Heresy or translators' choice?

We must return to the central question of this chapter. How is the variation between יהוה and *Kyrios* in extant *Septuagint* manuscripts explained?

We can find no evidence that there was ever a heresy identified with the replacement of the Tetragrammaton with *Kyrios* in the first four centuries C.E. The writings of the church fathers are entirely silent on the subject.

At the same time, we find ample evidence that there were at least seven different representations of the divine name used in extant *Septuagint* and Greek Hebrew Scripture manuscripts.

1. The dynamic translation of the Tetragrammaton as Κύριος (translated into English as *LORD*) is the most frequent representation of the divine name.
2. A variation of Κύριος is the surrogate (or abbreviation) of the divine name which was written as ΚΣ.
3. Less frequently found—but of great significance—are those manuscripts which embed יהוה into the Greek language text.
4. A variation of the divine name written with square Hebrew characters is found in manuscripts wherein the palaeo-Hebrew characters אָאָאָאָ are embedded into the Greek text.
5. A Greek visual duplicate form ΠΙΠΙ (PIPI) is found in some extant *Septuagint* manuscripts.
6. A Greek phonetic duplicate form ΙΑΩ (IAO) is occasionally encountered.
7. Finally, a surrogate form of ΙΑΩ (or ιαω in lower-case) is encountered which was written as τω.

What is surprising, however, is that none of these forms are confined to a single era as though there was a development from one form to the other. Origen himself used five forms (יהוה, Κύριος, $\overline{\kappa\varsigma}$, $\overline{\iota\omega}$, and ΠΙΠΙ) in the *Hexapla*.¹² In stark contrast to debating the propriety of one over the other, Origen used each of the five in specific contexts. In his commentary on Psalm 2:2 he referred to a sixth form $\aleph\aleph\aleph$ saying,

••176•• "In the most accurate manuscripts, the name occurs in Hebrew characters—yet not in today's Hebrew [characters], but in the most ancient ones."¹³

If that were not enough, an Ezekiel scroll carrying IAΩ (IAO) notations comes from the Dead Sea caves. (The scroll could have been written no later than 69 C.E. because they were buried prior to the Roman invasion beginning in 69 C.E.) The Qumran community was a strict group of Essenes which highly revered the divine name. (They most certainly were *not* Christian.) Yet, one of their scrolls carries two margin notes using a lower-case $\iota\alpha\omega$ as a Greek phonetic duplicate of יהוה.¹⁴

We are left with a simple conclusion. There was no heresy which removed יהוה and replaced it with *Kyrios*. There was no ensuing controversy. Rather, *the intended audience of any particular copy of the Septuagint dictated the translated form of the divine name*. In the regions of Palestine, or when a *Septuagint* copy was intended for an expatriate Jewish community, יהוה (or even $\aleph\aleph\aleph$) could be used. When the *Septuagint* manuscript was deep in Gentile territory, Κύριος (or $\overline{\kappa\varsigma}$) would be used. On some intermediate level, where Jewish influence was still exerted, the form ΠΙΠΙ (or even IAΩ or $\overline{\iota\omega}$) could be found.

Then why does the frequency of third century and later *Septuagint* copies existing today which use יהוה decrease?¹⁵

Rome conquered Palestine with two campaigns. The siege was started in 69 C.E. by Vespasian and finished by his son Titus in 70 C.E. The Jews attempted one last revolt in 132 C.E. By 132 C.E., Rome was so incensed by Jewish insurgency that they obliterated almost every evidence of Jewish community life in Palestine. Temple worship was completely disbanded.

By 70 C.E.—and certainly after 132 C.E.—Jewish hostility toward Rome was also directed toward Jewish Christians. The link between synagogues and Jewish Christians was irrevocably broken.

The Jewish Christians were so hated that even their Hebrew Scriptures were scorned. The *Septuagint* was rejected by the Jewish community as being *Christian*, and exclusively became a Gentile book. (It was precisely for this reason that the two Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures were made by Aquila and Theodotion in the second ••177•• century.)¹⁶ It is for the very reason that the *Septuagint* became identified with the Christian church that Aquila's translation reintroduced the Tetragrammaton. It is not surprising, then, to find an extant copy of Aquila's translation with יהוה (and even the older form $\aleph\aleph\aleph$) embedded in the Greek text.

In *The Cairo Geniza*, Kahle gives a further insight into the reason so few extant copies of *Septuagint* or other Greek Hebrew Scripture versions are available which contain the Tetragrammaton. On page 246 he says,

The proper examination of the actual conditions is made so difficult because one usually does not take into account that, after Christianity had become the religion of the State under Constantine, the Jews endeavored with success systematically to destroy all their literature in Greek, including the Greek texts of the Bible. Greek Bible texts written by Jews have only been preserved in so far as they were taken over and revised by Christians.

It is understandable why the *Septuagint* became an exclusively Christian text circulating in the

¹² As shown in both *Origenis Hexaplorum*, edited by Fridericus Field (showing four forms), and *Mercati's Ambrosianae* O 39 showing all five.

¹³ "All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial," p. 310.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* Metzger. The breathing mark was not used in the first century.

¹⁵ At this point we are specifically evaluating the *Septuagint*. Both Aquila's and Theodotion's translations were done in the second century C.E. to counteract the "Christianization" of the *Septuagint*.

¹⁶ Unless otherwise noted, the historical information in these paragraphs is taken from *New Testament History*, F.F. Bruce, pp. 368-392.

Gentile church. A *Septuagint* intended only for Gentile readers would have little reason to transcribe a foreign Hebrew word into its text.

There is no indication that any leaders in the early church acknowledged the change from the Tetragrammaton to *Kyrios* as a heresy. No writer reports a controversy over this issue.¹⁷

At an earlier period, it seems to have been viewed as a translator's (or editor's) choice to use *Kyrios* or the Tetragrammaton in the Hebrew Scriptures based solely on the intended readers' cultural heritage. Later, during the third and fourth centuries C.E. after Jewish copies containing יהוה were largely removed, the *Septuagint* containing only *Kyrios* continued to circulate among the Gentile churches which had incorporated Jewish believers separated from their Jewish heritage.

It was no more an issue of heresy or conspiracy to replace יהוה from the Hebrew Scriptures (*Septuagint*) with a term familiar to Greek ••178•• readers in the third and fourth centuries C.E. than it was for the New World Bible Translation Committee to use a word familiar to English readers in place of the Hebrew characters יהוה.

An interesting perspective

Is a translator permitted to decide which form of God's name he will use in his translation? Our first response is to say, "No." But look at the options from which a translator *must* choose. He has no alternative but to decide how to best communicate God's name to his reading audience.

We often assume that first century Gentile readers understood יהוה when it was embedded in their Greek language Scriptures. Consider, however, how uncomfortable a householder would be reading the Hebrew Scriptures if the *New World Translation* presented Psalm 113:1-2 as follows:

Praise יהוה, YOU people!
Offer praise, O YOU servant of יהוה,
Praise the name of יהוה.
May יהוה's name become blessed
from now on and to time indefinite.

The New World Bible Translation Committee could have made another choice. Say it wanted to preserve the characters from earlier Hebrew manuscripts. Psalm 113:3-5 would continue as,

From the rising of the sun until its setting
יהוה's name is to be praised.
יהוה has become high above all the nations;
His glory is above the heavens.
Who is like יהוה our God,
Him who is making his dwelling on high?

We agree that it would be difficult to show interested individuals the God of the Hebrew Scriptures if his name could not be read in the reader's language.

But now that the translator has chosen not to merely *transcribe* the divine name, he faces additional complex choices. If the Greek translator had *transliterated* the divine name, he could have used ΙΑΩ; the English translator could have used YHWH. But neither could be correctly pronounced. So the Greek translator could have added a breathing mark in lower-case letters (ιαω); the English translator could add vowels to make the name Yahweh.

Or the Greek translator could have chosen a known Greek word which expressed the same *meaning* as יהוה and would have *translated* ••179•• the divine name as Κύριος (*Kyrios*). The English translator could use *Master* or *Lord*. The English translator could also use capital letters to show that it was a translation of יהוה. He would then write the name as MASTER or LORD.

¹⁷ This was not equally true in the Jewish community, though the debate was not directed toward the Tetragrammaton *per se*. In the time period from the translation of the *Septuagint* circa 280 B.C.E. until well beyond the second century C.E., there was considerable debate regarding language among Jewish scholars. The permissibility of translating the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek—as well as the use of other languages (as against Hebrew) in various portions of the synagogue service—was carefully scrutinized. See J.A. Emerton, *The Journal of Theological Studies*, "A Further Consideration of the Purpose of the Second Column of the Hexapla," Vol. 22, 1971.

On the other hand, some alternate choice could be made. The Greek translators at times used ΠΙΠΙ. The New World Bible Translation Committee chose "the well-known form" *Jehovah* which is neither a transliteration nor a translation.

In each case, the translator made a choice, though not all are equally satisfactory.

But what if?

What if the inspired Christian writers *had* used the Tetragrammaton? In many cases, their accounts were written to Gentiles. (Luke and Acts were written to Theophilus. Most of Paul's epistles were written to churches deep in Gentile territory. Revelation was written to seven Gentile churches.) If יהוה was used in these Greek texts to Gentiles, then it could be forcefully argued that God intended to communicate his name in this singular, Hebrew form.

If that precedent had been established by the inspired Christian writers when writing to Gentiles who did not understand Hebrew—and who could certainly not read the written characters—then there would be no allowance today within an English translation of the Christian Scriptures to use any word with English letters. Only יהוה would be acceptable.

CHAPTER SUMMARY. After having established that the best manuscript evidence from the first centuries of the church shows no heresy involving a removal of the Tetragrammaton from the Christian Greek Scriptures, we are forced to explain the change during the same period of time in the *Septuagint*.

Seven means of representing the divine name in the *Septuagint* (and similar Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures) were used in the early Christian era. These included *translation* of יהוה into the Greek word Κύριος (*Kyrios*); *surrogates* such as $\overline{\kappa\varsigma}$ or $\overline{\omega}$; *embedment* of יהוה (or an older form $\aleph\aleph\aleph$) into the Greek language text; insertion of the *visual duplicate* form ΠΙΠΙ, or insertion of the *phonetic duplicate* form ΙΑΩ, into the text.

Inclusion of these various forms were not specific to a period of time, and may even have been represented in a single manuscript. In general, ••180•• one was not used to the exclusion of another as a sole means of representing the divine name in a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Inasmuch as there is no indication that this open—and sometimes interchangeable—use of Greek words elicited any objection, we conclude that the early church accepted this variation of forms as being an acceptable translation (and editorial) expression of the Hebrew Scriptures. Thus, we see no indication of a heresy in the shift from יהוה to Κύριος, but rather, an understanding that *Kyrios* represented a proper translation for non-Hebrew speaking Gentiles.

Our conclusion is further reinforced by evidence from two early sources. First is an extant copy of Aquila's translation which contains the palaeo-Hebrew characters $\aleph\aleph\aleph$ in a Greek text. Aquila's translation was done for the express purpose of producing a Greek translation for Jews to replace the *Septuagint*. Copies of this version are now known which contain $\aleph\aleph\aleph$, יהוה, and $\overline{\kappa\varsigma}$. Secondly, in the late third century Origen clearly used five forms (יהוה, Κύριος, $\overline{\kappa\varsigma}$, $\overline{\omega}$, and ΠΙΠΙ) within his *Hexapla*, and refers to a sixth ($\aleph\aleph\aleph$) in other writings.

The first centuries of the Christian church had Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures which were intended for distinctly different audiences. Hebrew Scriptures which were intended for Greek speaking Jews who understood their Jewish heritage could freely use either יהוה or $\aleph\aleph\aleph$.¹⁸ Greek translations of Hebrew Scriptures intended for a Gentile audience used *Kyrios*.

¹⁸ We are glossing over the animosity of the Jewish community after Christians began using the *Septuagint*. As we noted earlier, it was precisely because the Christians were using the *Septuagint* that non-messianic Jews produced translations of their Hebrew Scriptures during the second and third centuries C.E. which contained the Tetragrammaton embedded in the Greek language text.