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# 150 MISTRANSLATIONS IN THE BIBLE PART 1

This is the first in a series of seven articles, in which the following Scriptures are discussed in a Genesis to Revelation sequence. I have divided this material into seven separate articles because together this material is **about 400 pages** long, which averages out at about two-and-a-half pages per Scripture. But 400 pages is really the length of a whole book, rather than just “an article”. So dividing these Mistranslated Scriptures into seven parts should make it more manageable for most people.

I believe that everyone in all of the Church of God groups should be aware of these mistranslations. Many of them have a major impact on understanding the true teachings of the Bible.

Here is a list of the 150 Scriptures that are discussed in this series of seven articles.

| | **PART 1** |
|---|---|
| 1 | GENESIS 1:1 |
| 2 | GENESIS 1:2 |
| 3 | GENESIS 1:6-8 |
| 4 | GENESIS 1:11-12 |
| 5 | GENESIS 1:14 |
| 6 | GENESIS 1:16 |
| 7 | GENESIS 1:26 |
| 8 | GENESIS 2:2-3 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 9 | GENESIS 2:9 |
| 10 | GENESIS 3:15 |
| 11 | GENESIS 6:3 |
| 12 | GENESIS 6:4 |
| 13 | GENESIS 6:6-7 |
| 14 | GENESIS 6:9 |
| 15 | GENESIS 6:14 |
| 16 | GENESIS 17:10-11 |
| 17 | GENESIS 21:33 |
| 18 | GENESIS 22:1 |
| 19 | GENESIS 23:6 |
| | |
| | **PART 2** |
| 20 | EXODUS 7:3 |
| 21 | EXODUS 9:31 |
| 22 | EXODUS 12:2 |
| 23 | EXODUS 12:11 |
| 24 | EXODUS 12:14 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 25 | EXODUS 19:13 |
| 26 | EXODUS 23:12 |
| 27 | EXODUS 23:16 |
| 28 | EXODUS 23:18 |
| 29 | EXODUS 34:22 |
| 30 | EXODUS 34:25 |
| 31 | LEVITICUS 2:14 |
| 32 | LEVITICUS 16:8-10, 26 |
| 33 | LEVITICUS 19:20 |
| 34 | LEVITICUS 23:2,4,37,44 |
| 35 | LEVITICUS 23:14 |
| 36 | LEVITICUS 23:15-16 |
| 37 | LEVITICUS 24:16 |
| 38 | LEVITICUS 25:9 |
| | |
| | **PART 3** |
| 39 | NUMBERS 13:33 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 40 | DEUTERONOMY 6:4 |
| 41 | DEUTERONOMY 16:1, 2, 4, 5, 6 |
| 42 | DEUTERONOMY 16:3 |
| 43 | DEUTERONOMY 25:9 |
| 44 | JOSHUA 6:4-6,8,13 |
| 45 | JUDGES 11:31 |
| 46 | JUDGES 18:30 |
| 47 | 1 KINGS 19:16 |
| 48 | 2 KINGS 7:13 |
| 49 | 1 CHRONICLES 20:3 |
| 50 | ESTHER 1:10 |
| 51 | JOB 16:14 |
| 52 | JOB 21:24 |
| 53 | JOB 40:23 |
| 54 | PSALM 8:5 |
| 55 | PSALM 31:22 |
| 56 | PSALM 45:7 |
| 57 | PSALM 81:3 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 58 | PROVERBS 19:2 |
| 59 | PROVERBS 29:15 |
| 60 | ECCLESIASTES 1:4 |
| | |
| | **PART 4** |
| 61 | ISAIAH 1:14 |
| 62 | ISAIAH 3:4 |
| 63 | ISAIAH 3:12 |
| 64 | ISAIAH 9:6-7 |
| 65 | ISAIAH 14:12 |
| 66 | ISAIAH 39:7 |
| 67 | ISAIAH 52:12 |
| 68 | ISAIAH 55:1 |
| 69 | LAMENTATIONS 1:7 |
| 70 | EZEKIEL 28:16 |
| 71 | EZEKIEL 39:2 |
| 72 | JOEL 2:2, 25 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 73 | JOEL 2:8 |
| 74 | ZECHARIAH 14:19 |
| 75 | ZECHARIAH 14:21 |
| 76 | MATTHEW 4:5 |
| 77 | MATTHEW 5:44 |
| 78 | MATTHEW 7:11 |
| 79 | MATTHEW 10:4 (MARK 3:18) |
| 80 | MATTHEW 11:30 |
| 81 | MATTHEW 13:35 |
| 82 | MATTHEW 21:29, 32 |
| 83 | MATTHEW 24:45 (LUKE 12:42) |
| 84 | MATTHEW 25:16 |
| 85 | MATTHEW 25:34 |
| 86 | MATTHEW 27:3 |
| 87 | MATTHEW 28:1 |
| 88 | MATTHEW 28:19-20 |
| 89 | MARK 12:29 |
| 90 | MARK 16:2 |

| | |
|---|---|
| | **PART 5** |
| 91 | LUKE 1:3 |
| 92 | LUKE 11:50 |
| 93 | LUKE 12:42 |
| 94 | LUKE 17:21 |
| 95 | LUKE 23:43 |
| 96 | LUKE 24:1 |
| 97 | JOHN 1:1-2 |
| 98 | JOHN 3:3; JOHN 3:7 |
| 99 | JOHN 5:18 |
| 100 | JOHN 10:16 |
| 101 | JOHN 10:17-18 |
| 102 | JOHN 13:2 |
| 103 | JOHN 14:16; JOHN 16:7 |
| 104 | JOHN 17:24 |
| 105 | JOHN 19:34 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 106 | ACTS 15:19 |
| 107 | ACTS 17:25 |
| | |
| | **PART 6** |
| 108 | ROMANS 1:23 |
| 109 | ROMANS 2:9-10 |
| 110 | ROMANS 5:8 |
| 111 | ROMANS 8:19-21,39 |
| 112 | ROMANS 8:24 |
| 113 | ROMANS 8:29 |
| 114 | ROMANS 11:7 & 2 CORINTHIANS 3:14 |
| 115 | ROMANS 11:25 & EPHESIANS 4:18 |
| 116 | ROMANS 11:29 |
| 117 | 1 CORINTHIANS 11:20 |
| 118 | 1 CORINTHIANS 12:28 |
| 119 | 1 CORINTHIANS 15:29 |
| 120 | 2 CORINTHIANS 3:14 |
| 121 | 2 CORINTHIANS 7:8 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 122 | 2 CORINTHIANS 7:9-11 |
| 123 | 2 CORINTHIANS 11:6 |
| 124 | EPHESIANS 1:4 |
| 125 | EPHESIANS 4:18 |
| 126 | EPHESIANS 5:21 |
| 127 | 1 TIMOTHY 5:17-18 |
| 128 | 2 TIMOTHY 1:9-10 |
| 129 | 2 TIMOTHY 3:16 |
| | |
| | **PART 7** |
| 130 | HEBREWS 2:7,9 |
| 131 | HEBREWS 3:11,18; 4:1,3-5,8-11 |
| 132 | HEBREWS 4:3 |
| 133 | HEBREWS 4:6,11 |
| 134 | HEBREWS 7:12 |
| 135 | HEBREWS 7:21 |
| 136 | HEBREWS 9:26 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 137 | HEBREWS 11:1 |
| 138 | HEBREWS 11:37 |
| 139 | JAMES 5:15 |
| 140 | 1 PETER 1:20 |
| 141 | 1 PETER 1:23 |
| 142 | 1 PETER 3:3 |
| 143 | 2 PETER 1:19 |
| 144 | 1 JOHN 5:7-8 |
| 145 | JUDE 1:13 |
| 146 | REVELATION 2:1,8,12,18; REV. 3:1,7,14 |
| 147 | REVELATION 6:12 |
| 148 | REVELATION 9:7 |
| 149 | REVELATION 13:8 |
| 150 | REVELATION 22:2 |

We in the churches of God have made a commitment to submit our lives to Almighty God and to live by God's instructions, as recorded in the Bible. Through the pages of the Bible God speaks to us; and we feel a moral responsibility to do our best to put all of God's instructions, as recorded in the Bible, into practice in our lives. For us the Bible is **extremely** important. It is without question the most important book in our lives. For us no other writing even comes close to the Bible in importance.

The Jews have their Talmud, and the Catholics have their Catechism. These two words "Talmud" and "Catechism" are synonyms, both meaning "oral teachings". And in both of those religions these "oral teachings" (i.e. the Talmud for the Jews, and the Catechism for the Catholics) have a status that is basically equal to, if not even greater than, the status of "the Scriptures". In those religions it is sufficient

for a specific teaching to be recognized as authoritative if it is found in their oral teachings, even if that teaching is not specifically based on anything recorded in the Bible.

We in the churches of God, on the other hand, don't have any "supplementary authority" like that! For us **the Bible** is the only source of authoritative religious and moral teachings. This makes the writings of the whole Bible far more important to us than those same writings are to either Judaism (OT only) or to Catholicism.

For us the Bible represents the only absolute authority!

With such high stakes it becomes imperative that we base our understanding and our religious and moral practices on **a faithful translation** of the Scriptures. We don't have, and we don't want, outside sources of authority to dictate our religious beliefs and practices. We accept the Bible as sufficient for this task.

There are a vast number of "minor mistranslations"; i.e. they are strictly speaking mistranslations of the Hebrew or the Greek text, but they don't have any impact on our doctrinal understanding or on the way we conduct our lives. Correcting such minor mistranslations does not require any changes in our overall perception of God's plan and purposes, and God's dealings with mankind, and God's requirements for us.

But there are also **a large number of mistranslations that are not minor at all**. These mistranslations can and do affect our overall understanding, our perception of God's actions, and our religious practices. And these mistranslations can become a real problem! Such mistranslations are to us what a deceptively flawed roadmap is to an explorer. **They lead us in a totally wrong direction** away from our real goal and destination, and they give us a false sense of security.

When we base our understanding of the Bible or any of our teachings on such a mistranslation, we can be very sincere. But sincerity, while very important, is not enough. And **sincerity is not a measure of truth**. The world is filled with people who are in many ways "sincerely wrong". And while they are sincere, they are still wrong.

The only positive thing about such situations is that people who are "sincerely wrong" have a diminished degree of responsibility before God, when compared to people who are "knowingly wrong". It is especially for people who are "sincerely wrong" that God is going to "wink at the times of their ignorance" (see Acts 17:30).

We need to recognize that in this regard all of us in the churches of God are in the same situation as the rest of humanity. All of us, including me, are almost certain to be "sincerely wrong" in some of our views.

## SATAN'S ROLE IN DECEIVING HUMANITY

In the churches of God we are very familiar with Revelation 12:9. This verse reads as follows in the KJV.

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, **who deceives the whole world**: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

The Greek phrase here translated as “the whole world” means “the whole inhabited earth”. In other words, Satan has throughout human history deceived all people in every area and in every nation. Except for Jesus Christ, all people, including me and including you, have been deceived by Satan. We only differ from other people in the degree to which we have been deceived by Satan. But none of us is immune, or has ever been immune. Every church and every religion, including the churches of God, has to some degree or other been deceived by Satan. **That is what this Scripture really means!**

As a body of believers, the Church of God as a whole has never been immune from Satan’s deceptions. We have simply been **less deceived**, and we have been deceived **on fewer issues**, than people in other religions, that is all. But we have never completely escaped Satan’s deceptions. The principle of Romans 3:23 also applies to being deceived by Satan. We know that “all have sinned”, and we also need to recognize that “all have been deceived”, precisely as Revelation 12:9 explains. Revelation 12:9 does not include an exception clause for us in the churches of God.

In this regard some of us have made wrong inferences from Matthew 24:24. This verse reads:

For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, **if *it were* possible**, they shall deceive the very elect.

Jesus Christ was assuredly not saying that it is impossible for the very elect to ever be deceived in any way. It is really in the context of certain people falsely claiming to be God’s prophets or even “saviors” or “Christ” that the very elect cannot be deceived by such claims and such “signs and wonders”.

But as far as life in general is concerned, every human being (apart from Jesus Christ) has at some point believed some things that are not really true. Whenever we say that we have come to some “new understanding”, that is simply another way of saying that we have come to see that we were previously somewhat “deceived” in that particular area. There is no conflict between Revelation 12:9 and Matthew 24:24.

Since we are the ones who accept the Bible as the ultimate authority in our lives, Satan has also used the Bible itself to deceive us on many issues. This he has done in primarily **three ways**.

1) Satan has inspired a vast number of **mistranslations** of the correct text of the Bible.

2) Satan has inspired **false explanations** for Scriptures that are translated correctly.

3) Satan has inspired some **spurious words and alterations to be introduced** into the accepted text of

the Bible, words and statements that do not really belong in the Bible, thereby corrupting the correct text of the Bible.

Now before God called us into His Church, the principle of Isaiah 29:11-12 applied to us as well.

And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which *men* deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray you: and he says, **I cannot; for it *is* sealed**: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray you: and he says, **I am not learned**. (Isaiah 29:11-12)

When God called us into His Church, God opened our minds to understanding the truth. In that way Isaiah 29:11-12 ceased to apply to us. As far as the above three ways of deception are concerned, the following happened when God called us into His Church.

1) **First** of all we started to recognize **the false explanations** of Scriptures that are translated correctly (point #2 above). That is a direct consequence of having our eyes opened by God. When correct explanations for these Scriptures were presented to us (via the writings of Mr. Armstrong, etc.), we could see that these explanations are correct, even while our friends and relatives in the world could not see this.

2) **Next**, in the process of studying the Bible we also became aware of **a few devious alterations of the text** of the Bible (point #3 above). While some such alterations of the text are wellknown to scholars (e.g. 1 John 5:7 - 8, or changing one Hebrew name for God to a different name in some OT passages, etc.), there are undoubtedly other alterations which have not yet been identified, and where no manuscript with the correct wording of the text has actually survived to the present day. That's part of Satan's deception of mankind.

In some cases **the only evidence** for such a corruption of the text **is of an internal textual nature**, in the form of statements that were clearly altered to provide convenient scriptural support for certain otherwise unbiblical beliefs.

While this is not the primary focus of this article, one brief example should suffice to illustrate this particular point of internal textual evidence exposing an alteration.

**EXODUS 23:18** reads:

You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall **the fat of My feast** remain until the morning. (corrected text)

**EXODUS 34:25** reads:

You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall **the sacrifice of the feast of the Passover** remain until the morning. (corrected text)

[**Comments**: The Hebrew text reads “leavened”, implying “leavened bread” in both of these verses. So I have altered “leaven” to “leavened bread” in Exodus 34:25. The Hebrew text also reads “remain until the morning” in both of these verses. So I have altered “be left unto” to “remain until” in Exodus 34:25, for the sake of consistency. The second word “sacrifice” in Exodus 23:18 is supposed to be a translation of the Hebrew word “chag”, which means “feast”. So I have corrected the second occurrence of “sacrifice” in Exodus 23:18 to “feast”. The KJV of Exodus 23:18 hides the fact that in this verse two completely different Hebrew words have been translated into English as “sacrifice”. The Hebrew text of Exodus 34:25 contains the correct Hebrew word for “sacrifice” **twice**, and the Hebrew word for “feast” once, showing that the second occurrence of “sacrifice” was added at some point to Exodus 34:25.]

A careful comparison of the context of both these verses makes clear that these instructions must originally have been identical. Though one word is mistranslated in the English text, the Hebrew text for Exodus 23:18 actually represents the correct text for both these verses. The only explanation for the problem here is that some dishonest Jewish scribe changed the correct wording of “**the fat of My feast**” (as found in Exodus 23:18) to the expression “**the sacrifice of the feast of the Passover**” in Exodus 34:25, with the explicit purpose of justifying the unbiblical Jewish custom of calling the Passover “**a feast**”.

The motive behind the fraudulent alteration of the text of Exodus 34:25 (and the deliberate mistranslation of Exodus 23:18) is the same as the motive behind the fraudulent alteration of the text of 1 John 5:7-8, i.e. to provide some biblical support for an otherwise unbiblical custom or belief (i.e. combining the Passover with Unleavened Bread and calling it all “the feast of the Passover” in Exodus 34:25, and viewing God as “a trinity” in 1 John 5).

[**Comment**: Both these verses are examined later in this series of articles; and there are also short articles on each of these verses on my website.]

Anyway, some corruptions of the original text of the Bible are documented, while others are not documented and can only be exposed by examining **internal evidence** in the text of the Bible itself.

3) As far as mistranslations of the original Hebrew (OT) and Greek (NT) texts of the Bible are concerned (i.e. point #1 above), we do not become aware of these simply because God has opened our eyes to understanding the truth. It is only a careful study of the Bible, comparing our English translations with the Hebrew or the Greek text, and working from a foundation of having our eyes opened by God, that will bring these mistranslations to our attention.

In plain language: No matter how converted we are, we cannot become aware of significant mistranslations without actually examining the Hebrew text for the O.T. and the Greek text for the N.T. Mistranslations are by far the greatest barrier to us understanding the Bible correctly.

Now **a huge part of this problem** of mistranslations is the fact that the translators have in numerous cases translated two or more different Hebrew words in the Old Testament with **the same** English word, and translated two or more different Greek words in the New Testament with **the same** English word. This they have done in hundreds of cases.

Now when the translators translate two or more different Hebrew words (or Greek words in the New Testament) with the same English word, they tacitly acknowledge that **they don't really grasp the distinction between those words in the original text**. Instead they imply that those two or more different Hebrew words are synonyms! But in very many cases that is simply not true!

The different Hebrew or Greek words involved are **not synonyms**, even if the translators chose to imply synonymity! It is a lack of understanding the real message of the Bible and the plan of God and the revelations of God, that has led translators and language scholars to infer synonymity to numerous sets of Hebrew and Greek words.

As far as the O.T. Hebrew text is concerned, it is a fact that Hebrew was indeed **a dead language** for many centuries! And the scholars who revived the Hebrew language from a state of near-oblivion were repeatedly confronted with gaps in their understanding of the Hebrew text that contained no vowel pointings.

These scholars were time and again forced to "reason out" the likely meaning of a word. And while in very many cases they have come to conclusions that are correct, there are also many other cases where their lack of understanding God's mind (see Isaiah 29:11, where the learned say "I cannot read this") led them to assume synonymity for words that are not really synonyms.

We need to recognize that in the majority of cases **different Hebrew words** (the same applies to different Greek words in the NT) are used to convey **different meanings**, rather than being synonyms. We'll look at a considerable number of examples of the translators incorrectly ascribing the same meaning to two or more different words.

It is tough for people who don't have God's spirit (that is a polite way of saying "impossible") to try to make perfectly correct translations of the Hebrew or Greek text. That is what 1 Corinthians 2:11 tells us, that without God's spirit people simply cannot understand "the things of God", their impressive linguistic qualifications notwithstanding. Obviously, before anyone can make a correct translation of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, they first of all have to **understand** what that text actually means. Without a correct understanding of the original it is impossible to produce a correct translation. And so we end up with many mistranslations.

Now of the three ways that Satan has used the Bible to deceive us, the mistranslations embedded in the Scriptures are by far the most serious and dangerous for people in the churches of God.

We need to be aware of **these tactics that Satan uses** to deceive people, including us in the churches of God. No single translation of the original Scriptures into any other language has been inspired by God. And we in the churches of God need to be especially aware of the dangers posed by **unrecognized**

**mistranslations** buried within the text of the Bible. They are intended to deceive us and to lead us astray.

Consider the following.

## CONFUSION IS THE MOTHER OF DECEPTION

In order to deceive people, Satan must first of all confuse people. Confusion is the foundation on which most deceptions are built.

Now if somebody introduces one single reasonably significant deception into a familiar story, we have a far better chance of detecting that deception, than if that person were to simultaneously introduce one hundred different minor deceptions into that same story (downplaying some things, exaggerating others, presenting changed perspectives, using stronger or weaker verbs to make his points, imputing different motivations, making unjustified insinuations, shading the truth, etc.).

Within the context of one hundred minor deceptions **one or two major deceptions** can be hidden far more effectively. The sheer number of altered points in this scenario is **likely to overwhelm us** and to confuse us. And some of those minor deceptions are almost certain to find acceptance, thereby encouraging the acceptance of other deceptions that are not “minor” at all. Many people allow themselves to be pushed around on “minor” points.

Our recent history, in which our problems initially started with the introduction of a vast multitude of very minor changes, thereby setting the stage for eventually introducing a smaller number of major changes, amply illustrates this point.

Viewed in isolation, any one of those one hundred minor “alterations” to a familiar story (a stronger or weaker verb, etc.) seems totally insignificant and unworthy of being challenged. But left unchallenged these minor “alterations” become useful building blocks in the establishment of the one or two major deceptions that were also subtly introduced.

[COMMENT: This is an approach which is very commonly employed fairly effectively by criminal defense lawyers, to infer innocence, or at least diminished responsibility, for their **obviously guilty** clients. They modify ever so slightly a detail here and another detail there, and before you know it, a completely different motivation or activity seems quite plausible after all.]

Do you follow?

This is the principle Satan has applied to the Bible. As the god of this present age (2 Corinthians 4:4) he has inspired **thousands of seemingly insignificant minor mistranslations**, which individually are really not worth fighting about. Anyone who questions such minor mistranslations is perceived as being picky, as not focusing on the important things.

But sometimes a hundred very minor decisions can collectively have far more significant consequences than one major decision. The same is true for deceptions. And meanwhile Satan, **the ultimate criminal defense lawyer**, has methodically confused humanity.

Translators focus on those minor mistranslations when they change one word here and another word there from the previously accepted translation. Individually these “corrections” don’t really make a difference. However, within the context of those thousands of very minor mistranslations throughout the whole Bible Satan has also deviously inspired a considerable number of mistranslations that hide the correct meaning; or they distort and twist the Scriptures in such a way that the truth of God is hidden from view.

In some cases the mistranslations themselves are relatively minor, but **the consequences are major**. These are the mistranslations which, when left unexposed, lead us to totally wrong perceptions and teachings and expectations.

When mistranslations in this category are exposed, when we come to understand the Scriptures involved in these situations correctly, then that usually requires us to make some changes in our thinking, and in some cases even changes in our actual conduct and practices.

Over the years I have written a number of articles in which I have discussed many of the more significant mistranslations. While it is important to focus on each of these major mistranslations or misrepresentations individually, seen in isolation that focus **may still miss the bigger picture** to some degree.

You see, Satan has a far greater goal than just deceiving you and me about the true meaning of a verse here or there. Satan wants to distort the entire picture. He wants to pervert the message of the whole Bible so thoroughly and so completely, that even those people who actually catch a few of his more blatant deceptions here and there are still going to remain confused and deceived on many other significant issues.

You know that is true for people in general; they are deceived.

In this series of seven articles I will present the more significant mistranslations and misrepresentations that I am currently aware of. This is not the place where I intend to exhaustively prove that these verses are mistranslations of the correct text. That is something I have in many cases already done elsewhere in previous articles, which are available on my website. A detailed exposition of each of these mistranslations would make these seven articles unduly long.

Here my intention is to provide a clearer perspective of the greater picture that is addressed by Revelation 12:9.

Every single member of the churches of God needs to be aware of all of these mistranslations,

irrespective of where our organizational loyalties may lie. **These wrong translations are aimed at deceiving all of us**. In some cases these mistranslations are responsible for totally unjustified opinions and ideas on our part.

I don' t doubt that there are still other mistranslations of which I myself am not yet aware at this point in time. Revelation 12:9 also applies to me, as it does to everyone else, including you. As time passes I hope and pray that God will help me to come to correctly understand more and more of the areas in which I myself am currently still deceived by Satan.

With each of the Scriptures below:

1) I will present the verse.

2) I will point out the problem.

3) Where appropriate, I will show the significance and the ramifications of the deception that is involved.

4) Then we will also consider a correct translation of the verse in question.

And I will try to keep most of the discussions reasonably brief.

**One last comment**: You may recognize and agree with some of the explanations that I will provide here, and you may disagree with other explanations. In many cases the deciding difference in these two different reactions is not the clarity, or lack of it, of the explanations I have provided.

In many cases your personal approach to the subject at hand will influence your reaction to this information in a major way. If you make each case a matter of a serious **personal** investigation of the facts, examining this information for yourself, in order to reach **your own personal understanding** of the verses involved, without simply accepting (or rejecting) my assessment of the situation, **then** you are likely to reach an informed conclusion that is your own.

The more personal effort you put into attaining a clear understanding of these Scriptures, the more help you will receive from God (Matthew 7:7). It is my hope that for many of the Scriptures discussed in these articles, the information I have provided will become the starting point for your own personal investigation of the subject.

So now let's get started. For easy reference purposes the Scriptures examined in these seven articles are in a Genesis to Revelation sequence. While some of these mistranslations are certainly more significant than others, we should really be aware of all of them. So let's start.

**#1 = GENESIS 1:1**

THE VERSE:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

This translation implies that this speaks about “the beginning”, the very first thing that God ever did.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

1) The Hebrew text does not contain the definite article. So this should be translated as “in a beginning”.

2) The Hebrew verb is in the “qal perfect” form, which can also readily be correctly translated as “**had** created”.

3) The Hebrew noun for “heaven” is in the dual plural, and should be translated as “heavens”.

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

In a beginning God **had created** the heavens and the earth.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

This opening verse of the whole Bible is **not** speaking about “**the beginning**”. God is here simply telling us: at a certain point in time in the past God had created the universe, including this earth. It was “a beginning” for all physical matter, i.e. for the physical material universe. But it was not “the beginning” as far as God is concerned, because for God there has never been “a beginning”.

A correct understanding of this verse also makes provision for God to have created the angels before God later created the heavens and the earth. The verb “had created” implies that this creation had taken place at an earlier time than the things that will be discussed in the verses that follow; it implies that **before the end of verse 1 the creation of the heavens and the earth had been completed**.

**#2 = GENESIS 1:2**

THE VERSE:

And the earth was **without form**, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

This translation implies that the **original condition** of the earth was **a complete mess**! The words “without form and void” are a reflection of John Calvin’s views that the originally created earth was an

unstable “shapeless chaos”, or in the words of the Greek LXX translation, that originally the created earth was “invisible”, a clearly absurd view.

The implication is that the original creation was totally worthless. It wrongly implies that God originally had to work in **evolution-like steps**, starting out with created chaos, in order to produce something of value.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

1) The wrong interpretation of this verse is built on the foundation of the mistranslation of verse 1. When it is correctly understood that verse 1 speaks about the creation of the universe in the past perfect tense (i.e. “God had created ...”), then it becomes easier to understand that verse 2 is not a description of some primordial condition.

2) The Hebrew verb here is also in the “qal perfect” and should be correctly translated as “had become” rather than “was”.

3) Isaiah 45:18 makes clear that God did not **originally** create the earth in a state of “tohu”, i.e. in a chaotic state.

4) The Hebrew word “tohu” certainly does not mean “without form”. It refers to a consequence of sins and means something like “waste”. “Tohu” makes **a value statement** (i.e. the earth had come to have a lack of any value, i.e. to be without value).

5) The Hebrew word “bohu” makes **a content statement** (i.e. a lack of content), and means something like “empty”, implying a previous condition of having been filled with **some forms of life**.

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

And the earth **had become waste and empty**; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

The condition of having become waste and empty was **a consequence of the sins of Satan** and the angels that rebelled with him against God. What follows in the next 7 days is an account of how God first renewed (i.e. repaired) the damage Satan’s rebellion had caused, and then God created man. Psalm 104:30 tells us “You renew the face of the earth”, and that is precisely what God did from Genesis 1:3 onwards.

There must have been a considerable period of time between the original creation of this earth in verse 1, and the bleak picture of the earth in verse 2. Satan’s original rebellion took place between these two verses. This verse is also discussed in great detail in my 28-page article entitled “Understanding

Genesis 1:1-2 Correctly".

**#3 = GENESIS 1:6-8**

THESE VERSES:

And God said, Let there be a **firmament** in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the **firmament**, and divided the waters which *were* under the **firmament** from the waters which *were* above the **firmament**: and it was so. And God called the **firmament** Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

The word "firmament" is derived from the Latin Vulgate translation, and it means "a support". The use of this word "support" is based on **the incorrect world view** accepted by people during Roman times, and even as late as the 1500's.

However, the Hebrew word "rakia" which is used in this verse has nothing to do with "support". This Hebrew word means "**an expanse**", i.e. **space**. Here it specifically refers to **the sky**. The use of the word "support" is an example of translators reading their own perception of the universe and of creation into a specific verse of the Bible.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

While this is not a major matter, it is an example of how an incorrect translation can introduce unnecessary confusion into a text. This translation to some degree obscures what God really did on this day.

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THESE VERSES:

And God said, Let there be **an expanse** in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made **the expanse, the sky**, and divided the waters which *were* under the expanse from the waters which *were* above the expanse (i.e. the clouds): and it was so. And God called the expanse Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

In the previous few verses, on day one, God had thinned out the fumes and fog and vapors that had enveloped the earth as a result of Satan's rebellion. This thinning out went to the point of making the day-night cycle somewhat perceptible from a location here on this earth, but without actually making the sun visible.

Now, on day two, God proceeded to clean up **the lower atmosphere**. God was restoring **clean air** on day two. The whole earth was still flooded and a heavy layer of clouds still enveloped the whole earth in

the upper atmosphere.

But the lower atmosphere, between the flood waters below and the clouds above, was cleaned up and it was made conducive to supporting physical life, vital preparation for what was to follow.

This word “firmament” effectively hides that this is the day on which God gave this earth clean air, consisting of an oxygen-nitrogen-carbon dioxide mixture with a very specific ratio. This atmosphere is something which other planets simply don’t have.

**#4 = GENESIS 1:11-12**

VERSE 11:

And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb **yielding** seed, *and* the fruit tree **yielding** fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

[The information below applies equally to verse 12, where the same wording is repeated almost verbatim.]

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

There is not a major problem with this verse except that it contains an unfortunate translation. Though it doesn’t change the meaning here, this unfortunate translation helps to obscure a clearer understanding of some subsequent verses in this chapter.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

The English translation of this verse contains the word “yielding” twice. However, in the Hebrew text these are actually two completely different verbs.

1) In “**the herb yielding seed**” the verb translated “yielding” is “**zara**”, which means “to sow, to scatter seed”. With the hiphil stem (used here) it means “**to produce**”. The word “herb” here means “**green plants**”, rather than our modern meaning of the word “herb”.

So this part means: “and God said let ... the green plants produce seeds”. God created the plants, and the plants in turn would produce the seeds that they would scatter. To be clear, the word “zara” (translated as “yielding”) does **not** mean “create”. The English translation of this part of the verse here is not a problem. Now let’s look at the next word translated as “yielding”.

2) In “**the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind**” the verb translated “yielding” is “**asah**”, and it means “**to make**”. This translation here is also strictly speaking not a problem, except that it helps to obscure the correct meaning of this verb “asah”. A more appropriate translation of this phrase would be “and

God said let ... the fruit tree **make** fruit after his kind". Here is why this should be the correct translation.

Many people tend to view the verb "to make" as a synonym for the verb "to create". In this Genesis account both these verbs are used. But God very clearly did not intend these words to be synonyms. Genesis 2:3 specifically differentiates between these two words by speaking about all the work which God "**created and made**". God made a distinction between these two verbs.

The Hebrew word for "**create**" implies bringing something new into existence by using only the holy spirit (the power of God) to do the creating.

The Hebrew word for "**make**" implies bringing something new into existence by working with, or making use of some things that were created previously. In other words, "making" generally presupposes that **something** used in the making process **is already in existence** before the new thing is "made".

By stating that God designed the fruit trees to **make** fruit after their kind, it would show that "making" is not the same as "creating". Fruit trees do not "create" fruit; they make fruit in biologically predictable steps.

To be clear: the translation "the fruit tree yielding fruit ..." conveys this idea correctly. But **it hides** that this process is in fact the correct meaning of the verb "to make".

It would have been clearer if the translators, after translating "zara" as "yielding", would have here translated "asah" as "make", to indicate that two different Hebrew verbs are used in this context. Specifically, Genesis 1:16 would be less of a problem verse. See the discussion on Genesis 1:16 below for more comments on "asah".

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, let the green plants **produce** (or yield) seeds, *and* the fruit tree **make** fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

God created all the plants and they then in turn produce seeds and fruits. The action of producing seeds and fruits is not on the same level as the original creation of those plants by God. This difference between "creating" and "producing fruits in biologically predictable steps" illustrates the difference between the verbs "create" and "make". Translating "asah" as "make" in this verse also makes it easier to understand the correct meaning of the word "made" in Genesis 1:16.

**#5 = GENESIS 1:14**

THE VERSE:

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for **seasons**, and for days, and years:

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

The word “seasons” here creates the impression that this word is a reference to the annual seasonal cycle. This is a completely wrong focus.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

The Hebrew word here translated as “seasons” is “mow’edim”, and it has no reference to the annual seasons at all! This word really means “appointed gatherings”, and in the O.T. it is used both, to identify the time of commanded gatherings (i.e. the Holy Days), and also to identify the place of commanded gatherings (i.e. the tabernacle of the congregation). (We have already seen that the word “firmament” is a mistranslation. No additional comments are needed in this regard.)

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

And God said, Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for (determining) **appointed gatherings**, and for days, and years:

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

1) By “**lights**” God is here referring specifically to the sun and the moon, not to the stars. These two lights do determine the length of a month, a season, and a year, but this is only part of the focus of God’s statement in this verse. The statement that these two lights are **for** “**signs**” means that they, either individually or in combination, determine **the start** and **the length** of each month, and of each of the four annual seasons, and of each year.

These two lights are to be used for four things: for signs, for determining appointed gatherings, for days, and for years.

2) To make this clear: the annual seasons are covered by the word “**signs**”. **A month** is to start with a new moon (the moon provides the deciding “sign” here); **a season** is to start with an equinox or a solstice (the sun provides the deciding “sign” here); and **a year** is to start with the first new moon in the spring.

The first consideration for the start of the year is the position of the sun (it must at least have reached the equinox), and the second consideration for the start of a year is the position of the moon (it must be a new moon). So for the start of every year the sun and the moon provide “signs” in combination.

3) These two lights are for determining “**appointed gatherings**”. This statement reveals one main focus of this verse.

Note! This verse is not a statement that God made to Adam and Eve. These things were said by God before Adam was created, but they were **not said to Adam**.

This verse is **a statement that God made to Moses**, who wrote it down! And Moses knew exactly what God meant by “mow’edim”. God was referring to all of the appointed gatherings and observances, which God spelled out to Moses in Leviticus 23.

Moses here in Genesis 1:14 recorded things God had said **before creating Adam**. These are not statements that God said to Adam. Adam never heard God say this statement. Moses was the first human being to ever hear this statement regarding the purposes for the sun and the moon. And he wrote it down.

The mistranslation “for seasons”, instead of the correct “for appointed gatherings”, hides the fact that **God told Moses** that the timing of all the annual observances was to be determined by the movements of the sun **and** the moon. This is significant because in Leviticus 23 the focus is totally on the movements of the moon. But Genesis 1:14 already makes clear that the sun takes priority over the moon, and that the year can **never** start **before** the equinox!

4) As far as the statement “**for days**” is concerned, it is the sun that determines the start and the end of a day! The moon is never involved in determining the start of a day. This statement makes clear that a day cannot possibly start or end “with the onset of total darkness” (or at midnight for that matter), as some people have claimed.

If “the onset of darkness” was used to determine the start of a day, then “the sun” would no longer be the dividing line between a day and a night. In effect, “**the greater light would no longer be ruling the day**” (verse 16).

5) The statement “**for years**” means that the sun is the first consideration in determining when a year may start. Now there are **only four days** in the annual cycle that can be predicted in advance. These four days are the **two equinoxes** and the **two solstices**.

Any other day in the annual cycle can only be predicted by referencing its relationship to an equinox or to a solstice. Unless the start of a year is conditional on one of these four predictable days having been met, the sun cannot be said to be “for years”, i.e. **the sun would cease to be a determining factor for the start of a year**. This is important to keep in mind in establishing a correct calendar.

**Note**! God’s statement in this verse that the sun (the greater of the two lights God is specifically speaking about) is “for the determination of years” absolutely **demands** that the year may not start before the spring equinox! To start a year before the spring equinox violates God’s statement here in Genesis 1:14.

**#6 = GENESIS 1:16**

THE VERSE:

And God **made** two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: *He made* the stars also.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

Some people (including many commentators) erroneously read this translation to mean that the sun and the moon were only "**created**" on the fourth day, even though there had already been evenings and mornings on the previous three days.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

We often tend to treat the verb "made" as if it were a synonym for the verb "create". That is not right, as far as the two Hebrew verbs involved in this question are concerned. And this verse does **not** use the verb "to create".

First of all, as we saw in our discussion of Genesis 1:11, the Hebrew verb translated "made" is different from the Hebrew verb translated "created", and these words have different meanings. We can express the differences between these two verbs as follows:

The Hebrew word for "**create**" implies bringing something new into existence by using only the holy spirit (the power of God) to do the creating.

The Hebrew word for "**make**" generally implies bringing something new into existence by working with, or making use of some other physical things that were created previously. In other words, "making" generally presupposes that something used in the making process is already in existence before the new thing is "made".

Secondly, the Hebrew verb for "made" is used with the imperfect in this verse, and it is here better rendered as "**had made**". In this context this statement should be understood as a follow-on to the statements in verses 14 and 15. Thus the intended meaning is "had made" or "had designated", keeping in mind that the Hebrew word used here does not mean "to create".

As a minor consideration, the Hebrew word that is here translated as the verb "to rule" is in fact a noun. So where the KJV English text reads "**to rule** the day" and "**to rule** the night", the Hebrew text literally reads "**for the rule of** the day" and "**for the rule of** the night". Young's Literal Translation has presented this aspect correctly.

Lastly, the words "He made" in the last part of this verse are not found in the Hebrew text, and are therefore printed in italics in the KJV. These words should either be omitted, or at least the appropriate tense "He had made" should be used.

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

And God **had made** (had designated) two great lights; the greater light for the rule of the day, and the lesser light for the rule of the night: (**He had made** or had appointed) the stars also.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

This verse expresses **some of God's intended functions for the sun and the moon**. The next verse then shows God restoring the correct orbit for the moon to achieve perfect 30-day months, and the correct orbit for the earth to achieve perfect 360-day years. But verse 16 is certainly not speaking about the creation of the sun and moon and stars.

**#7 = GENESIS 1:26**

THE VERSE:

And God said, Let Us make man **in Our image**, **after Our likeness**: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

For most people the expression "after our likeness" has the same meaning as the expression "in our image". They believe these expressions to be synonymous. But that is simply not true.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

This is not strictly a mistranslation. Rather, the problem revolves around the incorrect meaning we tend to attach to the word "likeness" in this specific context.

The English word "**image**" means: a reproduction or imitation of the form of a person or thing. This is in line with the meaning of the Hebrew word translated "image".

The English word "**likeness**" has several meanings: 1) the state or quality of being like; 2) the same form, shape, semblance; 3) that which resembles something else, a copy, a portrait, a representation.

The Hebrew word translated "likeness" has only the first of these three English meanings, namely "the state or quality of being like".

To summarize the meanings of our **two English words**:

1) The word "image" **always** refers to **appearance**, to what something looks like.

2) The English word “likeness”, on the other hand, can refer to two completely different things. The word “likeness” can refer to looks and appearance, and in that sense “likeness” is a synonym for the word “image”. But the word “likeness” also refers to “**a state or a quality** of being like”. And this latter meaning has nothing to do with “image”, nothing at all.

In other words, “Object B” may actually **look very different** from “Object A”, and yet still be **in the likeness of** “Object A”, because it has some of the same qualities or **same characteristics** as “Object A”.

Put another way, when it comes to the actual appearance of things, the word “likeness” is less specific and more abstract than the word “image”.

This “same characteristics” meaning of “likeness” is the correct meaning for the Hebrew word “demuwth”, which is used in this verse. This correct meaning of “demuwth” is illustrated in a number of Scriptures.

For example, in Psalm 58:4 David said regarding the wicked: “their poison is **like** (Hebrew “demuwth”) the poison of a serpent”. In other words, the wicked have **the qualities of a serpent**, even though outwardly they most assuredly don’t look like serpents, and neither are their vicious deeds literally the same as snake poison.

Similarly, in speaking about the sins of Aholibah (i.e. Jerusalem) God said in Ezekiel 23:15: “all of them princes to look to, **after the manner** (Hebrew “demuwth”) of the Babylonians of Chaldea”. In other words, while the actual looks may have been different, these foreign leaders referred to in this verse were dressed **in the style of** the Babylonians.

These Scriptures illustrate the abstract nature of the Hebrew word “demuwth”, and they are in line with the meaning of “a state or a quality of being like”. Simply put, the two Hebrew words translated as “image” and as “likeness” in this verse have the following meanings:

**Image** refers to **looking like** something else. **Likeness**, on the other hand, refers to **being conceptually like** something else, independent of actual looks.

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

The KJV translation is fine, provided we very clearly attach the meaning “the state or quality of being like something else” to the word “likeness”, and provided we understand that God did not use the word “likeness” here to refer to appearance.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

When God said “let Us make man **in Our image**”, God was saying “let Us make man to **outwardly** look like We do, with Our shape and appearance”. The physical human body was to have **the same general looks** as God’s spirit body; the same general appearance but a different composition.

When God said “let Us make man **after Our likeness**”, God was saying “let Us make man conceptually like us, with **the same mental capacities**”. To achieve this “after our likeness” condition, it absolutely required human beings to be given **the spirit in man**, to enable human beings to think and plan and reason, and to comprehend abstract concepts in the same way God does all these things.

Put another way, the complete statement “let us make man in our image after our likeness” reveals that God was going to do **two** things for mankind:

1) God would give human beings **a body** that would have the same form as the body of God. Where it would differ from God is in its composition: God is composed of spirit and man is composed of flesh. This fleshly body imposes a major restriction upon mankind when compared to God.

2) In addition, God would also give human beings **a spirit** that would enable human beings to engage in the same mental activities that God utilizes. Where this spirit would differ from God is in its capacity to exercise these mental activities. When compared to the holy spirit, which fills the mind of God, the spirit God gave to man (i.e. the spirit in man) is severely limited in its abilities and capacities to comprehend and think and reason and plan.

So in appearance (i.e. image) mankind is like God, but on a lower level. And in mental activities (i.e. likeness) mankind is also like God, but again on a lower level.

Now here is what we need to understand very clearly!

What really makes us human is that we are made “after the likeness of God”. This condition is far more important than the condition of being “in the image of God”.

Theoretically speaking, **if** there was somebody who had the body of a man, but did not have the spirit in man, then **that individual would not be a human being**! Looks are not enough to make someone human. It is the spirit in man that makes us human.

That was precisely the case with King Nebuchadnezzar. For seven full years God took the spirit in man away from Nebuchadnezzar, and for that period of time **he was not a human being**, even though he continued to look like a (albeit wild) man.

God said very clearly: “let his heart be changed from man’s, and **let a beast’s heart be given unto him**” (Daniel 4:16). For seven years **Nebuchadnezzar was literally an animal** and not a human being, even though he always looked human on the outside. The key here was that for that 7-year period Nebuchadnezzar did not have the spirit in man.

In contrast, a man may lose an arm or a leg or an eye or be severely disfigured by some severe accident (and thus strictly speaking no longer look like God), but he still has the spirit in man. And it is that spirit in

man that makes him human, irrespective of his looks.

It was important that God created mankind in “the image” of God. But it was far **more important** that God created man after “the likeness” of God, because it is this latter attribute that primarily sets us apart from all of the animals that God created.

It was already in Genesis 1:26 that God revealed that God’s purpose for creating human beings was for human beings to be given the opportunity to become God Beings. **This intention** God revealed by creating us human beings in God’s **image** and God’s **likeness**. **If human beings were never intended to have the opportunity to become God Beings in God’s Family, then God would not have created us in His image and in His likeness.**

**#8 = GENESIS 2:2-3**

THE VERSES:

And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He **rested** (Hebrew “shabath”) on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had **rested** (Hebrew “shabath”) from all His work which God created and made.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

This translation implies that the primary focus on this very first Sabbath day was on resting. This picture is due to a mistranslation, and it is an example where a slightly different verb can create a different focus.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

The Hebrew verb “shabath”, from which the Hebrew noun “shabbath” is formed, is in these verses twice mistranslated as “rested”. The verb **“shabath” does not mean “to rest”** as we define the verb “to rest”. The meaning “to rest” was only added to this specific verb later by the Pharisees, in order to justify their extreme unbiblical rules for Sabbath observance, rules which Jesus Christ did not accept or adhere to.

This Hebrew verb “shabath” really means: **to cease, to stop doing something**. And the noun “shabbath” really means “**the day of cessation from something**”.

The Hebrew verb “shabath” actually has nothing at all to do with resting. Rather, it means “to cease doing something”, “to stop certain activities”. But stopping certain activities is not at all the same as resting. “Resting” really implies “stopping all activities”. But the Hebrew verb “shabath” does not refer to “stopping all activities”.

This mistranslation of the Hebrew verb “shabath” is discussed at length in my 2001 40-page article “FURTHER UNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE SABBATH COMMANDMENT”. See that article for more information on the correct meaning of the verb “shabath”.

The main Hebrew verb that actually means “to rest” is “nuwach”. And this verb “nuwach” is **not used in Genesis 2**. But it is used in Genesis 8:4 where the ark “**rested**” on the mountains of Ararat.

We see that **later**, at the time of the Exodus, God also **adds** the aspect of **resting** to the Sabbath commandment. But resting was not the focus back in Genesis 2.

Look at the Sabbath commandment in Exodus 20. Verse 8 tells us **to remember** the “day of cessation”. Verse 9 instructs us to do all our **work** on the other six days. Then verse 10 spells out that on “the day of cessation” we are not to do **any work**, and that also applies to our families and to our employees.

**Note**! Exodus 20:8-10 has thus far not said anything at all about us “resting”! The entire focus in the first three verses has been on us keeping the Sabbath holy by **ceasing from all our work**. But ceasing from work is not necessarily the same as resting.

Thus far the Sabbath command has the same focus as Genesis 2. A correct translation of the text in Genesis 2 should read “... and He **ceased** on the seventh day **from all His work** which He had made ... in it He had **ceased from all His work** which God created and made”. So Exodus 20:8-10 also focuses on us ceasing from doing all our work on the Sabbath day.

Then **verse 11 introduces a new and added focus to the Sabbath**. It tells us the following:

For *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them *is*, and **rested** (Hebrew “nuwach”) the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

This word “nuwach” really means “rested”! So did God “rest” on that original Sabbath day? Yes, Exodus 20:11 tells us this very clearly. But did Genesis 2 already tell us that God “rested”? No. Genesis 2 only tells us that on that Sabbath day God ceased from all His work.

The commandment in Exodus 20 provides us with **additional information**, information that had not been presented anywhere in the Book of Genesis. From the Book of Genesis alone, when the Hebrew text is translated correctly, we would not know that God “rested” on that first Sabbath. Exodus 20:11 reveals additional new information. This fact regarding new information is not apparent with the mistranslations in Genesis 2:2-3.

Next, in this verse **we are not the ones who are told to rest**. To rest and to be refreshed is presented as a consequence for those under our authority, a result of us stopping certain activities. We are to stop doing something, and the result will be that our animals get to rest, and our employees are refreshed. **We stop** ... and **they are rested and refreshed**.

That's an interesting focus, isn't it?

It doesn't tell us to rest. No, it tells us to stop doing something so that others may be able to rest. That concept is actually a part of the definition of "love" ... we do something so that **others may benefit**. So the actual Sabbath commandment presents an opportunity to express godly love and to serve others; in this case we express love by giving our domestic animals and our employees the opportunity to rest. We do this by us stopping all our work activities.

We need to blot out of our minds the devious mistranslation of the Hebrew verb "shabath", even if every single Hebrew dictionary that you can lay your hands on asserts that "shabath" does mean "to rest". It doesn't. That is proved by how the verb "shabath" is used throughout the Old Testament.

This commandment instructs us to cease from all our work, thereby keeping the Sabbath holy. But should we ourselves use the Sabbath to rest? Yes certainly, because God set us **an example** that we should follow. Exodus 20:11 spells out the example God set for us.

So the problem with the mistranslation in Genesis 2 is as follows:

**The correct perspective is**: The Sabbath is first and foremost a day of ceasing from all our work. In ceasing from our work we are keeping the Sabbath holy, and giving our employees the chance to rest. In addition to ceasing from our work, a second focus for the Sabbath is that we are to use it to rest. This second focus is based on the example that God set for us.

Now much later, in the days of Isaiah, God added **a third focus** to the Sabbath, in that it is not to be used for "doing our own ways" or "finding our own pleasure" or "speaking our own words" (Isaiah 58:13-14). But ceasing from all our work always remains the primary focus of the Sabbath.

**The mistranslation in Genesis** 2 changes that focus! The original focus is changed, and in that way resting becomes the most important criterion for Sabbath keeping! And **that focus is wrong**! Ceasing from our work is the first focus for the Sabbath, and then resting becomes a second focus.

It is this wrong focus assigned to Genesis 2:2-3 that is the justification for **the extreme pharisaical rules** regarding any physical activities on the Sabbath. For example, the Talmud states: "Our Rabbis taught: If one carries out **half a dried fig**, and then carries out **another half of a dried fig** in one state of unawareness, **he is culpable**" *(Talmud, Shabbath, 80a*).

That is an absolutely absurd claim! It is perverse to claim that carrying the weight of a dried fig on the Sabbath amounts to "working". It was equally perverse for the Pharisees to claim that Jesus Christ was working on the Sabbath because He spoke words like "be healed", or "take up your bed (something like a small yoga mat) and walk". There are very many such absurd rules like this in the Talmud ... I have looked up many of them.

It is the incorrect emphasis on “rested” in Genesis 2 that is the justification for all of these extreme and totally unbiblical pharisaical rules for Sabbath observance. First focusing on not following our normal lines of work, **and then** focusing on resting places God’s intent for the Sabbath in the correct perspective. The perspective should **never** be: in order to rest we must avoid any expenditure of energy. God’s Sabbath commandment in Exodus 20 is **not** about energy expenditure. Neither is God the author of the “Sabbath day’s journey” regulation nor of any other Sabbath regulations along those lines.

And back in Genesis God had not said anything at all about resting!

The wrong translation in Genesis 2 is the foundation of many wrong ideas about the Sabbath. Young’s Literal Translation, amongst others, has correctly translated the verb “shabath” in these two verses as “ceased”.

This subject of “rest” is also discussed at length in the section that deals with Hebrews 4:1 later in this series of articles. See the comments provided there for additional explanations.

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He **ceased** on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had **ceased** from all His work which God created and made.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

During the preceding six days God had created some things and also made some things. On the seventh day God ceased from both of these activities (i.e. creating and making). Later, in Exodus 20, it shows that this cessation included “resting”. However, the setting apart of the Sabbath day is in the first instance not based on resting, but on ceasing from specific activities.

**#9 = GENESIS 2:9**

THE VERSE:

And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of **knowledge** of good and evil.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

This translation implies that eating the wrong fruit gave them some kind of knowledge. But that is simply not true! Eating that fruit did not give them any knowledge that they did not have before eating that fruit.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

In English we make a clear distinction between the concept of “knowledge” on the one hand, and the concepts of “**perception**” and “**discernment**” on the other hand. We see “knowledge” as something that is objective and factual.

“Perception” and “discernment”, on the other hand, are subjective and conditional. People who have the same knowledge available to them may have completely different perceptions regarding how that knowledge actually applies to life. “Perception” is very much conditional on the frame of mind with which a person comes to the table. **“Perception” can result in different interpretations of the same knowledge.**

In biblical Hebrew, with its rather limited vocabulary, these differing concepts are conveyed by the same one word. The word that means “knowledge” also means “perception” and “discernment”. And in this verse the intended meaning of this Hebrew word is perception, not knowledge.

Neither tree was going to give them any **knowledge**. What both trees offered them was **opposing perceptions** of good and evil, opposing perceptions of what is right and what is wrong.

In plain language, had they eaten of the tree of life, **then** they would have **perceived** God’s mind and plans and intentions; they would have perceived God’s way of thinking. And then they would have received access to God’s holy spirit, thereby receiving **access** to eternal life. The desire to grasp the godly perception of what is good and what is evil is a prerequisite for eventually receiving the free gift of eternal life.

By eating from the tree of the perception of good and evil, instead of holding onto God’s perspective of what is right and what is wrong, **they accepted Satan’s perspective of what is right and what is wrong**. And this perception of right and wrong leads to death. This is the perception that is represented by Proverbs 14:12.

However, the **knowledge** (i.e. the factual information available) **is the same for both cases**. The difference lies in two diametrically opposite ways of **perceiving** or interpreting that knowledge, two completely different ways of evaluating the same factual knowledge.

There was nothing magical about that fruit. God really could have designated **any** one of the fruit trees as “the tree of the perception of good and evil”. The fruit itself didn’t do anything at all for them or to them. It was **their action** in taking that fruit that did something to their minds.

In plain terms: Had Adam and Eve eaten of the tree of life, this would have reinforced in their minds God’s perspective of right and wrong, by God giving them access to the holy spirit. But when they ate the other fruit instead, this changed their perception of right and wrong, and therefore God denied them access to His holy spirit.

God will **never** give His holy spirit to people who have a wrong perception of what is right and what is wrong, people who reach morally wrong conclusions from correct factual information.

What happened to Adam and Eve is the exact same thing that **happens to every one of us**. Whenever we do something that we **know** is wrong, then that automatically changes our own standards of what is right and what is wrong.

We **always** think of a transgression, any transgression, as less serious when we ourselves have engaged in it, than when we ourselves have never been involved in that transgression. **Knowingly doing something wrong always changes our subjective perception of right and wrong.**

Satan was the first one to ever knowingly do something wrong, and that action changed his perspective of right and wrong for ever. He can never be rehabilitated.

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the **perception** of good and evil.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

This tree was the test as to whether Adam and Eve would be willing to do something that they **knew** was wrong. What specific type of fruit was involved is not significant. Their action of knowingly doing something wrong changed their perception of what is right and what is wrong, away from God's standards for right and wrong.

Eating that fruit did not give them any knowledge, but they immediately **perceived** their own situation (e.g. their nakedness) in a different way. Their minds had changed as a result of knowingly going against their own consciences.

**#10 = GENESIS 3:15**

THE VERSE:

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise your head, and **you shall bruise his heel**.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

This is what God said to Satan after Adam and Eve had eaten the forbidden fruit.

"There you are", some people may say, "this verse says quite clearly that Jesus Christ would have to die for human beings". In other words, people use this verse to claim that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ's life for our sins was determined from the very beginning, and (supposedly) certainly from the time when Adam sinned.

But that understanding is not correct.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

Does this verse actually refer to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ's life for our sins? Let's examine this verse.

1) **This interpretation**, that this verse is a reference to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, **originated with the Catholic Church**. While that doesn't automatically make it wrong, it does at least call for a closer examination before this Catholic explanation is accepted as correct. After all, the Catholic Church is hardly a reliable source for a correct understanding of the teachings of the Bible.

2) The four gospels deal specifically with the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. And in the four gospels alone there are over 250 quotations from, or references to the Old Testament, virtually all of them being references to the things Jesus Christ said and did and fulfilled.

However, **Genesis 3:15 is never quoted in any of the gospels**, or anywhere else in the New Testament for that matter. This tells us that **none of the writers of the New Testament**, all of whom were undoubtedly familiar with the Genesis accounts, **associated Genesis 3:15 with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ**. That should at least make us think. And this is not a verse that Jesus Christ Himself ever quoted during His ministry.

3) In Genesis 3:15 it is **Jesus Christ** who, in the presence of Adam and Eve, **is speaking directly to Satan**. Now **if** Jesus Christ was supposedly speaking about Himself in this verse, **then** we could paraphrase this verse more or less as follows:

And I will put enmity between you, Satan, and the woman (who is that ... Eve or the Church?), and between your seed (who is that ... demons or human beings?) and **Myself** (i.e. if Jesus Christ is the seed being spoken about); **I will bruise your head, and you will bruise My heel**.

The Hebrew verb here twice translated as "will bruise" really means "**to crush**", which is much more forceful than "bruising".

Now **if** this verse was really intended to be a prophecy that would point to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and since Jesus Christ was the One speaking these words, **then Jesus Christ was really speaking about Himself** in this verse, and then the above paraphrase would represent a fair interpretation of this verse.

**But does that really make sense**? Was Jesus Christ here really speaking about Himself?

4) There are **two enmities** being referred to in this verse. They are:

- one enmity between Satan and the woman

- one enmity between Satan’s seed and the woman’s seed.

There are **two outcomes** to these two enmities mentioned. They are:

- the woman’s seed would **crush** Satan’s head

- Satan would **crush** the heel of the woman’s seed.

Now for a moment please totally **forget** Homer’s **pagan mythology** about the supposed mortal vulnerability of the heel of Achilles. That is just some stupid story without any foundation, but which Satan inspired as a pagan version of how Genesis 3:15 should supposedly be understood.

However, the real point is that **a wound to the heel is not mortal at all**. It is nothing more than a setback, albeit a painful one. People can have a foot amputated, or even a leg amputated, and still continue to live. So ”crushing” someone’s heel is never a mortal wound. Don’t let pagan mythology confuse you.

5) To be quite clear:

**"A crushed heel" is totally inappropriate as a reference to the death of the Messiah!**

The bruising or crushing of a heel does not picture death! The **crushing of a head** may picture death, but not the crushing of a heel.

In any analogy about the body is there **ever** a time when Jesus Christ would be referred to as "**the heel**"? Would Jesus Christ ever refer to Himself as "the heel"? Is the heel at the top or at the bottom of the body? Does the heel come first or last in the body?

And where does Jesus Christ fit into the body: at the top or at the bottom? And especially **in speaking to Satan**: would Jesus Christ ever refer to Himself as "**the heel**"?

**Why** would Jesus Christ refer to Himself as "the heel"? Isn’t it **rather demeaning** to associate the enormous sacrifice Jesus Christ brought on our behalf with "the heel"?

6) I realize that all of these questions didn’t bother the Catholic Church in putting forward this explanation. But can **you** see the utter inappropriateness of comparing Jesus Christ to **the heel** of a

body?

7) There are **two different "seeds"** being spoken about. Before we can establish who is "the seed of the woman" we really ought to establish **who is "the seed of Satan"**? Let's look at a few Scriptures to help us in this regard. And keep in mind that in Genesis 3:15 Jesus Christ was speaking to the serpent. So let's look for references to "**the seed of serpents**".

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, **O generation of vipers**, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? (Matthew 3:7)

Here John the Baptist identified the dominant and most influential Jewish religious sects at that time (i.e. **Pharisees and Sadducees**) as the seed of serpents.

**You serpents**, **you generation of vipers**, how can you escape the damnation of hell? (Matthew 23:33)

Here Jesus Christ also identified the scribes and the Pharisees as the seed of serpents.

**You are of your father the devil**, and the lusts of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. (John 8:44)

Here Jesus Christ again identified all those who opposed Him as the seed of the devil.

And said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief, **you child of the devil**, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? (Acts 13:10)

Here Paul identified a pagan sorcerer as the seed of the devil.

**He that commits sin is of the devil**; for the devil sins from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. (1 John 3:8)

Here John identifies **all those who sin** as the seed of the devil. Notice also that here the focus is on Jesus Christ destroying **the works** of the devil.

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that **through death He might destroy him** that had the power of death, that is, the devil; (Hebrews 2:14)

The Greek word here translated as "destroy" really means: **to inactivate**, **to make idle**! It does not

mean "to annihilate", which is what we commonly think of when we hear the word "destroy". So Paul is also saying that **the works of the devil will be destroyed** because Jesus Christ will bind Satan and make him inactive.

Now enmity commonly reveals itself in warfare. Those who fight one another are enemies. So notice what will happen at the very end of this age, after God has protected the people from the Philadelphian era.

And **the dragon** was wroth with the woman, and **went to make war with the remnant of her seed**, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (Revelation 12:17)

Now **consider Revelation 12:17** in light of Genesis 3:15. Here we have the following things:

1) The dragon is Satan, and he uses armies who are "his seed"!

2) The remnant of the woman's seed in this verse here are the Laodiceans, who at that time are not in the place of safety.

3) So there is warfare (it is really very one-sided warfare!) between two groups of human beings, and **here Satan's "seed" aims "to crush" these last remnants of the woman's seed**.

4) Chronologically this is **the very last group of human beings that Satan is able "to crush"** before he is locked away for 1000 years. Chronologically **this is the tail-end of human history** before Jesus Christ assumes total rule over this Earth. Now this event may perhaps not be what Genesis 3:15 was referring to, but it is rather interesting nonetheless.

And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for **to devour her child** as soon as it was born. (Revelation 12:4)

This verse shows that **the warfare** that Satan initiated against God's Church **spans all of history**. There has been a constant battle between the world, which is under Satan's control (Satan's "seed") and the people of God. As Jesus Christ said:

If the world hate you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. (John 15:18)

This battle between the world and the people of God has been ongoing since the time of Adam. And **the ultimate outcome** of that enmity is that Satan and his seed are defeated. As Paul put it:

And the God of peace **shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly**. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ

be with you. Amen. (Romans 16:20)

[Here the Greek word translated as “shall bruise” also means “to break in pieces, to crush”.]

So now let’s go **back to Genesis 3:15**. Here is the setting:

1) There are only two human beings on Earth: Adam and Eve.

2) Satan had just successfully tempted them to eat the forbidden fruit.

3) All of human history lay ahead.

4) In this verse Jesus Christ is speaking to Satan, **not to Adam and Eve**!

5) Now **if** Christ was going to say anything about a future Savior, then Christ would assuredly make such a prediction of the Savior to Adam and Eve, and **not to Satan**!

Where would anybody (except for Satan’s churches) get the idea that Jesus Christ would address such a prophetic statement about a future Savior, who would die for humanity, to Satan? Interpreting this verse as a statement about the Savior **makes Satan look more important**, because the statement is addressed to him.

6) At that point in time **the future looked very bleak** and daunting and uncertain for Adam and Eve.

In this context **what was Jesus Christ telling Satan,** statements that Adam and Eve would obviously also have heard?

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

The translation is basically fine, if we just change “bruise” to “crush”. It is the interpretation that people commonly apply to this verse that is the problem.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

**Here is what Genesis 3:15 really means**:

1) **And I will put enmity between you and the woman**: There would always be an enmity between Satan and the true religion of God (i.e. the Church of God). That enmity started when Satan seduced Eve into sinning, and this enmity will continue until Satan is bound for good.

2) **And between your seed and her seed**: There would also always be an enmity on the individual and personal level, between all the people in the world who are on Satan's wavelength (i.e. his seed), and the people who have submitted their lives unconditionally to God.

3) **It shall crush your head**: Paul tells us that God will "crush Satan under our feet" (Romans 16:20). The 144,000 in the first resurrection will have overcome Satan and his temptations. This is a "crushing" from which Satan will never recover.

4) **And you shall crush his heel**: You, Satan, will inflict some damage on the people of God. But **that damage is not fatal**, because the plan of God to reproduce Himself through human beings **will succeed**! A crushing of a heel is never fatal ... it just slows down the forward momentum a bit. Forget about Achilles and Greek mythology.

In speaking to Satan, Jesus Christ was **not telling Satan about a yet future Savior for mankind**. All Jesus Christ was telling Satan in this verse is: "you, Satan will influence a lot of human beings to accept your thinking and your selfish ways; and that will slow down the fulfillment of My plan to some degree. But no matter what you do, My plan to create God beings will succeed. And you will be defeated".

**That's all that this verse was intended to convey to Satan**! Jesus Christ was **not** giving Satan some cryptic clue for an inside scoop regarding a future Savior.

I could elaborate further, but you should be able to figure out the rest for yourself. And this verse is **not** a prophetic prediction about the future Savior, and that is why **it is never quoted in the New Testament**.

**#11 = GENESIS 6:3**

THE VERSE:

And the LORD said, My spirit **shall not always strive with man**, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

The verb "strive" makes it sound like God was arguing with man, or pleading with man.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

This verse contains a serious mistranslation, which hides the correct meaning of God's statement.

The Hebrew verb translated as "strive" is "**din**", which really means "**to judge**". It is wellknown that this Hebrew verb basically means the same as the Hebrew verb "shaphat", which also means "to judge"; and these two Hebrew verbs are frequently used in parallel, in constructions that talk about judging. The meaning "to judge" for the verb "din" is very well known.

Yet not a single one of all the translations that I checked has translated “din” correctly into English in this specific verse, though they do so in other verses where this Hebrew verb is used. That should make us think.

The origin of this mistranslation is as follows:

The wrong translation of this Hebrew verb comes to us from the Greek LXX and then via the Latin Vulgate. The LXX Greek translation for “din” in this verse is “**katameine**”, a form of the verb “katameno”, and this Greek verb means “**to abide, to remain**”.

The Latin Vulgate rendered this verb in this verse as “**permanebit**”, which also means “to abide, to remain”. So instead of translating the Hebrew verb “din”, Jerome in his Vulgate Translation simply translated the Greek verb “katameno”. **The influence of the LXX and the Vulgate** in this specific verse can be seen in such translations as JPS and RSV.

Note! **Even the Jews themselves don’t translate “din” correctly in this specific verse**, though they do translate “din” correctly in other verses. Why would that be so?

The reason they all mistranslated a Hebrew verb with a well-known meaning is that **they didn’t understand what God is actually telling us** in this statement. That is why translating this correctly as “to judge” didn’t make sense to them. So they read their own ideas into their translations.

Coming to translations into English:

Translating from the Latin Vulgate, John Wycliffe rendered this as “shall **not dwell** in man”. That is totally wrong, as far as the Hebrew text is concerned. Then it was William Tyndale who first introduced the word “**strive**” into his English translation of Genesis for the Matthew’s Bible in 1537. This verb “strive” was then retained by the Geneva Bible in 1560 and the later Bishops Bible, both of which formed the foundation for the 1611 KJV. From there the verb “strive” was accepted by many subsequent translators.

None of them bothered to correctly translate the Hebrew text, which would have been easy for them to do.

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

And the LORD said, **My spirit shall not always judge man**, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

From the time of Adam onwards God was **judging man's conduct**! It was not a matter of God pleading with man, or arguing with man. None of those things would actually produce **the character** that God wants to see in human beings.

God was objectively and fairly judging man's conduct throughout that entire period leading up to the flood. And very, very few people responded to God.

**AN OBSERVATION**: God's statement "My spirit shall not always **judge** man because he is only flesh" is in fact quite revealing. It reveals that in the age before the flood **all people were being judged by God**.

This statement shows that the second resurrection was not a part of God's plan before the flood, because the second resurrection was instituted by God for the explicit purpose of dealing with all those human beings who are **not** being judged by God in this present life.

It is clear that before the flood all people were judged by God, because **all people were drowned by God** (except those in the ark, for whom a ransom had to be paid, see the mistranslation in Genesis 6:14). **The flood was a judgment made by God**! Before the flood God was "always judging all men", and God's statement in Genesis 6:3 shows that **God was going to stop using that specific approach** in dealing with mankind. God was indicating that after the flood God would use **a different approach regarding "judging man"**.

That different approach to judging man was to focus on judging a very small fraction of one percent of human beings, people whom God would specifically "call", while postponing the judgment of the overwhelming majority of all people to the time of the second resurrection.

Genesis 6:3 is also proof that none of the people in that judgment period (i.e. from Adam to the flood) can be in the second resurrection. They were all being judged by God, and found to be "only evil continually" (that's Genesis 6:5). And therefore God executed His judgment on them by drowning them.

Another way to understand God's statement in Genesis 6:3 is to recognize that God was saying "from after the flood onwards I am not going to be judging all men, because from then onwards I will only judge a small select group of people".

The mistranslation of "din" in Genesis 6:3 represents a significant part of Satan's endeavor to "deceive the whole world" (see Revelation 12:9) about God's plan for mankind.

**#12 = GENESIS 6:4**

THE VERSE:

There were **giants** in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare *children* to them, the same *became* mighty men which *were* of old, men of renown.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

The previous verse was spoken exactly 120 years before the flood, thus about 20 years before Noah started to beget his three sons Shem, Ham and Japheth.

The word “giants” in this verse is a mistranslation of the Hebrew word “**nephilim**”. Apart from this mistranslation, there is no indication anywhere in the Bible that there were actual giants on earth before the flood. The only giants mentioned in the Bible all lived **after the flood**.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

There are **three** different **Hebrew words** in the OT which are sometimes indiscriminately translated in the KJV as “giants”. Only one of these three words actually means “giants”.

1) The correct Hebrew word for “giants” is “**rapha**, pl. **rephaim**”. This word is used in Scriptures like Deuteronomy 3:11, a verse that speaks about the giant king Og, whose bed was about 13 feet long.

2) The next Hebrew word is “**gibbor**, pl. **gibborim**”. This word basically refers to those who have power, thus: mighty ones, conquerors, heroes, those who are victorious. While these attributes might also apply to giants in some cases, this is not the word to identify men of very large stature (i.e. giants). In only one place is this word incorrectly translated as “a giant”, and that is in Job 16:14 (“he runs upon me like a giant”). There it should really read “he runs upon me like a mighty man”.

3) The third Hebrew word is “**nephil**, pl. **nephilim**”. This is the word used here in Genesis 6:4. This noun is formed from the Hebrew verb “**naphal**”, which means “**to fall**”. And so the noun “nephilim” really means “**the fallen ones**”. The only other verse in the OT where this word “nephilim” is also used is Numbers 13:33, which we’ll examine later in Part 3 of this series.

In plain language, when Genesis 6:4 says “in those days there were in the earth the nephilim (those who had fallen)”, this is **not** a reference to their physical attributes (i.e. their size or stature or origin of birth), but to their **character attributes** (i.e. those who had fallen away from God’s standards).

The story behind how the word “giants” ended up in our English language translations is covered in great detail in my article “Were There Giants On Earth Before Noah’s Flood?”.

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

There were **those who had fallen** (the fallen ones) in the earth in those days. And also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare *children* to them, the same *became* mighty men which *were* of old, men of renown.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

This is the verse on which some people base their mistaken belief that before the flood fallen angels (i.e. demons) had sex with mortal women and that those unions produced giants. First of all, spirit beings are not able to mate with mortal human beings (Matthew 22:30). And secondly, this verse does not speak about giants. There is no biblical evidence for any giants **before the flood**. See also the discussion of Numbers 13:33.

My above-mentioned article about “Giants Before Noah’s Flood” discusses the meaning of this whole verse at length. My purpose here is simply to point out that this specific verse does not really speak about giants, and that “giants” is a wrong translation for the Hebrew word “nephilim”.

**#13 = GENESIS 6:6-7**

THE VERSE:

And it **repented** the LORD that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for **it repents Me** that I have made them.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

People can read this and conclude that God “repents” just like we have to repent. And for us “to repent” always implies that we have done something wrong. **If we haven’t done something wrong, then we don’t need to repent**. For us repenting involves acknowledging some past guilt.

But this is not how the word “repent” applies to God. The Hebrew word “nacham”, which is in these verses translated as “repent”, simply means “to be sorry”. It refers to regretting something, without implying that something morally wrong had taken place.

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THESE VERSES:

And the LORD **regretted** that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for I **regret** that I have made them.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THESE VERSES:

These verses have nothing whatsoever to do with what we understand for the concept of “repenting”! These verses are simply a way of saying that **God regretted that He had made man**, that it saddened God to see how inherently evil human nature actually turned out to be.

For a more detailed discussion of what real repentance is, see the discussion of Matthew 21:29 in Part 4 of this series.

**#14 = GENESIS 6:9**

THE VERSE:

These *are* the **generations** of Noah: Noah was a just man *and* perfect in his **generations**, *and* Noah walked with God.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

People assume that this verse is a reference to Noah's pedigree, i.e. to his ancestral line. But that is not at all what God is telling us in this verse. In this context a reference to Noah's pedigree would have been meaningless!

Noah was the tenth generation from Adam (counting Adam as the first generation). **Everybody alive** at that time could also claim a direct line of descent from Adam. If the statement "perfect in his generations" was supposed to be a reference to Noah's pedigree, then everybody else was also "perfect in his generations". There is nothing in this verse that sets Noah's pedigree apart from every other descendant of Adam via Seth.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

There are **two completely different Hebrew words** in this verse, which are both translated into English as "**generations**". This creates some confusion. In addition, our English translations also confuse "pedigree" with "progeny".

In the expression "these are the generations of Noah" the Hebrew word is "**toledah**". But in the expression "perfect in his generations" the Hebrew word is "**dowr**". So we are dealing with two different words for "generations" within the same verse.

1) The Hebrew word "toledah" refers to "families, races, generations", with the understanding that it specifically **focuses on what follows**, **and not on what went before**. It focuses on progeny. This word "toledah" refers to the verses that follow this statement, not to the verses that preceded it.

To make this quite clear: the English word "pedigree" refers to generations that have gone before, but the Hebrew "toledah" refers to generations that come after! So **"toledah" does not refer to pedigree**! It refers to the generations that follow, not to the generations that went before. In this verse "toledah" is best translated as "lines of descent from" or as "**progeny**".

2) Next, the Hebrew word "dowr" refers to "a living generation, contemporaries". It has nothing to do with generations before or after the present one.

So this word also does not have anything to do with "pedigree"; and neither does it have anything to do with "a line of descent that may follow". "Generation" is not a good way to translate the word "dowr". **The best way to translate "dowr"** in this verse **is "contemporaries"**, because that is exactly

what this verse is referring to.

These distinctions are important to understand because there are some churches that have tried to draw some **racial** conclusions from this verse, conclusions that agree with their own particular racial biases. Those conclusions are **completely unjustified**. Their wrong conclusions are based on a misinterpretation of “dowr”.

3) Next, the Hebrew word here translated as “**perfect**” is “**tamiym**”. This word basically means: upright, whole, sincere, complete, but without necessarily implying perfection. In this verse it is far better translated as “**upright**”.

The JPS translation renders this section as “Noah was in his generations a man righteous and **whole-hearted**”, opting for “whole-hearted” instead of “perfect”.

The 1977 NAS translation renders this as “Noah was a righteous man, **blameless in his time**”.

The NIV renders this expression as “**blameless** among the people of his time”.

The RSV reads “**blameless** in his generation”.

The 1994 Dutch language Leidse Vertaling renders this as “Noach was een rechtschapen en **onberispelijk** man onder zijn **tijdgenoten**”, which literally translated reads “Noah was a righteous and **impeccable** man among his **contemporaries**”.

The above-quoted translations should suffice to show that “perfect” is not a correct translation for the Hebrew word “tamiym”.

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

This (i.e. what follows) *is* **the progeny** from Noah: Noah was a just man *and* **upright among his contemporaries**, *and* Noah walked with God.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

This verse is an introductory statement for the section that follows. The first statement in this verse **refers to Noah’s progeny**, and so the next verse spells out the line of descent from Noah, which consisted of his three sons.

The second part of this verse refers to **Noah’s character**, that Noah “walked with God”. His walking with God is based on Noah having been a just man and upright amongst his contemporaries.

But this verse is not in any way at all a reference to Noah’s pedigree!

Any kind of racial inference for this verse is based on an incorrect understanding of the Hebrew words “dowr” and “tamiym”.

We might also keep in mind that, while the Bible certainly lists genealogical lines for certain people, nowhere does the Bible ever make evaluative statements regarding the merits of such genealogical lines, that a specific line is “perfect”, or words to that effect.

Nowhere does the Bible hint at one race being “perfect” or “better than another race”. And this Scripture is no exception to that rule.

**#15 = GENESIS 6:14**

THE VERSE:

Make you an ark of gopher wood; rooms shall you make in the ark, and **shall pitch it within and without with pitch**. (Genesis 6:14)

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

This verse is thoroughly explained in my October 2021 article entitled “THE DAY OF ATONEMENT IS NOT A DAY OF COVERING". That article provides a more detailed explanation than I will provide here. The main implication of the above mistranslation is that the last part of this verse refers to the building of the ark.

That implication is totally false! That statement has nothing at all to do with the ark itself.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

The expression of interest here is "**pitch it with pitch**". The verb translated as "to pitch it" is "**kaphar**", and the noun translated as "pitch" is "**kopher**".

In the above-mentioned article I show that the verb "**kaphar**" does not mean "to cover". What it does mean is: **to reconcile**, **to purge**, **to atone**. In other words, when we are purged of our sins, that enables us to then be reconciled to God. So reconciliation with God is the result of us first being purged or purified.

The word "atonement" refers to that same process. To be reconciled with God means that we are "made at one" with God. So I believe that the words **"atone" and "atonement" are suitable translations for the biblical Hebrew words "kaphar" and "kippur"**. The words "to cover" and "covering", on the other

hand, are not at all suitable translations for these Hebrew words. They are plain mistranslations.

Regarding the noun "kopher", this word is used 17 times in the OT. And Genesis 6:14 is the only place where it is translated as "pitch". In the following verses I have highlighted in bold text **the English words with which "kopher" has been translated**.

If there be laid on him **a sum of money**, then he shall give for the ransom (Hebrew "redemption", not "kopher") of his life whatsoever is laid upon him. (Exodus 21:30)

When you take the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man **a ransom** for his soul unto the LORD, when you number them; that there be no plague among them, when you number them. (Exodus 30:12)

Moreover you shall take no **satisfaction** for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death. And ye shall take no **satisfaction** for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest. (Numbers 35:31-32)

Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before His anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any **bribe** to blind my eyes therewith? and I will restore it you. (1 Samuel 12:3)

Then He is gracious unto him, and says, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found **a ransom**. (Job 33:24)

Because there is wrath, beware lest He take you away with His stroke: then **a** great **ransom** cannot deliver you. (Job 36:18)

None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God **a ransom** for him: (Psalm 49:7)

**The ransom** of a man’s life are his riches: but the poor hears not rebuke. (Proverbs 13:8)

The wicked shall be **a ransom** for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright. (Proverbs 21:18)

The ten verses above are more than half of all the places where this Hebrew noun "kopher" is used. What is the overall flavor of this Hebrew word? In Numbers 35:31-32 instead of "**satisfaction**" it could equally correctly be translated as "**ransom**", as it is in translations like the ASV, RSV, NIV, etc.

The main way this Hebrew noun is used is to refer to **some kind of payment as a type of penalty**. It could be a ransom or a bribe or a required payment. But none of these verses have anything in them that would even remotely suggest a meaning like "pitch".

Right, so the meanings for the verb "**kaphar**" are "**reconcile**", "**atone**", and "**purge**"; and the meanings for the noun "**kopher**" are "**ransom**" and "**payment**".

Question: So why did the translators translate these words in Genesis 6:14 as "you shall pitch it with pitch"?

Answer: Because **nothing else made sense to them** in that particular context. I mean, what else could you possibly do inside and outside some boat or barge?

Before we look at the expression "within and without" in Genesis 6:14, let's first establish **what we now already know for certain**.

1) The translation of the first part of this verse is quite acceptable. It reads:

"Make you an ark of gopher wood, rooms shall you make in the ark."

2) The mistranslated second part reads:

"... and shall pitch it within and without with pitch."

3) Corrected this part reads:

"... **and you shall purge/reconcile** ..... **with a ransom**."

4) So what still needs to be translated correctly is the part in the middle, which is translated as "**it within and without**". After that we can put the whole picture for this verse together.

In the mistranslated text the focus is the ark. And the mistranslated statement "you shall pitch it with pitch" is clearly **focused on the ark**. And with that focus on the ark the translators didn't really have many options.

However ...

When we understand that **the correct focus** of this statement is that "**you shall purge with a ransom**", then the ark cannot be the focus. There is no reason for purging "the ark". And there is no possible reason for paying a ransom for "the ark". That is precisely why the translators didn't translate this correctly. They were thinking about the ark.

The key for us is:

Once we clearly understand that this is a statement about purging or reconciling "something" with a ransom, then that "something" cannot possibly be the ark!

**It must be something other than the ark**, which needs to be purged with a ransom. And "atoning, purging or reconciling" always involves a life or lives! It is a life for which a ransom is paid.

An inanimate object like the ark doesn't need to be purged or reconciled. And it doesn't require a ransom to be spared from destruction.

God had just said in **the previous verses** that He would destroy all human lives and all animal lives. That is what "the end of all flesh is come before Me" refers to ... all physical lives being destroyed.

That is then **followed by** a statement about "**a ransom**" having to be brought, in order to be spared from destruction. There are **only two options** for such a ransom.

1) It could be **a ransom for the eight human beings** who were spared on the ark.

2) It could be **a ransom for all the animals** that were spared on the ark.

Those two groups are the only possibilities for needing to pay a ransom. There are **no other possibilities**, because no other land-based physical lives would be spared from destruction.

So once we understand that God is speaking about reconciling (or purging) by means of a ransom, then either one or both of these groups are the only option for the focus of this statement.

And that brings us to the words "... **it within and without**".

These words can only refer to either the eight human beings on the ark, or to all the animals on the ark, or it can refer to both these groups together.

Nothing else could possibly qualify for being purged with a ransom. There are no other possible applications for a ransom in that context!

Now **why did both these groups need to be "purged with a ransom"?**

Both groups had been a part of a sick, depraved, perverse and utterly violent world, which world God was preparing to destroy. In that sense both these groups were "contaminated" by exposure to that world. The purging or reconciling by means of a ransom was to represent that contamination being

removed from those individuals.

This reference to purging by means of a ransom was to explain how it was possible for those in the ark to be spared. A ransom was paid for them.

Now let’s look at our expression.

The Hebrew word translated as "**within**" is "**bayith**". This Hebrew noun is used 2055 times in the OT, and it is translated as "house" or as "home" or as "household" exactly 1960 times. This word really means "**house**", and by extension "**household**".

In this verse the word "bayith" has the prefix "mi" attached to it; i.e. it reads **"mi-bayith"** in the text. In your Hebrew dictionary you will find this prefix listed as the word "min".

Thinking about this prefix "min" for a while:

This Hebrew prefix is used to convey many different things. It always **depends on the context** in which this prefix is used. When it is applied in a **spatial** context, then it usually means "**out of, away from**". When it is used in a **temporal** context, then it usually means "**since, from**". It is also used to designate **a logical cause**, in which case it is best translated as "**because of**". It is also used to designate an originator, in which case it is sometimes translated as "by" (e.g. "by the king"). There are also a number of other ways in which this prefix is used.

These different applications for the prefix "min" are thoroughly explained in "A CONCISE HEBREW AND ARAMAIC LEXICON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT" by William L Holladay. I have listed a few of those applications above so the reader will understand that the explanation I will provide below is grammatically completely justified.

Here is the point I want to make:

**The translators were thinking of a spatial context** for this verse. They were thinking of the space of the ark. And in a spatial context they could correctly have translated "mi-bayith" as "out from the house" or as "away from the house". But **it is wrong to translate "mi-bayith" as "within"**, because the prefix "mi" gives the word for "house" the force of "going out from". So "within" is a wrong translation.

However:

When this prefix is used **to designate a cause**, then it conveys a completely different meaning. In this case it conveys the meaning "**because of**". So in this case "**mi-bayith**" should be correctly translated as "because of the house" or as "**because of the household** (of Noah)".

The Hebrew word translated as "**without**" is "**chuwts**". This Hebrew noun is used 164 times in the OT, and it means "**outside**". Here this word also has the prefix "mi" attached to it. And "**mi-chuwts**" should be translated as "**because of the outside**".

"The outside" does not refer to "the outside of the ark". No, it is **"outside" in relation to the previous word**. That is, it is "outside" in relation to "the household of Noah". So the expression "because of the outside" really means "**because of those outside of Noah's household**".

To keep things simple, I will just use the word "purge", with the understanding that "reconcile" and "atone" would be equally correct in the statements below.

So the **second part of verse 14** should read:

"... And you shall purge (because of) the household and (because of) those outside the household with a ransom."

In English the inclusion of the words "because of" makes the whole sentence rather clumsy. We can put this into **a more readable form** by replacing the words "because of" with the word "therefore". Now we have the following:

"... **And you shall therefore purge the household and those outside (the household) with a ransom**."

We might note that in Genesis 6:14 God used the word for "ark" twice and the word for "house/household" once. So God was drawing a distinction between the ark (mentioned twice), and the house or household (mentioned once). Otherwise God could have used the word for "ark" three times. **This distinction between "ark" and "household" is totally lost in our false and incomplete translations into English**.

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

So now let's put together a correct translation for all of Genesis 6:14.

Make an ark of gopher wood; rooms shall you make in the ark. And **you shall therefore purge the household and those outside** (the household) **with a ransom**.

This is a correct translation of the Hebrew text. Look again at Exodus 30:12 above, where God instructed every man to pay "a ransom for his soul" so that he would be protected from the plague at that time.

**The same thing applied to Noah!**

God was about to destroy all human beings and all animals. And for the eight people in the ark plus all the animals, who were spared, there had to be a ransom. The ransom was not for the ark, but for the household of Noah and for all the animals that were spared. What that ransom actually was is not revealed, and it doesn't change anything.

Keep in mind that we are dealing with **three significant mistranslations** in this one verse. This verse should not include the verb "pitch it", and it should not include the noun "pitch", and it also grossly mistranslated the Hebrew "mi-bayith" as "within". There is **no word in this verse** that **means "within"**. The result of correcting those mistranslations gives us a completely different meaning.

Now here is a problem the translators did not consider:

You do not "pitch" boats and barges "within and without"! That idea is plain stupid!

Applying pitch to something (irrespective of whether that pitch is tar or bitumen or asphalt or some kind of resin) makes that surface sticky! Pitch is not a solid mass; it is actually a very thick sticky liquid which flows ever so slowly (taking years in some cases to move a very small distance). So it might well appear solid to us.

But boat builders do not "pitch" their boats on the inside! Boatbuilders use pitch as a form of calk on the outside seams of their wooden boats.

If the ark had indeed been "pitched within", it would have made life extremely uncomfortable for all the animals, and also for Noah and his family. **It would be stupid to pitch the floors and the walls of your inside living quarters**, especially without the aid of modern chemically-designed hardeners to add to the pitch.

Pitch was applied exclusively to the outside seams of ships and vessels. There is no place for pitch on the inside of a vessel. And the Hebrew text of this verse does not say anything at all about "within".

As a matter of interest, there are so many significant details for building the ark, that are not presented in Genesis, that any statements about calking are totally insignificant. If Noah could build the ark from the basic instructions he was given, then he didn't need to be told anything about calking. Building the ark from the basic instructions that are given required Noah to already have a considerable degree of understanding about boat-building. And calking the outside seams at the end of that project would have been obvious to Noah.

See the above-mentioned article for more details regarding this mistranslation.

**#16 = GENESIS 17:10 -11**

THESE VERSES:

This *is* My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your seed after you; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. (v 10)

And you shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt Me and you. (v 11)

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

This is not a mistranslation as such. Rather, here we are dealing with a **totally inappropriate verse division**, which then has the same effect as a mistranslation.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

Verses 1 to the first part of verse 10 form **one discussion**. These verses spell out the covenant (agreement) that God was making with Abraham. In essence Abraham's part in that covenant was "to walk before God and to be upright and sincere" (the same word "tamiym" as in Genesis 6:9 is used here, verse 1). God's part in that covenant was that He would bless Abraham and his descendants.

But that covenant between God and Abraham was **not** circumcision!

The first part of verse 10, which reads "this is My covenant which you shall keep between Me and you and your seed after you", is **a concluding statement**! The discussion of the actual covenant has been concluded with these words.

The second part of verse 10 introduces a new subject, which goes to the end of verse 14. That new subject is **a token or sign that is attached to the covenant that has just been discussed**!

The covenant was to live before God in uprightness and in integrity. The token added to this covenant was that every male was to be circumcised. But circumcision was to be nothing more than a token for the commitment to live by God's laws and instructions.

There is a similarly clear distinction between the covenant God made with Noah, and the token that God attached to that covenant. God made a covenant with Noah to never again destroy all life by a worldwide flood (Genesis 9:9-11), and then God attached the rainbow as a token to that covenant (verse 12-17).

There is always a major distinction between a covenant, and the token of a covenant. And the covenant itself is always, without question, far more important than the token that may be attached to that covenant.

Now the problem this inappropriate verse division here has caused is that **the token appears to have**

**been elevated to the status of the covenant itself**, thereby effectively diverting the attention away from the obligation to live a certain way before God. It is unfortunately very common to see people refer to this covenant as “the covenant of circumcision”. That is a way of detracting from the real significance of this covenant.

People don’t understand that without adherence to the real covenant here (i.e. **to live** a certain way before God) the token of this covenant (i.e. circumcision) is totally and completely worthless! And so it should be no surprise that, while God expects Christians today to abide by the terms of this covenant in Genesis 17 (i.e. to live our lives in integrity before God), God does **not** require Christians to also accept **the token** that God had attached for Old Testament Israel.

The entire discussion in Acts 15 revolved around the fact that Paul understood clearly, and therefore defended vigorously, the distinction between this covenant itself (which is binding on Christians) and the token that was attached to this covenant (which is not binding on Christians).

As Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 7:19, “**circumcision is nothing**, and uncircumcision is nothing”. What Paul meant was: circumcision was never the real issue in the covenant in Genesis 17; it was nothing more than a token that God had added to that covenant. And therefore circumcision is also not required of people who live by the new covenant. **The new covenant has a new token attached to it**, namely that God gives us His holy spirit. In a way we could also view baptism as “the token” God has attached to the new covenant.

Dividing the text of these two verses correctly and applying the appropriate punctuation makes all of this much easier to see.

A CORRECT DIVISION OF THESE VERSES:

This *is* my covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your seed after you. (**v 10**)

Every man child among you shall be circumcised, and you shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt Me and you. And he that is eight days old ... . (**v 11-12**)

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THESE VERSES:

God made a covenant with Abraham that he and his descendants were to live in honesty and in integrity before God. To outwardly show their willingness and commitment to live by these terms, God added the token of circumcision to this covenant.

In the New Testament that covenant is just as binding on Christians, and even more so. But in the New Testament **the token** to indicate the commitment to live by this covenant **was changed** from circumcision to both, baptism and to receiving the down-payment, the first instalment as it were, of the holy spirit. Same covenant but a different token.

**#17 = GENESIS 21:33**

THE VERSE:

And *Abraham* planted **a grove** in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

The idea of “groves” is generally associated with pagan customs and idolatry. “Grove” often refers to a carved idol. For example, in 2 Kings 23:6 we see that King Josiah “brought out **the grove** from the house of the LORD” and burned it. So when this verse tells us that Abraham planted “a grove” it sounds somewhat questionable.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

There are several different Hebrew words that are at times translated as “grove” in the KJV. The Hebrew word that refers to pagan religious customs and practices is “asherah”. This word is used in Exodus 34:13, where God told Israel: “you shall cut down their groves”.

However, in Genesis 21:33 the Hebrew word used is “eshel”, which word is only used three times in the Old Testament. This word simply means “**a tree**”, and in a number of translations it is translated as “tamarisk tree”. The other two places where “eshel” is used are 1 Samuel 22:6 and 1 Samuel 31:13; in both these verses it is rendered as “a tree” in the KJV.

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

And *Abraham* planted **a tree** in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

This verse simply states that Abraham planted a tree at this well, which his servants had dug. The tree had no religious significance of any kind to Abraham. With the connotation which “a grove” has in other parts of the Bible (Exodus 34:13, etc.), it is not appropriate to here render “eshel” as “a grove”.

This is an example of the problems that arise when different people are responsible for translating different books of the Bible, as was the case with the KJV. If the man who translated 1 Samuel had also been responsible for translating Genesis, then the word “grove” would never have been used in this verse. It would have contained the word “tree”. Many of the inconsistencies in the KJV translation can be led back to different scholars having been responsible for translating different books of the Old Testament.

**#18 = GENESIS 22:1**

THE VERSE:

And it came to pass after these things, that God did **tempt** Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, *here* I *am*.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRANSLATION:

The early English translators translated the Hebrew word “nacah” here by simply anglicizing the Latin word in the Latin Vulgate Translation. In that verse the Vulgate translated the Hebrew “nacah” with the Latin word “temptavit”. That is why the English text reads “tempt”.

We generally associate the word “tempt” with the prospect of sinning. But that is not the connotation conveyed by the Hebrew verb “nacah”.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS TRANSLATION:

**Originally** the English word “tempt” meant: to try the strength of something, to test. But **today** this word “tempt” has the meaning of: entice to do something that is wrong. And that is certainly not what is meant here in Genesis 22:1. Today we generally apply the following meanings to the following English verbs:

1) **To Tempt** = to see whether or not someone is willing to do **something that is wrong**.

2) **To Test**, **To Prove** = to see whether or not someone will do or achieve **something that is right**. Doing something that is wrong does not really enter the picture. And this is what God was doing in Genesis 22.

God was not testing Abraham to establish whether or not Abraham was willing to break one of God’s laws, and do something that is wrong. God was testing Abraham as to whether or not Abraham was prepared to make an enormous sacrifice for God, which went far beyond mere obedience to all of God’s laws.

In this verse the Hebrew verb “nacah” should really be translated as “test” or “prove”. And this is how it is correctly translated in many of the newer translations.

A CORRECT TRANSLATION OF THIS VERSE:

And it came to pass after these things, that God **tested** Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, *here* I *am*.

THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS VERSE:

As James 1:13 points out:

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempts He any man.

God did not “tempt” Abraham to do any evil. But God tested Abraham as to whether or not Abraham was willing to do much more than is required by the law. God was testing Abraham’s character and unconditional commitment to God.