

1. The Hebrew Words.

In the following the unbeliever is condemned because as a witness for his gods he is unable to bear honest witness

Is. 43:9–13 and 44:7–11. Here Yahweh arranges before the nations a kind of trial in which it will be shown who is truly God, Yahweh or the gods of the Gentiles. The nations seem to be here both spectators and also judges who will decide (v. Rad). But they are also interested parties as advocates and **witnesses on behalf of their gods**. They are interested witnesses who must come forward to demonstrate the deity of their gods from their experiences (43:9; 44:9). To this extent they are also accusers of Yahweh, though vanquished by Him, 44:11. **For these witnesses or deities have nothing whereof to testify.** The content of the witness is thus a religious truth of which the witness is convinced on the basis of his experience. It is a religious certainty whose content he emphatically represents, for whose acknowledgment he strives, but for the correctness of which he cannot give any rational proof or present any empirical demonstration. It is grounded, then, on the prophetic experience of revelation which is original, and which by nature is not subject to rational control. This is certainty to the prophet. It is also certainty to Israel in so far as it follows the spiritual leadership of prophecy. The witness to this reality of God which is believed and experienced in faith bears the character of a religious confession advanced with the claim to recognition.

E. μάρτυς, μαρτυρέω, μαρτυρία, μαρτύριον in the New Testament.

2. The Use of μάρτυς.

To understand the NT use it is basic to remember that non-biblical Gk. already uses the concept of witness both in the sense of witness to ascertainable facts and also in that of witness to truths, i.e., the making known and confessing of convictions

a. General Use; Witness to Facts.

The original sense of witness to facts, i.e., the man who can speak about them from his own direct knowledge, especially in legal proceedings, is to be found in Mk. 14:63 == Mt. 26:65.

It is Luke's usage in Lk. 24:48 and Ac. which takes us beyond this, **but in such a way that here, too, the term first denotes one who declares facts directly known to himself.** The facts in question, however, are the facts of the history of Jesus, especially His resurrection, which is treated by Luke as **no less an objective fact than the passion. But witness cannot be borne to these facts unless their significance is also indicated and an emphatic appeal is made for their recognition in faith.** This, too, is from God's standpoint a fact. But it is a fact on a different level from that of the facts in the story of Jesus. **It cannot be confirmed by witnesses; it can only be believed and then attested by proclamation. The distinctiveness of the object referred to in this witness implies also that the declaration of specific facts and the believing, confessing, evangelising confession of their significance are indissolubly united in the concept of the witness. The witness to facts and the witness to truth are one and the**

same—the unavoidable result of the fact that the Gospel presents a historical revelation. But the fact that Luke applies the concept of the witness to the content of the Gospel is grounded in his marked concern to expound clearly the historical foundations of the evangelical message. At issue are, not doctrines, myths, or speculations, but facts which took place in the clear light of history at a specific time and place, facts which can be established and on which one can rely.

In Revelation 12:11 the martyrological orientation of the word seems to be even plainer. After the victory of Michael and his angelic hosts over the dragon there is heavenly jubilation that “the accuser of our brethren is cast down.” “And they overcame him διὰ τὸ αἷμα τοῦ ἀρνίου καὶ διὰ τὸν λόγον τῆς μαρτυρίας αὐτῶν, by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony,”⁷² i.e., the word which they attest, or rather, since they have given their lives, attested. Now here, too, the term means evangelistic confession of Jesus rather than the testimony of blood. Nevertheless, it is used of a confession which culminates in the sacrifice of life.

5. The Use of μαρτύριον.

a. Occurrence.

This word (used 20 times) is less common than μάρτυς, μαρτυρεῖν and μαρτυρία. It is not found at all in the Johannine writings except at Rev. 15:5, where the OT ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ μαρτυρίου is adopted with ref. to the heavenly temple, cf. Ac. 7:44. Of the other 18 instances half are in the Synoptists (Mk. 1:44 par. Mt. 8:4; Lk. 5:14; Mk. 6:11 par. Lk. 9:5; Mt. 10:18 and 24:14 par. Mk. 13:9; Lk. 21:13; in fact there are thus only three references).

b. Use in the Sense of Witness for the Prosecution.

In respect of the use and meaning, our starting-point must be the fact that, unlike μαρτυρία, μαρτύριον does not mean the process of giving testimony. Even in witness we are to think less of the content than of the fact that the objective testimony, whether it be an object, act or utterance, is primarily a means of proof. This is everywhere apparent in the NT, where the phrase εἰς μαρτύριον is used with the dat. of the person for whom the witness is significant, usually as witness against him. This sense is apparent already in the OT use, cf. Gn. 31:44; Dt. 31:26; Jos. 24:27. In the NT it is plainly the meaning in Jm. 5:3: the rust on the gold and silver of the rich εἰς μαρτύριον ὑμῖν ἔσται καὶ φάγεται τὰς σάρκας ὑμῶν ὡς πῦρ. They would rather let their possessions rot than use them in works of mercy. Thus the rust on their gold will be a witness for the prosecution against them on the day of judgment. Mk. 6:11 is to be construed in the same way. Where the disciples are not accepted with their message, they are to leave the place and to shake off the dust from their feet εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς (correctly expounded in Lk. 9:5 as εἰς μαρτύριον ἐπ’ αὐτούς). The fact that they leave their hearers with this gesture will be a witness against their resistance and unbelief on the day of judgment. The direction which Jesus gives the cleansed leper that he should show himself to the priest and bring the prescribed offerings εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς (Mk. 1:44 par.) could be taken in the same way.⁷⁵ If the cleansing is confirmed by the priest, this will be a severe indictment of the unbelief in which the people (αὐτοῖς) lingers still. The passage is to be expounded in terms of Mt. 11:20–24. Also to be taken in this sense are Mk. 13:9 and the par. Mt. 10:18, also 24:14, though Lk. 21:13 stands apart. In Mk. 13:9; Mt. 10:18 it is envisaged that for Jesus’ sake the disciples will be brought before the local Jewish

courts, whipped in the synagogues, and arraigned before rulers and kings εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς (Mk.) or αὐτοῖς καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν (Mt.). The αὐτοί here seem to be the Jews in contrast to the Gentiles represented by the rulers and kings. According to the context the μαρτύριον cannot be the evangelistic witness of missionary preaching, which offers the chance of conversion. The goal of this witness is to make opponents guilty. In Mt. 24:14: “This gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all the world εἰς μαρτύριον πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, it is apparent from v. 9 (ἔσεσθε μισοῦμενοι ὑπὸ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν διὰ τὸ ὄνομά μου) that the reference is to the witness which makes the Gentiles guilty. Hence we cannot translate: “That they may be given a chance to believe.” Only Lk. gives a different turn to the saying with his ἀποβήσεται ὑμῖν εἰς μαρτύριον (21:13). This means, not martyrdom in the later sense, but the opportunity which the disciples are given of making their witness. As always in Lk., the alteration is a thoughtful one, and is designed to form a transition to the ensuing promise that Jesus will help them at the trials. Their witness will thus be of irresistible power (v. 15), so that they will emerge unscathed from the most dangerous situations (v. 18f.).

c. Witness to Something.

The small alteration here made by Lk. is important because it introduces us to another circle in which μαρτύριον is not witness as a means of proof but witness to something, occasionally in an active sense. The genitive used with it denotes either the subject (τὸ μαρτύριον τῆς συνειδήσεως ἡμῶν, 2 C. 1:12; τὸ μαρτύριον ἡμῶν, 2 Th. 1:10) or the object to which the statement relates (τὸ μαρτύριον ... τῆς ἀναστάσεως, Ac. 4:33; τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 1 C. 1:6; τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ θεοῦ, 1 C. 2:1, unless we are to read τὸ μυστήριον here; τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ κυρίου, 2 Tm. 1:8). μαρτύριον is here synonymous with εὐαγγέλιον, κήρυγμα, or διδασκαλία. The same is true of the designation of the Christian message as τὸ μαρτύριον καιροῖς ἰδίους 1 Tm. 2:6.

d. Witness in the Active Sense.

μαρτύριον takes on the active sense of attestation in Hb. 3:5. Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant εἰς μαρτύριον τῶν λαληθησομένων, i.e., the directions, especially the legal statutes, which he receives from God in the tabernacle and is then to attest to the people. This active use is contrary to Greek sensibility and is to be explained by the σκηνὴ τοῦ μαρτυρίου of the LXX, → 485.

In clear distinction from μάρτυς, μαρτυρεῖν, μαρτυρία, there is in the NT no trace of any inclination to develop the use of μαρτύριον in the direction of the Church's martyrological usage in the 2nd century (cf. Mart. Pol., 1, 1; 2, 1; 18, 2; 19, 1).

F. The Development and Establishment of the Specific Martyrological Use in the Early Church.

1. Review.

In the 2nd century the impulses found in the NT, especially in the Johannine writings, are carried a stage further. Like the beginnings, the development was due to the persecutions which fell on the Christian community. As is only natural, the popular use with its various meanings lived on.⁸² So, too, did the older specifically Christian use for verbal evangelistic witness to the truth of the Gospel. The only thing to fade was recollection that the reference was originally to those who were specifically charged to give this witness, or who did in fact give it. The terms are now applied to those who, even if only on occasion, bear witness under threat, for only this is

regarded as full witness. Hence the distinction between ὁμολογεῖν and μαρτυρεῖν disappears, as may be seen especially in the accounts of the South Gaul martyrdoms in Eus. Hist. Eccl., V, 1, where the two terms are fully interchangeable. But they also draw apart, for the term witness is reserved for those who seal the seriousness of their witness or confession by death, and it becomes a tt. in this sense.

2. The Usage.

Whether μαρτυρεῖν is used in this martyrological sense in 1 Cl., 5, 4 and 7 is open to debate. As an example of a ἕως θανάτου ἀθλεῖν (5, 2) Peter is first mentioned, ὃς ... οὐχ ἕνα οὐδὲ δύο ἀλλὰ πλείονας ὑπήνεγκε πόνους καὶ οὕτω μαρτυρήσας ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὸν ὀφειλόμενον τόπον τῆς δόξης (5, 4). It is said of Paul that he δικαιοσύνην διδάξας ὅλον τὸν κόσμον, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ τέλος τῆς δύσεως ἐλθὼν καὶ μαρτυρήσας ἐπὶ τῶν ἡγουμένων, οὕτως ἀπηλλάγη τοῦ κόσμου (5, 7). In the first verse there has been no mention of Peter's preaching, only of his sufferings. Hence it seems to be said that he suffered a martyr's death. But in what is said about Paul the μαρτυρεῖν seems to refer to his preaching, though this is, of course, the preaching of one who died for the sake of his ministry. The usage is thus fluid. To reserve judgment on this epistle, which comes from the Roman church, is particularly appropriate when one recalls that the Shepherd of Hermas, which also comes from Rome, obviously does not show acquaintance with the technical use of μάρτυς etc. Hermas mentions martyrs, and is vitally concerned about their ecclesiastical rank and heavenly reward, cf. esp. s., 9, 28; v., 3, 1, 9; 2, 1; 5, 2. But his regular term for them is οἱ παθόντες διὰ τὸ ὄνομα or εἵνεκα τοῦ ὀνόματος. No less surprising is the complete lack of any martyrological use of the word group in Ignatius. Ignatius is full of the idea of martyrdom. The content associated with the idea is richly developed by him. He is an imitator, a bearer of Christ. As one who goes to martyrdom, he is on the point of becoming a true disciple of Christ. But nowhere do we find μάρτυς, μαρτυρεῖν etc. He shows no acquaintance whatever with the later use. The same is also true of Justin, who does not use the terms either.

The first work to have all four words μάρτυς κτλ. in the fixed martyrological sense is the Martyrdom of Polycarp written just after Polycarp's death (Feb. 23, 155) by the church of Smyrna to tell the church of Philomelium about it, cf. Mart. Pol., 19, 1: ... Πολύκαρπον, ὃς σὺν τοῖς ἀπὸ φιλαδελφίας δωδέκατος ἐν Σμύρνη μαρτυρήσας ... οὐ μόνον διδάσκαλος γενόμενος ἐπίσημος, ἀλλὰ καὶ μάρτυς ἕξοχος, οὗ τὸ μαρτύριον πάντες ἐπιθυμοῦσιν μιμεῖσθαι κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον Χριστοῦ γενόμενον, and 13, 2: παντὶ ... καλῶ πρὸς τῆς μαρτυρίας ἐκεκόσμητο. Cf. also μάρτυς in 2, 2; 14, 2; 15, 2; 16, 2; 17, 3; μαρτυρεῖν in 1, 1; 21, 1; 22, 1; epil. 3; μαρτυρία in 1, 1; μαρτύριον in 1, 1; 2, 1; 18, 3. It may also be noted that a little later Melito of Sardis in his work Περὶ τοῦ πάσχα uses the simple ἐμαρτύρησεν when telling of the martyrdom of Bishop Sagaris (Eus. Hist. Eccl., IV, 26, 3), and that a little later still Polycrates of Ephesus, in his letter to Victor of Rome about the paschal question, uses what is almost the fixed double formula ἐπίσκοπος καὶ μάρτυς for the bishops Polycarp of Smyrna, Thraseas of Eumencia and the above Sagaris.

Thus in the church at Smyrna, and, one might say, in the church throughout Asia Minor, we find a fixed and technical martyrological use of the terms by the middle of the second century. We find this use, then, in the area which was the home of Rev., in which the first clear steps are taken towards such a development. Elsewhere at this time no traces of the later concept are to be found. One may conclude that the sphere in which the martyr concept developed was the church in Asia Minor.

We also find the beginnings of a use of the term witness for those who confess at the risk of their lives but without suffering death. Thus acc. to Hegesippus the descendants of Jude, the brother of Jesus, who were haled before Domitian but escaped free and later played a leading role in the

Palestinian church, are called μάρτυρες (Eus. Hist. Eccl., III, 20, 6; 32, 6). Hippolytus also uses the word for those who had to do forced labour in the Sardinian mines and who were later liberated (Philos., IX, 12, 10 and 11). He also speaks of the μαρτυρεῖν and μαρτυρία of that dubious Christian the later Pope Calixtus, who had temporarily done forced labour in Sardinia (§ 4). In a letter of Serapion of Antioch there is ref. to a bishop who signed himself Ἀὐρήλιος Κυρίνιος μάρτυς (Eus. Hist. Eccl., V, 19, 3). In Eus. Hist. Eccl., V, 18, 5 f. there is a Montanist leader Themison, ὁ μὴ βαστάσας τῆς ὁμολογίας τὸ σημεῖον, who purchased his freedom by a big money payment, and also an Alexander, both of whom called themselves witnesses and were honoured as such by their followers.

The usage is only occasional. But it spread rapidly. It is found in the Acts of Justin (c. 6: οἱ ἅγιοι μάρτυρες ... ἐτελείωσαν τὸ μαρτύριον ἐν τῇ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ὁμολογίᾳ). Dionysius of Corinth in his letter to Rome wrote that Peter and Paul εἰς τὴν Ἰταλίαν ὁμόσε διδάξαντες ἐμαρτύρησαν κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν καιρὸν (Eus. Hist. Eccl., II, 25, 8). He obviously took the μαρτυρεῖν of 1 Cl., 5, 4 and 7 in the sense of martyrdom. Hegesippus uses μαρτυρεῖν in this sense of the martyrdom of Simon, son of Cleopas, in the time of Trajan (Eus. Hist. Eccl., III, 32, 3), and esp. of the death of the Lord's brother, James. After being thrown from the top of the temple and stoned, James received a blow on the head from a fuller: καὶ οὕτως ἐμαρτύρησεν, Eus. Hist. Eccl., II, 23, 18; cf. also μετὰ τὸ μαρτυρῆσαι Ἰάκωβον τὸν δίκαιον, ὡς καὶ ὁ κύριος, IV, 22, 4. But μαρτυρεῖν is also used by Hegesippus in the ordinary sense (μαρτυροῦμέν σοι καὶ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ὅτι δίκαιος εἶ, II, 23, 10), and μαρτυρία can mean oral witness to the faith, II, 23, 14, cf. 23, 2. Both ideas are combined at the end of the account: μάρτυς οὗτος ἀληθῆς Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἑλλησιν γεγένηται ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστός ἐστιν (23, 18). His oral witness is consummated in his death. Both are one act. He is thus a μάρτυς in the full sense. But the ὅτι clause shows that μάρτυς needed to be filled out in content.

Particularly instructive is the account of the persecution in S. Gaul at the time of Marcus Aurelius (Eus. Hist. Eccl., V, 1 f.), esp. because here for the first time we find the distinction between ὁμολογοί and μάρτυρες which later carried the field, and the title μάρτυς or ἡ τῆς μαρτυρίας προσηγορία is reserved for Christ Himself and for those οὗς ἐν τῇ ὁμολογίᾳ Χριστὸς ἠξίωσεν ἀναληφθῆναι, ἐπισφραγισάμενος αὐτῶν διὰ τῆς ἐξόδου τὴν μαρτυρίαν (V, 2, 3). The Christians there, for all the terrible tortures they have already had to suffer—οὐχ ἅπαξ οὐδὲ δις ἀλλὰ πολλάκις μαρτυρήσαντες, says the account (V, 2, 2)—refused to be called martyrs by their fellow-believers until they were perfected; they were only ὁμολογοί μέτριοι καὶ ταπεινοί. The account itself, of course, is not so strict in its usage. If it says of those condemned to death προσετίθεντο τῷ τῶν μαρτύρων κλήρῳ etc. (V, 1, 26 and 48), it can already call the living μάρτυρες in so far as they have had to suffer torments for their confession. What is usually ὁμολογία can also be called τὴν καλὴν μαρτυρίαν (V, 1, 30). It speaks of the repeated μαρτυρεῖν of the same persons (V, 2, 2). It even says of Attalos that he αἰεὶ μάρτυς ἐγγένοι παρ' ἡμῶν ἀληθείας (V, 1, 43), using the term in the older sense of evangelistic witness. But these are echoes of a less developed and earlier use. Such echoes never die away altogether. We also find spiritualisations, esp. in Cl. Al., cf. Strom., IV. But in the strict sense martyrs are now only those put to death for their faith: κύριως μόνους μάρτυρας ὠνόμασαν τοὺς τῇ ἐκχύσει τοῦ ἑαυτῶν αἵματος μαρτυρήσαντας τῷ τῆς θεοσεβείας μυστηρίῳ (Orig. Comm. in Joh., 2, 210). For as the prophets are perfect (τέλειοι) in prophecy, so οἱ μάρτυρες ἐν ὁμολογίᾳ (Cl. Al. Strom., IV, 21, 133, 1). The content and the current relation of μαρτυρεῖν and ὁμολογεῖν are correctly stated in this observation. Those not yet condemned are, in Tertullian's phrase (Mart., 1), *martyres designati*. The strict sense of witness is only a distant echo in this technical Christian use. The word has acquired a new sense. This is why the Latin speaking church took over the Greek term instead of translating it (by *testis*).

It remains only to note that μαρτύριον, in accordance with its objective trend, was often used later for the place where a martyr was buried or his remains were to be found, cf. P. Oxy., VI, 941, 4 (6th cent. A.D.): ἀντίς τοῦ μαρτυρίου, over against the altar of the martyr.

3. Understanding.

The new concept which arose in this way naturally associated itself at once with ideas which had been long in preparation. The Christian who goes forward to martyrdom does not wrestle with flesh and blood. Those who torture him or try to make him recant are agents of the devil. He stands in an ἀγών with this great foe. The conflict with the Egyptian (Egypt is the land of devilish magic) finds particularly graphic description in a vision in the Martyrdom of Perpetua and her companions, c. 10.⁸⁸ In this struggle Christians imitate Christ. They also continue His sufferings. Indeed, He Himself fights in them and stands at their side. They are supported by Him and by the Spirit. They are thus enabled to endure without a murmur, and even with a smile, the most terrible torments. In not a few cases they have the privilege of seeing the δόξα κυρίου. They are prepared, encouraged and strengthened by visions and heavenly voices. As they suffer, they are in transition to the heavenly state, μηκέτι ἄνθρωποι, ἀλλ' ἤδη ἄγγελοι (Mart. Pol., 2, 3). It is little wonder that when their bodies are consumed by the flames there comes from them a divine savour. If they are perfected, they go directly to heavenly glory.

These ideas are found very clearly in the older martyrdoms, e.g., of Polycarp, Justin, Perpetua, and the S. Gaul martyrs, though not every trait is present in all of them. The basic elements, namely, the conflict with Satan, the imitation and extension of the sufferings of Christ, His mysterious support, the infilling of power and joy, are fully developed in the epistles of Ignatius. All the decisive points go back to ideas found in the NT itself.⁹⁰ Thus disciples who are persecuted for the sake of Christ are called blessed in Mt. 5:11 f. The support of the Spirit is promised to those brought before courts in Mt. 10:17 ff. The promise of life is given to those who offer up their lives in Mt. 16:24 ff. Here and in the eschatological discourses the Gospel tradition offers a wealth of motifs which come together at this point. The note in Ac. 5:41 (they rejoiced because they κατηξιώθησαν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος ἀτιμασθῆναι) breathes the whole mood of martyrdom, not to mention the death of Stephen. To Paul the sufferings which he endures in his missionary work seem to be an ἀνταναπληροῦν of the ὑστερήματα τῶν θλίψεων τοῦ Χριστοῦ (Col. 1:24). This thought determines his whole view of his missionary sufferings. As such, they are sufferings in the service of Christ. The joyous mood of martyrdom is also expressed in Rom. 5:3 and 8:17. In 1 Pt. those who are persecuted are summoned to joy at κοινωνεῖν τοῖς τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθήμασιν (4:13) and exhorted to ἐπακολουθεῖν τοῖς ἰχνεσιν αὐτοῦ, namely, those of the Christ who suffered for others (2:21ff.). Before the eyes of the seer in Rev. stands Christ, the Lamb slain, the original martyr, the faithful witness κατ' ἐξοχήν. In the NT, however, these elements are not yet firmly associated with the concept of the martyr. They cannot be, for the development of the martyrological sense is only a consequence of the martyrdom experienced by the Church. When it arose, this sense necessarily assimilated all the other ideas, and it thus had new implications (e.g., in respect of merits) which it is beyond the scope of this dictionary to pursue.

† ἐπιμαρτυρέω, † συμμαρτυρέω, † συνεπιμαρτυρέω, † καταμαρτυρέω.

The meaning of these compounds is closely related to the popular sense of μαρτυρεῖν (→ μάρτυς B. 2 and 3).

ἐπιμαρτυρεῖν (Plat., Plut., Lucian, Joseph., very occasionally pap.) is not found in the LXX at all.

ἐπιμαρτυρεῖν occurs in the NT only at 1 Pt. 5:12. It means “to attest (a preceding assertion),” not just “to attest emphatically” (cf. P. Lond., 1692a, 19 [6th cent. A.D.]: τῶν δεῖνα ἐπιμαρτυροῦντων). The ἐπι- simply strengthens an element in the μαρτυρεῖν. But ἐπιμαρτυρεῖν can also mean “to affirm,” “to agree,” and it can be used of the protestation, not of a fact, but of a view or opinion, so that the basic sense of μαρτυρεῖν is lost, cf. Ep. Ar., 197: ἐπιμαρτυρήσας δὲ τούτοις, where ἐπιμαρτυρεῖν means the same as the preceding ἐπιφωνεῖν, ἐπαινεῖν, ἀποδέχεσθαι. There can be no question here of a witness or proof in the strict sense. This may be explained in terms of what was said in → μάρτυς B. 2. In 1 Pt. 5:12 what is attested is stated in the ensuing acc. c. inf.

συμμαρτυρεῖν is a common compound (Soph., Eur., Isocr., Xenoph., Plut., pap.) which does not occur in the LXX and is used in the NT only at R. 2:15; 8:16; 9:1. It first means “to bear witness with,” “to attest or confirm something as one witness along with another or several others.” It has this sense in, e.g., BGU, I, 86, 40 ff. (2nd cent. A.D.), where a list of witnesses is linked with the first witness by a συμμαρτιρῶ (or συμμαρτυρῶ) καὶ συνσφραγιῶ (*sic*); cf. also Plut. Comparatio Thesei c. Romulo, 6, 5 and 7 (I, 39b) ὁ χρόνος ἐστὶ μάρτυς ... τῶ δὲ τοσοῦτῳ χρόνῳ συμμαρτυρεῖ καὶ τὰ ἔργα. But then recollection of the basic meaning fades, and συμμαρτυρεῖν simply means “to confirm” (i.e., the statement of another of any kind, whether about a fact or an opinion), or, with the dat., “to agree.” Cf. Plat. Hi., I, 282b: συμμαρτυρῆσαι δέ σοι ἔχω ὅτι ἀληθῆ λέγεις, “I must agree with you that you are right” (i.e., with the view expressed). Xenoph. Hist. Graec., VII, 1, 35: ἔλεγε δὲ ὁ Πελοπίδας ὅτι ... συνεμαρτύρει δ’ αὐτῶ ταῦτα πάντα ὡς ἀληθῆ λέγοι ὁ Ἀθηναῖος Τιμαγόρας, Timagoras confirms the account of Pelopidas. With ref. only to a belief, without mentioning who held it, Plut. Quaest. Conv., VIII, 4, 4 (II, 724c/d): σκύλων δὲ Πυθοῖ καὶ ἀκροθινίων καὶ τροπαίων ἀναθέσεις ἄρα οὐ συμμαρτυροῦσιν ὅτι τῆς εἰς τὸ νικᾶν καὶ κρατεῖν δυνάμεως τῷ θεῷ τούτῳ πλεῖστον μέτεστιν, the votive offerings confirm the opinion of faith that God will help to victory. “Distinction between the two meanings to testify with and to confirm alone does justice to the usage; συμμαρτυρεῖν never denotes, like μαρτυρεῖν, purely authoritative assertion, but always confirmation.”

Our starting-point now must be the three passages in Romans. 2:15: οἵτινες ἐνδεικνύονται τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου γραπτὸν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν (by their actual conduct, v. 14), συμμαρτυρούσης αὐτῶν τῆς συνειδήσεως. Conscience confirms the ἐνδειξις of the actual conduct of the Gentiles (that they ἑαυτοῖς εἰσὶν νόμος, or that the works demanded by the Law are written on their hearts). The constant impulses of the living moral consciousness have independent significance along with the individual acts performed. Similarly, R. 9:1: ἀλήθειαν λέγω ἐν Χριστῷ, οὐ ψεύδομαι, συμμαρτυρούσης μοι τῆς συνειδήσεως μου ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ. The judgment of Paul’s conscience as directed by the Holy Spirit accompanies and confirms the statement which he has made or begun to make. It is really true that the unbelief of Israel is a great burden to the apostle. In R. 8:16: αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα συμμαρτυρεῖ τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν ὅτι ἐσμὲν τέκνα θεοῦ, the divine → πνεῦμα confirms what τὸ πνεῦμα ἡμῶν already says, namely, that we Christians are the children of God. The first πνεῦμα is the πνεῦμα υιοθεσίας by which the sons of God are impelled and which enables them to call upon God as Father (v. 14f.). The πνεῦμα ἡμῶν can only be the spiritual ego of man, the νοῦς, or, as we would say, the soul. πνεῦμα is also used for soul in R. 1:9; 8:10; 1 C. 5:3–5; 7:34; 16:18:2 C. 2:13; 7:1, 13; Gl. 6:18; Phil. 4:23; Col. 2:5; Phlm. 25. If we take συμμαρτυρεῖν strictly, it is implicitly said that the spiritual ego of the man in Christ already declares him to be a child of God. But it is hard to think that Paul could say this. Hence we are forced to give to συμμαρτυρεῖν here the simple sense of “bear witness.” If, on the other hand, we think that when Paul relates the πνεῦμα to man he always, or here at least, means the personal life of the Christian as this is shaped by the Spirit of God, then we can take συμμαρτυρεῖν strictly. The statement of faith made by this Christian ego

which is aware of being a child of God is confirmed by the Spirit. “Here Paul sets alongside the act of faith the inspirative process. He assigns this to the second place; the first is occupied by the faith based on the message of Jesus.” But could the Roman Christians read this from τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν? Does it not finally amount to the fact that the Spirit of God confirms Himself?

συνεπιμαρτυρεῖν, which is common in non-biblical Gk. (Aristot., Polyb., Plut.), does not occur in the LXX and is found in the NT only at Hb. 2:4. The salvation first preached by the Lord Himself is confirmed in us by the hearers, συνεπιμαρτυροῦντος τοῦ θεοῦ σημείοις κτλ. On the meaning cf. Ep. Ar., 191: συνεπιμαρτυρήσας δὲ τούτῳ τὸν ἐχόμενον ἡρώτα, “(the king) agreed with this one and asked the next.” Cf. also 1 Cl., 23, 5: συνεπιμαρτυρούσης καὶ τῆς γραφῆς. The saying does not imply the presence of another witness who confirms what has been said and with whom there is then a second. It simply means that something seen by another, whether a fact, opinion, or conviction, is accepted by a second as true.

Thus Hb. 2:4 does not carry a reference to yet other μάρτυρες, so that the preachers (ὑπὸ τῶν ἀκουσάντων ... ἐβεβαιώθη) are indirectly described as such. They have given assurance and made an impression thereby. But God Himself has confirmed the truth of the preaching by the witness of the σημεῖα. In the case of συνεπιμαρτυρεῖν the situation is much the same as in that of συμμαρτυρεῖν.

καταμαρτυρεῖν (Lys., Demosth., Isaeus, Epict., Dio C., occasionally the pap.) is used with the gen. of person for “making a statement in witness against someone.” It occurs a few times in the LXX (for הַיְע hi, הַנֶּע or פ' הַיְע הַיְע). mostly of false witnesses for the prosecution. It does not have to mean false witnesses; this either emerges from the context (3 Βασ. 20:10 [not B], 13; Sus. 21 Θ) or is expressly indicated by the addition (μαρτυρίαν) ψευδῆ (Prv. 25:18; Sus. 43;49 Θ). The term does not have this implication in Job 15:6: τὰ δὲ χεῖλη σου καταμαρτυρήσουσίν σου, or Da. 6:25: οἱ καταμαρτυρήσαντες τοῦ Δανιήλ. Cf. also Epict. Diss., IV, 8, 32, of the witness of the genuine Cynic who by his conduct τῇ ἀρετῇ μαρτυρεῖ καὶ τῶν ἐκτὸς καταμαρτυρεῖ (bears witness against the value of everything external).

In the NT the word occurs only at Mk. 14:60 == Mt. 26:62, where the highpriest asks Jesus: οὐκ ἀποκρῖναι οὐδὲν τί οὗτοί σου καταμαρτυροῦσιν; and Mt. 27:13, where Pilate puts to Him the question: οὐκ ἀκούεις πόσα σου καταμαρτυροῦσιν; (Mk.: ἴδε πόσα σου κατηγοροῦσιν). The context shows that there is no basis for the statements.

† μαρτύρομαι, † διαμαρτύρομαι, † προμαρτύρομαι.

μαρτύρεσθαι originally, “to invoke someone as a witness about something,” esp. the gods (Plat. Phileb., 12b: μαρτύρομαι νῦν αὐτήν τὴν θεόν, Eur. Med., 1410: δαίμονας, Eur. Phoen., 626: γαῖαν καὶ θεούς), but also men, Aesch. Eum., 643: ὑμᾶς δ' ἀκούειν ταῦτ' ἐγὼ μαρτύρομαι, Plat. Resp., II, 364d: οἱ δὲ τῆς τῶν θεῶν ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων παραγωγῆς τὸν Ὀμηρον μαρτύρονται, Aristoph. Pl., 932: ὄραξ ἄ ποιεῖ; ταῦτ' ἐγὼ μαρτύρομαι, namely, the witness who is addressed (σε to be supplied), cf. Ra., 528; Vesp., 1436; Nu., 1222 and 1297; Plut. Alcibiades, 12 (I, 196d): τὸν Διομήδη ... μαρτυρόμενον θεοὺς καὶ ἀνθρώπους, Plut. Aristid., 18 (I, 330a): Ἀριστείδης ... μαρτυρόμενος Ἑλληνίους θεοὺς ἀπέχεσθαι μάχης, Marcellus, 7 (I, 301d): Ζεῦ, μαρτύρομαί σε ... σοὶ καθιεροῦν, P. Oxy., VIII, 1114, 23 ff. (3rd cent. A.D.): ἐμαρτύρατο τοὺς τότε τὸ μαρτυροποίημα σφραγίζειν μέλλοντας ... Αὐρηλίαν Ἀπολλωνίαν ... ἀδιάθετον τελευτήσαι. It thus passes into general use. Strictly, we should be told what the occasion is. If we are told only to what the witness refers, μαρτύρεσθαι comes to mean “to make a solemn declaration about.” This can then have the sense of an emphatic affirmation that something is so, cf. Plat. Phileb., 47d: ταῦτα δὲ τότε μὲν οὐκ ἐμαρτυράμεθα, νῦν δὲ λέγομεν; Dio C.,

41, 3, 2: εἰπόν τε πολλὰ καὶ ἐμαρτύραντο, or simply “to attest”: P. Oxy., VIII, 1121, 8 (3rd cent. A.D.): μαρτυρομένη τὰ εἰς με ἐπιχειρηθέντα, cf. line 23 f.: ἐπιδίδωμι τάδε τὰ βιβλία μαρτυρομένη μὲν τὸ ἐπιχείρημα ἀξιούσα δὲ ..., also 1120, 11; 1114, 23 (→ *supra*), or an emphatic demand, requirement or admonition, cf. P. Lips., 37, 25 (4th cent. A.D.): διὰ τοῦτο ἐπιδίδωμι τούσδε τοὺς λιβέλλους μαρτυρόμενος καὶ ἀξιῶν τούτους ἐν ἀσφαλεῖ εἶναι μέχρις τῆς ἐπιδημίας τοῦ ἄρχοντος.

In the LXX it occurs (along with the rather more common ἐπιμαρτύρεσθαι, 9 times) only twice, at Jdt. 7:28: μαρτυρόμεθα ὑμῖν τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ τὸν θεὸν ἡμῶν, to support a demand previously expressed; and 1 Macc. 2:56, where Caleb receives an inheritance ἐν τῷ μαρτύρασθαι τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, because he bore witness to the community in the sense of a summons not to be discouraged by the report of the spies, but to begin the conquest of Canaan trusting in God. Σ has it in ψ 49:7 (for 717 hi) in the sense “to declare solemnly.”

In the NT μαρτύρεσθαι is found twice in Ac. and three times in Pl. It has the meaning of emphatic demand in 1 Th. 2:11 f.: παρακαλοῦντες ὑμᾶς ... καὶ μαρτυρόμενοι εἰς τὸ περιπατεῖν ὑμᾶς ἀξίως τοῦ θεοῦ κτλ., and Eph. 4:17: τοῦτο οὖν λέγω καὶ μαρτύρομαι ἐν κυρίῳ, μηκέτι ὑμᾶς περιπατεῖν καθὼς καὶ τὰ ἔθνη περιπατεῖ. The translation “I adjure you” strikes a false note, since there is no thought of calling on God to give force to the admonition. In the other three passages it has the sense of emphatic affirmation, each time with the dat. of person. It may be a factual assertion, as in Ac. 20:26: διότι μαρτύρομαι ὑμῖν ... ὅτι καθαρὸς εἰμι ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος πάντων. Paul assures the Ephesian elders that he bears no responsibility if anyone perishes. It may refer to a truth to be observed, as in Gl. 5:3: μαρτύρομαι δὲ πάλιν παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ περιτεμνομένῳ ὅτι ὀφειλέτης ἐστὶν ὅλον τὸν νόμον ποιῆσαι. In particular, it refers to the message of the Gospel which Paul attests both to small and great (Ac. 26:22).

There is hardly any difference in meaning between διαμαρτύρεσθαι and μαρτύρεσθαι. The first meaning is “to invoke someone (gods or men) as witness with reference to something,” “to declare with an appeal to witnesses,” and then secondly “to declare emphatically,” whether with ref. to facts or truths (so esp. Demosth.) or in the sense of a summons, admonition, or warning.

It occurs a few times in the LXX, almost always for 717 hi, but once each for 717i hi, 717 hoph, and twice for 777 hi. It has its basic sense at Dt. 4:26: διαμαρτύρομαι ὑμῖν (against you) σήμερον τὸν τε οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν, ὅτι ἀπωλεία ἀπολεῖσθε κτλ., cf. 30:19; 31:28; in Ier. 39:10, 44 (διαμαρτύρεσθαι μάρτυρας) the ref. is to the part of witnesses at the signing of agreements. Elsewhere it means “to declare emphatically,” whether with ref. to statutes to be followed (Ex. 18:20; 19:10, 21; 1 Βασ. 8:9), to representations made to someone (Ex. 21:29; 2 Εσδρ. 23:21), occasionally to a promise given (Zech. 3:6), or commonly to prophetic warnings to repent (4 Βασ. 17:13; 2 Παρ. 24:19; 2 Εσδρ. 19:26, 34; ψ 49:7; 80:8; Ier. 6:10; Ez. 16:2; 20:4 in these two passages with the obj. τὰς ἀνομίας). With these meanings we often find the dat. of person, e.g., Dt. 32:46; Ex. 19:21. There is a special use in Mal. 2:14: ὅτι Κύριος διεμαρτύρατο ἀνὰ μέσον σου καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον γυναικὸς νεότητός σου, “He was present as a witness.”

Of the 15 NT occurrences, 10 are in the Lucan writings (9 in Ac.), 3 in the Past., one each in 1 Th. and Hb. The meaning is never “to invoke as witness.” “To declare emphatically” in the sense of a warning is the meaning in Lk. 16:28: ὅπως διαμαρτύρηται αὐτοῖς, ἵνα μὴ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔλθωσιν εἰς τὸν τόπον τοῦτον τῆς βασάνου, and 2 Tm. 2:14: διαμαρτυρόμενος ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ μὴ λογομαχεῖν. Here the ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ reminds us of the original sphere of the term. This is also true in 1 Tm. 5:21 and esp. 2 Tm. 4:1, where the meaning is “to declare emphatically” by way of admonition. In the latter passage: Διαμαρτύρομαι ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ ... καὶ τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτοῦ· κήρυξον τὸν λόγον, διαμαρτύρεσθαι is

similar to ὀρκίζω τινά τι in Mk. 5:7; Ac. 19:13; cf. 1 Th. 5:27, and it obviously has the sense “to adjure.” To avoid this we should have to take τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν κτλ. as the object of διαμαρτύρομαι, which is against the context. In all other instances the meaning is (emphatic) “affirmation” that a thing is or will be so, cf. the intimation of Paul’s imprisonment in Ac. 20:23, the adducing of a truth attested in the OT in Hb. 2:6, Paul’s preaching of future judgment in 1 Th. 4:6, and in Ac. (up to 20:23) the apostolic preaching of the Gospel with the object τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ (20:24), τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ (28:23), τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου (8:25), τὰ περὶ ἐμοῦ (Christ, 23:11), τὴν εἰς θεὸν μετάνοιαν καὶ πίστιν εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν (20:21). In 18:5 the content is given by the phrase εἶναι τὸν χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν and in 10:42 by a ὅτι clause. In 2:40 it is made clear by the context.

προμαρτύρεσθαι occurs for the first time outside the Bible in an 8th cent. pap. in the sense “to summon to something in advance” (P. Lond., IV, 1356. 32: προμαρτυρόμενος [αὐτοῦς εἰς] τὸ σχεῖν τὸν φόβον τοῦ θεοῦ πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν).

It does not occur in the LXX and the only NT instance is at 1 Pt. 1:11 in the sense “to attest or declare in advance as a fact (which will come to pass).” The πνεῦμα (of Christ) dwelling in the prophets was προμαρτυρόμενον τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα (the sufferings ordained for Christ) καὶ τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας.

† ψευδόμαρτυς, † ψευδομαρτυρέω, † ψευδομαρτυρία

ψευδόμαρτυς, “the false witness.” Like ψευδομαρτυρεῖα and ψευδομαρτυρία it occurs already in class Gk., cf. esp., Anaxim. in Ps.-Aristot. Rhet. Al., 16, p. 1431b, 20 ff., esp. 41 f., where there is an express discussion *de testimoniis et testibus*, and all three words are found. On the other hand, they do not occur at all in the pap., though we find ψευδομαρτύριον (→ 514). The construction is not to be explained in the same way as ψευδοφιλιππος (Luc.), ψευδηρακλῆς (Menand.), ψευδόχριστος (Mt. 24:24), ψευδοπάρθενος (Hdt.), ψευδόχρυσος (Plut.), ψευδόδειπνον (Aesch.) etc., where the ψευδο-implies that what the main word denotes is claimed only ψευδῶς or falsely. On the contrary, the main word is taken verbally as in ψευδάγγελος (declaring lies, false messenger, Hom., Aristot.), ψευδοκῆρυξ (Soph.), ψευδόμαντις (Aesch., Soph.). The word thus means one who attests something which is false. It is not contested that the person concerned is a witness, as though he had no direct knowledge of the persons, relations or events at issue. What is disputed is the correctness of what he says; τὰ ψευδῆ μαρτυρεῖν, ψευδομαρτυρία, ψευδόμαρτυς correspond (cf. Anaxim. Rhet. Al., 16). When in Plat. Gorg. (472b), in the discussion of the thesis of Socrates τὸν ἀδικοῦντα οὐκ εὐδαίμονα εἶναι, Polos brings against Socrates the whole host of the Athenians as witnesses, and Socrates calls all these ψευδομάρτυρας with whose help ἐπιχειρεῖς ἐκβάλλειν με ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας καὶ τοῦ ἀληθοῦς, he is not saying that they cannot be regarded as witnesses, but simply that οὗτος ὁ ἔλεγχος οὐδενὸς ἄξιός ἐστι πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν (471e) because they testify to what is false. Whether a man is μάρτυς or ψευδόμαρτυς depends on whether or not he tells the truth.

The biblical usage is similar. In the LXX ψευδόμαρτυς occurs only in Sus. 60 (cf. Θ v. 61), where it is said of Daniel and the two elders who laid traps for Susannah: αὐτοὺς κατέστησεν ἀμφοτέρους ψευδομάρτυρας, “he convicted them both as false witnesses.”

In the NT the word is used at Mt. 26:60 for those who bore witness against Jesus at His trial. The high-priest and the whole council sought ψευδομαρτυρίαν κατὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ὅπως αὐτὸν θανατώσωσιν, καὶ οὐχ εὔρον πολλῶν προσελθόντων ψευδομαρτύρων. Here the standpoint of the narrator merges into that of the assembly inasmuch as his judgment of the quality of the witnesses becomes a description of the purpose of the Sanhedrin

The only other instance of ψευδόμαρτυς is at 1 C. 15:15. If Christ is not risen, our preaching is in vain and so is your faith. εὐρισκόμεθα δὲ καὶ ψευδομάρτυρες τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅτι ἐμαρτυρήσαμεν κατὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ὅτι ἤγειρεν τὸν Χριστόν, ὃν οὐκ ἤγειρεν εἴπερ ἄρα νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται. Here, too, the starting-point is that ψευδόμαρτυς denotes the one who as a witness, i.e., claiming to be a witness, says something untrue. Paul has done this if, as he says in v. 8, he proclaims from his own experience that Christ is risen and yet all the time it is established *a priori* that resurrection from the dead is not possible. The reference of the observation is to the content of the witness, not to the fact that the character of Paul is set in a bad light because he falsely claims the title of μάρτυς. Quite apart from contradicting the sense of ψευδόμαρτυς, this would also, in defiance of the context, entail a diverting of attention from the material question to a personal consideration. The genitive ψευδομάρτυρες τοῦ θεοῦ makes no difference in this respect. If this is taken as a subj. gen. (witnesses whom God has appointed and who obey Him),³ this would mean that the incidental note echoes a title (μάρτυς τοῦ θεοῦ) not found elsewhere in Paul. This compels a wresting of the sense of ψευδόμαρτυς and a deflection from material considerations to personal. The point is also missed that the ὅτι clause which follows is a comment on the phrase. This is the correct explanation. Though it is linguistically difficult to take the gen. as an obj. gen., the usual exegesis is right here. Paul would be a ψευδόμαρτυς τοῦ θεοῦ because, to use Plato's words, καταψευδομαρτυρηθεῖν ἂν ὁ θεὸς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, that He has done something which in reality He has not done, i.e., raise up Christ (cf. Plat. Gorg., 472a).

Apart from a vl. in Sus. 61 Θ, ψευδομαρτυρεῖν occurs in the LXX only at Ex. 20:16 = Dt. 5:20 (17): רָקַשׁ עַד בְּרַעְיָה תַעֲנֶה אֵלַי, of false witness in court.

There is reference to this statute of the Law in Mt. 9:18 = Mk. 10:19 = Lk. 18:20. At R. 13:9 it has made its way—from this source—into ℵ and some other MSS as a secondary reading. The only other instance is in Mk. 14:56 f. of the witnesses at the trial of Jesus.

ψευδομαρτυρία does not occur in the LXX.

It is found in the NT at Mt. 26:59 with reference to the trial of Jesus (→ ψευδόμαρτυς) and in the plural in the list of vices, based on the second table of the Decalogue, in Mt. 15:19: ἐκ γὰρ τῆς καρδίας ἐξέρχονται διαλογισμοὶ πονηροί, φόνοι, μοιχεῖαι, πορνεῖαι, κλοπαί, ψευδομαρτυρίαι. In P. Hal., 1 (→ mavrtu~ n. 14) we have express accounts of the proceedings at trials for false witness (ἡ τοῦ ψευδομαρτυρίου δίκη). The normal expression here is ψευδομαρτύριον.

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¹ Kittel, G., Bromiley, G. W., & Friedrich, G. (Eds.). (1964–). *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.