By What Name Do I Call You?

Sometimes we are encountered by people who insist that the name of the resurrected Messiah must be a Hebrew sounding name. Names sounding like "Yeshua" and "Yahoshua" are most commonly proposed. It is asserted that the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" is a reference to a false god, whereas a Hebrew name is a reference to the real Messiah of the Hebrew and Greek Text. Some even insist that the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" should never be used at all.

The reasons given for this theological position are varied. This article will focus on the proposed position that the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" is a reference to a false god, and therefore should not be used.

This article will demonstrate that this theological position is a misunderstanding, and confusion, of the use of language, words, and symbols. As such, this theological position is not supported by the Hebrew or Greek Text.

To address this theological position in a logical manner is somewhat challenging. The following sections will debate this theological position from different points of view.

Authoring Articles and Books

It is manifest that from the point of view of printing and publishing books and articles, when quoting the King James Bible, or most of the modern English translations and commentaries, that the author is duty bound to quote the printed English text verbatim. Under the rules of quotations, the author must use the word "Jesus" or words "Jesus Christ", just as it is printed. For example, when quoting John 16:4 the author must say: "And Jesus said…" verbatim. The author cannot help but force the reader see and say the name of the Messiah as "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" when quoting. This is the way it is; it is a matter of fact. Thus, from this point of view, it is impossible to not use the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" when writing articles and publishing books.

Authoring Translations

From the point of view of rendering a translation of the Greek Text, the typical translator is taking the Greek word 'Ieesou/'Ieesous', and rendering it into the English word "Jesus". Since there is no letter 'J' in the Greek, Hebrew, Latin, or Hispanic languages, and since the letter 'J' was not even in the English language until the 14ᵗʰ century, there is a valid argument asking why a translator would render the Greek name into the word "Jesus. This 'J' inconsistency is why people say that the original name of the Messiah is not, and could never have been, "Jesus". Remember, the word "Jesus" is in fact a modern English pronunciation, whereas the Greek word "Ἰησοῦς" is pronounced in English as "Ieesous". Therefore, since the Messiah's original name cannot be "Jesus", the translator should be rendering the Greek name of the Messiah as something else.

A rebuttal to this 'J'-sound inconsistency is the fact that anyone may have multiple names, names which are not even close to being the same sound. In modern western culture, a person having multiple names is not even allowed. For example, the IRS forces us to have just one legal name, and one Social Security Number to identify who we are.

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This western modern mindset is part of the confusion behind this issue regarding the Messiah's name. People try to insist that the Messiah must only have one name, and since it cannot be "Jesus" it must be something else, such as "Yeshua" or "Yahoshua".

But this mindset forgets that in ancient times a person could, and often did, have multiple names. Each name identified the same person, but usually also identified what that person was doing as well, both in job and status. For example, Joseph was given another name by the Pharaoh, when he was assigned his new job and status in the empire. Joseph had an Egyptian name too, and was also called "Zaphenathpaaneah". The apostle Paul had two names, a Roman name 'Paul', and a Hebrew name, 'Saul'. And it appears from Matthew 1:23-25 that the Messiah has both a Hebrew name, "Immanuel", and a Greek name, "Yeesou/Ieesous". Therefore, it is not inconsistent to suggest that the resurrected Messiah can have multiple names, even a different sounding name in different languages.

What this demonstrates is that translating the Greek name into the English name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" is not "wrong". After all, "Jesus" is the dictionary defined English form of the Greek name. However, it may be more accurate to translate the Greek name into "Ieesous", or something similar, and then let the reader decide to interpret that Greek name as being the English name "Jesus". Another alternative is to translate the Greek name into a Hebrew name, such as "Yahoshua", and tell the reader that you are using this name instead.

It should also be remembered that people of other languages will read the name printed as "Jesus", but will say the name with the 'Y' sound, such as "Yesus". For example this is the case in the Spanish language. What this means is that those taking this theological position cannot be objecting to how the name "Jesus" is pronounced, but rather their objection must be the act of using the printed name "Jesus" at all.

"Jesus" is a Name of a False God?

Understanding that the Messiah may have multiple names, and multiple pronunciations, still does not address the assertion that the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" is actually calling out the name of a false god. Typically, the Greek god "Zeus" is cited as being the root to which the English name "Jesus" is a derivative. But is it really true that a person named after a false god, is then themselves a false god, or worse, is somehow that very same false god? Some people are named "Nimrod". Does this mean that they are the same "Nimrod" of ancient history? It should be manifest that a person's name does not make that person into someone else having the same name. This being understood, it is demonstrated that the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" is not what the focal issue is. The focal issue is: "What does the name mean to those using it?" If someone says the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ", do they mean "Zeus"? Probably not. Do they mean the kid down the street also named "Jesus/Yesus"? Probably not.

Going From יהושע (עשוהי) to Ιησουσ

The Hebrew word translated as "Joshua" (the servant of Moses and the son of Nun) was transliterated into the Greek language as "Ιησουσ" throughout the Septuagint translation made in circa BC 280. Today we know how the Hebrew letters forming the name "Joshua" was transliterated into the Greek letters forming the name "Ιησουσ", **because of the evidence preserved** in the "Origen Hexapla", "Origenis Hexaplorum"; original work was circa AD 146,

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this is a rework published circa AD 1587, published again by Field, Frederick, 1875. The link below is to the **Hebrew to Greek Alphabet Table** found in this ancient document,
https://archive.org/stream/origenhexapla01unknuoft#page/n79/mode/2up .

You can use the Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon for further corroboration:
http://biblehub.com/hebrew/3091.htm .
Another Lexicon:
https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?t=KJV&strongs=H3091

Showing the Hebrew letters for "Joshua", reading from left-to-right:

1st Form:			י	ה	ו	שׁ	ו	ע
2nd Form:		עשׁוהי	י	ה	ו	שׁ	ע	

"Origen Hexapla", Pg 72-73, using the **Hebrew to Greek Alphabet Table**:

1st Form			2nd Form		
י	=>	I	י	=>	I
ה	=>	η	ה	=>	η
ו	=>	ου	ו	=>	ου
שׁ	=>	σ	שׁ	=>	σ
ו	=>	ου	ע	=>	α
ע	=>	α			

"Origen Hexapla", Pg 73 line 8, the ע can be rendered as α or ε

1st Form			2nd Form		
י	=>	I	י	=>	I
ה	=>	η	ה	=>	η
ו	=>	ου	ו	=>	ου
שׁ	=>	σ	שׁ	=>	σ
ו	=>	ου	ע	=>	ε
ע	=>	ε			

Other sounding examples in the "Origen Hexapla" show that the
"ו   שׁ" can become "σ   ου"

י	ה	ו	שׁ
		ου	σ
I	η	σ	ου

Greek Grammar changes the ending letters, and thus renders the ending ע as unused/unspoken:

I	η	σ	ου	σ	-	Nominative	-	Ιησουσ
I	η	σ	ου	ν	-	Accusative	-	Ιησουν
I	η	σ	ου		-	Genitive	-	Ιησου
I	η	σ	οι		-	Dative	-	Ιησοι

This demonstrates that the name "Ιησουσ" has nothing whatsoever to do with a pagan god, such as "Zeus", but rather is the historically correct transliteration of the Hebrew letters into the Greek letters, and then the Greek Grammar rules dictate the alternative spellings.

Thus, the focal issue is not the objection of using the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ". The deeper issue is: "What does the name "Jesus" mean to the reader, when it is used?" What the name means is not a matter of printing it, or saying it. What the name means is a matter of how the reader was educated. **Thus, the author must know who the audience is**.

What Does a Name Mean To People?

The real debate that is at the root of this issue is: "What does the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" mean to people?" Consider a fact verified in the dictionary. When someone says the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ", what is pictured in the minds of most listeners is the personage of a Savior that is a member of a Trinity, as taught by the Catholic/Protestant churches. The contrast is that this imagined personage is not the real Messiah of the New Covenant scriptures, but is another personage invented by men and churches.

From this point of view, if you want to talk about "the real Messiah" you should not use the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ", as your audience will immediately have the wrong image in their minds as to who you are talking about. This then leads to the conclusion that you should use a different name, perhaps a Hebrew sounding name such as "Yeshua" or "Yahoshua", so that the listener is forced to picture a different Messiah personage than the one they automatically picture.

By understanding the need to use a different name, you essentially also understand that the issue is not "which name do you choose to use", but rather, "what does the name chosen to use mean to them when they hear it"? You know what the name chosen means to you, but what does it mean to them? Whatever is the answer, the goal is to communicate a better understanding of what that name should mean to them.

What Does a Symbol Mean To People?

Words are just symbols. A word means something because you first recognize it, and then infer some definition or thoughts from it. Likewise, people read the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ", recognize it as a name, and then think something about that personage in their minds.

All symbols, such as ☺ or © or Ω or 'Jesus', always have (at least) three meanings:
    1. It means something to the person saying it,
    2. It means something to the person your talking to,
    3. It means something to the people around you listening in.

    1. It means something to the person showing it,
    2. It means something to the person your showing it to,
    3. It means something to the people around you watching.
Communication is achieved when the one saying it, is actually trying to say the same thing as the one hearing it.

Consider the Swastika, 卐 symbol. This symbol has many more than one meaning. It will have very different meanings to the "Free Love Hippie", than to the "WWII Vet", than to the "Zodiac Astrologer".

The "Free Love Hippie" shows it to express their freedom from the establishment, but the WWII Vet is enraged that an American would dare to wear it, but the "Zodiac Astrologer" wonders why

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either of them are thinking it is anything more than a benign reference to the celestial cycle of the earth.

The same is true with the symbols "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ". The image projected in the mind may be something different to the person saying it, than to the person hearing it, than to the people overhearing it. Communication is only achieved when the person saying the word symbols, and the person hearing them, thinks of the same conceptual image being projected in their minds.

What this means is that the symbol, the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ", is not the "problem". The real problem is knowing what the symbol means to those hearing it. An author of an article must know who his audience is, and then make a decision as to which symbols, words, to use.

Communicating With People

It is manifest that the purpose of using symbols, words, is to communicate with someone else. When writing articles or talking verbally, which symbols we choose to use is foundational to the success or failure of our communication.

For this reason, when writing articles for certain audiences, it is probably better to use a different symbol, a different name, such as "Yeshua" or "Yahoshua". By doing this the author is understanding that no matter which word is used as the name of the Messiah, it is nothing more than a symbol, being interpreted by an English language listener, and will still have the same three possible meanings. The author's primary concern is how the audience will picture in their minds the symbol chosen, and then understand what is being said about that personage within the article.

For example, in an article it can be useful to use the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ", knowing that the reader will then picture a Savior personage invented by men and churches, and then say things to make them understand how that pictured personage is not the real Messiah of the Hebrew and Greek Text. If successful, the author is changing the mental image the reader currently has of the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ", and intentionally forming a different image, now pictured when they see the symbol "Yeshua" or "Yahoshua.

As an example to help in communication, an author may want to add an adjective to the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ". This is the same as focusing the symbol in a specific direction. Adding an adjective will help project an image in the reader's mind that is closer to what is hoped, in order to better write the article.

For example, using the combined symbols of "Catholic Jesus" will help to present an image of the Savior personage invented by the Catholic/Protestant churches. The logic of the article may then contrast the image of the "Catholic Jesus" against the image of the real "Messiah Yahoshua". The intent and goal is to change the mental understanding the reader has of the original symbol "Jesus", into a different understanding represented by a different symbol, "Yahoshua".

Summary

This article focused on the proposed position that the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" is a reference to a false god, and therefore should not be used. However, it has been demonstrated that this position is impossible when quoting English Bibles and commentaries. It has been demonstrated that this position relies upon a unique modern mindset, which does not allow a person to have multiple names, not even in different languages (countries). It has been demonstrated that this position relies upon a false assertion. That people named after a false god, such as Nimrod, then makes them be that false god to others. It has been demonstrated that the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" is not the focal issue. Nor is the issue how that name is pronounced. The focal issue is what does the name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" mean to people when they hear it.

Finally, it has been demonstrated that names are words are symbols. Regardless of the symbol chosen, the listener will picture an image of what that symbol means to them in their own minds. To communicate, the author needs to understand the audience. The author needs to then choose which symbols to use. Which words and names will make the reader picture what is needed, so that the reader is led in the direction meant to be communicated?

The English name "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" is part of the English language. This name is therefore a component of communication, and can be used as appropriate. This name is a symbol that means something to the one hearing it. To properly communicate, what is foundational is to choose those words and names, which when interpreted within the logic of the article, will convey the thoughts and conclusions desired.

In Service To The Brethren,
Wayne L. Atchison, an Elder in the Body of the Messiah - Credentials

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