

## APPENDIX D

### CONFESSION ENTAILS MAKING A COVENANT

#### Using Old Testament Words to Define New Testament Words

The Rosetta Stone was used to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphics. Before this stone was found Egyptian hieroglyphics could not be deciphered. This stone has a lengthy message in two different languages: Greek and Egyptian (demotic and hieroglyphics [two forms of the Egyptian language]). At the time of the writing on this stone there were two written forms of the Egyptian language and a language spoken by the rulers: First, hieroglyphics was used for important and religious documents. Second, demotic was used for the common script of Egypt. Third, Greek was used by the rulers of Egypt (the Ptolemies). This stone has an extensive message in these two languages carved on it. A language expert (Jean Francois Champollion) was able to decipher demotic and hieroglyphics and from this to read many Egyptian documents.

This same technique should be used by those who study the Scriptures. The Scriptures were written in three different languages: Hebrew (most of the Old Testament), Aramaic (parts of the Old Testament and occasional words and phrases in the New Testament), and Greek (most of the New Testament). In a secondary sense translations of the Scriptures into other languages can be helpful in determining the meaning of Bible words. (These translations should never carry the same weight that the Scriptures carry because they are not translated by the direction of the Holy Spirit.)

What is the meaning of the word “confess?”

I suspect that some people fail to realize that the commandment to confess our Lord is more than speaking some words. Paul quotes Isa. 45:23 in Rom. 14:11 and equates the Greek word ἐξομολογέω (pronounced *exomologeō* – Strong’s #G1843) to the Hebrew word שָׁבַע (pronounced – *shaw-bah*’ - Strong’s # H7650).

Rom. 4:11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow, And every tongue shall confess to God.

Isa. 45:23 By myself have I sworn, the word is gone forth from my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

The Greek word *exomologeō* is found in Rom. 15:9 where it is a quote of the Hebrew word יָדָו (pronounced *yaw-daw'* - Strong's #H3034) from Ps. 18:49.

Rom. 15:9 and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, Therefore will I give praise unto thee among the Gentiles, And sing unto thy name.

Ps. 18:49 Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O Jehovah, among the nations, And will sing praises unto thy name.

Note also that the Greek word *exomologeō* is translated “thank” in Mt. 11:25. From these passages where the Holy Spirit translated the Hebrew words *shaw-bah'* and *yaw-daw'* as *exomologeō* we learn that there are at least two aspects of the word *exomologeō*: First, there is the serious aspect of it being an oath (or swearing) and second, there is the aspect of the attitude of the one confessing (thankfulness).

#### Lexical Definitions of the Words

ἐξομολογέω “either *forth from the heart, freely, or publicly, openly ... to confess, to profess; 1. to confess ... 2. to profess* i.e. *to acknowledge openly and joyfully ... to profess that one will do something, to promise, agree, engage*” (Thayer, p. 224)

שבע “**swear** (prob., so to say, *seven oneself, or bind oneself by seven things, ...*)...” (BDBG, p. 989)

יָדָו “*throw, cast on or in ... give thanks, confess* (orig. acknowledge?) is commonly derived perhaps from gestures accompanying the act ...” (BDBG, p. 392)

### What is Entailed in Confessing that Jesus is the Christ?

There are two aspects (of confession) that we learn from the Hebrew and Greek words: First, confession of Jesus as the Christ is serious and it implies that we are binding ourselves by what we have confessed. Second, confession of Jesus as the Christ implies that we are thankful to be able to confess Him. There are a number of warnings about swearing falsely, in the New Testament (Mt. 5:33-37 etc.).

The eunuch confessed: Acts 8:37 “And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. ... 39 ... and the eunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing.” It is manifest that the eunuch acknowledged that Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah) and that He is the Son of God (deity). It is also manifest that he was thankful for the forgiveness of his sins (vs. 39).

### What is Implied by This Oath?

Since the confession that one makes prior to baptism is an oath (freely given by one who is thankful to be permitted to become a servant of God), what is implied by that oath? The eunuch confessed: “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” What is the meaning of saying that Jesus is the Christ? The word “Christ” *χριστός* pronounced “*christos*” “(χρίω) ... *anointed*” (Thayer, p. 672). In the Old Testament prophets, priests, and kings were anointed. I cannot find explicit evidence that judges were anointed, but I suspect that they were. If this is the case, confession of Jesus as “the Christ” means that one acknowledges Him as: prophet, priest, and king and probably as our future Judge. If He is a prophet, everything He taught was truth. If he is a priest (high priest), we must go through Him for forgiveness. If He is a king, we must obey everything that He commands us to do. If He is judge, He will make the final decision of where we spend eternity.

## Summary

Confessing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, is quite serious as we learn from the Old Testament passages quoted in the New Testament. One should not make the “good confession” without considering the consequences of swearing falsely.

It is important that we allow the Scriptures to define any word that we find in them, if a definition can be derived (by necessary inference) from the total context (the whole Bible). We need to use the Bible as a dictionary to define the words found in it (if possible). There are many other words that we need to define in this manner.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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