

BEWARE OF THE SACRED NAMERS!

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A Wayward Christian Brother, "God" Or "Yahuah"?, Koine Greek Word "Theos", Jehovah's Witnesses And Their Designer Bible, Very Brusky Response, Sacred Name Movement, Online Sacred Name Debates, The Bible Isn't Our Personal Cafeteria, Our Personal Beliefs Should Conform To The Scriptures And Not Vice Versa, Jesus And Apostles Encouraged Doctrinal And Spiritual Unity, The Sacred Name Debate Causes Division In The Body Of Christ, Jesus Always Used "Father" And Not A Specific Name, Original Hebrew Script Consisted Of Only Consonants And No Vowels Or Punctuation Marks, Masoretes Introduce Diacritics And Other Textual Changes To Standardize Both Hebrew Pronunciation And Reading, Popular Sacred Names That Are Often Defended, YHWH: The Tetragrammaton And What It Means, Adonai And HaShem And The Jewish Prohibition, Original Vowel Sounds Were Eventually Lost, No 100% Guarantee That Modern Pronunciation Of YHWH Is Correct, Online Sacred Names Debates, My Personal Preference, Use Whatever Names You Prefer And Are Comfortable With, Don't Change the Biblical Text, Closing Remarks, Suggesting Reading

Dear friends, I have a particular longstanding beef with some of my Christian brethren, and I am going to tell you exactly what it is for your consideration. Some time ago, I engaged in an online discussion with a certain brother who was quoting some verses from 1 Timothy chapter 4. But what irked me about this brother's FB post is the fact that as I have seen so many other Christians do on previous occasions, in three different places in the verses that he was quoting, this brother replaced the word "God" with the word "YAHUAH".

Now, normally, I do not let such things bother me too much. However, in this particular case I decided to call out this brother concerning his actions. Thus, I posted a comment in which I inquired of this Christian brother why he purposely and intentionally changed the Scriptures to conform to his personal beliefs. I pointedly told him that the word which he had inserted -- "YAHUAH" -- is NOT found in the original Koine Greek text. I further explained to him that the Koine

Greek word which is really used in the verses which he had quoted is actually "theos". Furthermore, this Koine Greek word is translated as "God" 1,320 times in the New Testament of the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

Even though I knew that it would probably upset him, I also informed this brother that what he was doing was just as bad as the cultish Jehovah's Witnesses who likewise insert their favorite name "JEHOVAH" wherever they please in their special Jehovah's Witnesses designer Bible. So I asked this brother with what right and with what justification and authority he was altering the Scriptures. Not surprisingly, he chose to respond to my inquiry in the following brusque manner. Well, actually, he personally attacked me as well. However, you do not need to see that part of his response. Suffice it to say that he was not very nice to me:

----- Begin Quote -----

"I'm not altering anything. I'm going with what I believe . . . I don't refute anyone who wants to use whatever name they deem the truth. See if you can respect that."

----- End Quote -----

As you can see by his response, this brother was in total denial. I didn't really want to offend him, but I felt that I should push the issue a little further. So I informed him that his opinion does not matter, and that all that really does matter is what the Holy Scriptures clearly state. Thus, I reiterated the fact that the Koine Greek word "theos" does NOT translate as "YAHUAH", and that as such, YES, he was in fact altering the Holy Scriptures, and that for him to say otherwise was simply not true.

I also reminded him that these days, everyone seems to have their favorite names for God and Jesus which they like to use. In fact, this movement is now referred to as the Sacred Name Movement. As I'm sure many of my readers are aware, this kind of nonsense can be found all over Facebook, and I imagine that the same thing occurs on some of the other social networks as well. Tragically, over the years that I have been online, I have come across so many posts where Christians are heatedly arguing and bickering over different names, and debating over which ones are the correct names to use. But the sad fact of the matter is that all such debates really accomplish is to cause division in the body of Christ. That is precisely why I

wrote my 2013 article called "Jesus Christ or Yeshua Messiah?: More Christian Zionist Legalism".

My friends, as I have said many times before, the Bible is NOT our personal cafeteria where we can pick and choose what we want to believe and accept. Furthermore, we simply CANNOT translate it or alter its text to suit our particular beliefs. We need to accept it for exactly what it says. In other words, dear friends, our beliefs must conform to the Scriptures and NOT the other way around. We simply CANNOT and SHOULD NOT try to force God's Word to conform to what we believe, and to the pet doctrines which we personally espouse. And, yes, it is my opinion that when we dogmatically and frantically embrace and defend one particular name over all other names, that is what we are doing. When we even go so far as to actually replace a particular word in the Bible, or intentionally misinterpret its original Hebrew or Greek word, that is clearly taking it too far.

Sadly, that is exactly what this particular brother was doing, just like so many other Christians who are caught up in this proper name or sacred name business. As I already explained to you, he prefers to use a particular name -- YAHUAH -- and thus he was inserting that name into the aforementioned verses. He was purposely ignoring the original Koine Greek word "theos" -- which means "God" -- and substituting "YAHUAH" for it as if there was absolutely nothing wrong with doing that. As he said in his own words, he was placing what he personally believes FIRST. In other words, ABOVE what those verses in 1 Timothy 4 actually say. However, consider what the Lord Himself, what the Apostle Paul, and what other Bible authors had to say concerning the importance of doctrinal and spiritual unity:

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

1 Corinthians 1:10, KJV

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

Amos 3:3, KJV

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, THAT THEY MAY BE ONE, as we are . . . THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be ONE

IN US: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; THAT THEY MAY BE ONE, even as WE ARE ONE: I in them, and thou in me, THAT THEY MAY BE MADE PERFECT IN ONE; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

John 17:11, 21-23, KJV

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be ONE FOLD, and ONE SHEPHERD."

John 10:16, KJV

". . . Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell TOGETHER IN UNITY!"

Psalms 133:1, KJV

"That ye may with ONE MIND and ONE MOUTH glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 15:6, KJV

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of ONE MIND, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

2 Corinthians 13:11, KJV

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace . . . That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Ephesians 4:1-3, 14-16, KJV

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in ONE SPIRIT, with ONE MIND striving together for the faith of the gospel;"

Philippians 1:27, KJV

"Fulfil ye my joy, THAT YE BE LIKEMINDED, having the same love, being of ONE ACCORD, of ONE MIND."

Philippians 2:2, KJV

"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."

1 Corinthians 14:33, KJV

Tell me my dear friends, how in the world can we possibly all be ONE as Jesus stated, and "speak the same thing" and be "in the same mind" as Paul has so clearly written, and "walk together" as the Prophet Amos wrote, when different Christians are choosing an assortment of "sacred names" as their favorite names for God the Father and Jesus Christ, and constantly arguing over who is right and who is wrong? How is that supposed to draw us together into one unified, close-knit Christian body? As I believe I point out in the aforementioned article "Jesus Christ or Yeshua Messiah?: More Christian Zionist Legalism", in the Gospels, whenever the Lord spoke about His Father, or prayed to His Father, He did NOT use a specific name. You won't find it anywhere in any of the four Gospels. Jesus ALWAYS used the word "Abba", which as you may know, means "Father". That is good enough for me. How about you?

Now, to add further weight to what I have stated here, and to really expose the foolishness of the legalistic sticklers who go around demanding that Christians use one particular name over another, allow me to share another very important detail with my readers. For those of you who are not aware of it, while all of the modern variations of God's supposed name contain vowels, the plain truth of the matter is that the original Hebrew alphabet didn't contain any vowel points referred to as diacritics -- or actual vowels. It consisted of twenty-two consonants only. However, there were likewise four Hebrew consonants -- ׀ , ׁ , ׂ , ׃ -- which are referred to as "mater lectionis", which were occasionally used to imply vowels.

Any doubters who may be reading this can easily verify these points for yourselves by conducting quick online search. In fact, some of my readers may be surprised to learn that the original Hebrew script did NOT contain any of our modern punctuation marks such as commas, periods and question marks. Originally, Hebrew script was written as one long, continuous

block of consonants. It wasn't until the late Fifth Century AD, into the Sixth Century, and all the way up to the Tenth Century AD, that the Masoretes began adding diacritics -- also known as cantillation marks, or "niqqud" in Hebrew -- to the Hebrew text.

For those of my readers who may not be too familiar with the Masoretes, they were groups of Jewish scribe and scholars who worked in various Jewish population centers such as Jerusalem, Tiberias and Mesopotamia as well. As I just said, these Jews were behind the creation of the aforementioned system known as "niqqud", or diacritical notes which consisted of small dots and dashes. The goal of the Masoretes was to standardize Hebrew pronunciation, paragraph and verse divisions, and the cantillation marks for the worldwide Jewish community. What is also interesting about this is the fact that "niqqud" is NOT widely used in modern Hebrew, such as in newspapers, books, websites, and daily correspondence. Instead, text is typically written using ONLY the twenty-two aforementioned consonants.

Now, my friends, we come to the real gist of the matter. As I mentioned earlier, if you are a longtime participant on any of the social networks, it is quite possible -- perhaps even more than likely -- that you have encountered some of these heated doctrinal arguments where different Christians are stubbornly debating over which are the proper names to use for God the Father and Jesus Christ. Some of the more popular names I have personally encountered include the following:

Jehovah
Yahshua
Yahuah
Yahweh
Yehoshua
Yehowshuwa
Yeshua
YHWH

The last of the above names -- YHWH -- is referred to as the Tetragrammaton. It is derived from four Hebrew consonants. In other words, יהוה, or the Hebrew letters Yod, Heh, Vav and Heh. The Tetragrammaton forms the proper name of the God of Israel in the Hebrew Bible. In fact, it appears almost 7,000 times in the Scriptures. It's often translated as "Jehovah" or "Yahweh", and it signifies "He Causes to Become". It is likewise often translated as "He brings into existence", "He who is", or "I will be what I will be". While in ancient times, the name was

actually pronounced verbally, eventually, the Jews prohibited it out of concern that the name might be used improperly. And so, the Tetragrammaton was replaced with either "Adonai" -- which means "my Lord" -- or else with "haShem" -- which means "the Name" -- in speech and reading.

As a result of the Jewish prohibition which was put in place, the original vowel sounds were eventually lost. Thus, while modern scholars have endeavored to find out how the original Tetragrammaton was pronounced using hints that are still in the Bible, and found in other sources as well, there is no 100% guarantee that the modern pronunciation is correct. It may be correct, but we don't know for certain that this is so. Yet despite this glaring fact, proud, modern Christians try to tell us what the proper name of God is, and how it should be pronounced and spelled.

So as I already said, this vowel loss has in turn led to the all-too-familiar modern online debates regarding which of the aforementioned names is actually the proper one to use. As I have already made clear to you, personally, I stay out of it. I don't need that kind of heated nonsense in my life. As an American, English-speaking modern Christian, using "God the Father" and "Jesus" works perfectly fine by me. After all, I know who I am referring to when I use such terms. As for you legalists, fellows, please take it elsewhere, because I'm not the least bit interested in your divisive, petty foolishness.

To be perfectly clear here, each of us is free to use whatever names for God the Father and Jesus that we prefer, and those that we are comfortable with. That isn't really the issue that compelled me to write this short article. This issue is that a certain brother actually changed a word in the Biblical text which is NOT even supported by the original Koine Greek word that is used in the text. He made a total and complete and unjustified substitution of one word for another. That is the issue I have with what he did.

So in conclusion, my friends, as far as I am concerned, what I have stated here is both the historical as well as the lingual truth regarding this matter, whether some legalistic Christians like to hear it or not. I hope that you agree. But, according to your faith. To each his own.

With these thoughts, I will bring this article to a close. It is my hope that you've found it informative and enlightening, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life as well.

If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would really appreciate if you'd take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information and further study, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were either mentioned in this article, or which contain topics which are related to this article. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server. To read these articles, simply click or tap on any link you see below.

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Written by Bill Kochman

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>