

# EXCERPTS FROM:

Hebrew Bible Quotes that  
Have Been Misunderstood  
for Thousands of Years

Volume 1: Quotes from  
Genesis to 2 Kings

By Kenneth Greifer



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Some of these books or parts of these books were also published as *How to Fix the Book of Psalms*, *How to Fix the Book of Isaiah*, *How to Fix Isaiah 53*, and *An Amateur's Discovery of the Original Isaiah 53*.

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# INTRODUCTION

## TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF THE HEBREW BIBLE

There are many books written by Bible scholars about possible mistakes in Hebrew Bible quotes and how to analyze them to figure out what these quotes might have originally said. You can find these books under titles that say things like “textual criticism” and “Hebrew Bible.”

My book is different because I am not a Hebrew Bible scholar, but an amateur Hebrew Bible researcher, and I am not trying to teach you how to do textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible. Instead, I want to tell you about Hebrew Bible quotes that I think have mistakes in them that Bible scholars have not been able to figure out. I also have new explanations for many quotes that I think have been misunderstood by scholars for thousands of years.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF VOWELS

In English, words are spelled with letters called consonants and vowels. The vowels, a, e, i, o, and u,

help people understand what words say. Without them, people would have to guess what words say by looking at the consonants and trying out different vowels to see what words would make sense next to each other. If the sentences are normal prose, which means regular writing, then people would have an easier time, but if the sentences are poetic and witty and can say almost anything, then guessing words becomes more difficult.

The Hebrew Bible was written in ancient Hebrew without all of the vowel sounds represented by letters. People had to guess what written words said by looking at the words around each word and guessing what those words said too. Reading the Hebrew Bible was probably like a very complicated guessing game because you had to guess almost every word. If quotes were poetic and witty, like many of them are, then you could guess more than one possible sentence that sounds right.

This whole book is a look at Hebrew Bible quotes that can say and mean more than one thing, if you guess the vowels differently, and if you divide the Hebrew letters into words differently. It is also about quotes that were read correctly, but that are just hard to understand.

## PUNCTUATION

The Hebrew Bible was written without punctuation which makes some quotes harder to understand.

## WORD ORDER

In ancient Hebrew, words were not always written in the same order. You can find quotes with the subject, verbs, and objects of verbs in different orders. You can have subject, verb, object, or verb, subject, object, or object, verb, subject, and possibly other word orders. Sometimes it is hard to tell which word is the subject of a verb and which is the object of a verb.

For example, subject, verb, object:

PSALM 68:12 says “My L-rd (subject) will give (verb) a saying (object of the verb)...”

Verb, subject, object:

PSALM 34:23 says “Redeems (verb) the L-rd (subject) the soul of His servants (object of the verb)...” which really means “The L-rd redeems the soul of His servants...”

Object, verb, subject:

PSALM 107:18 says “All food (object of the verb) will hate (verb) their soul (subject)...” which really means “Their soul will hate all food...”

## MEANINGS OF ANCIENT WORDS

Experts don't know every word of Biblical Hebrew and all of their possible meanings from thousands of years ago. Not every word was written down in the ancient documents they have, and not every possible meaning for every word was used in these ancient documents. Also, some words are used just once or a few times, so they have to make a lot of guesses about their possible meanings.

They can use ancient translations to figure out meanings of words, but then they have to know all of the possible meanings of words in that other language, and they have to decide if the translators were right five hundred to a thousand years or more after the books were originally written. They can also try to guess word meanings from similar words in similar ancient languages, but they might not have the same meanings.

## SPACING BETWEEN WORDS

Biblical Hebrew did not have letters for every

vowel sound. Because of this, a few Hebrew letters next to each other could be read more than one way and could be easily grouped into words wrong. The second possibility is controversial because scribes used to put dots between the words which should have prevented mistakes in how the letters were grouped together into words<sup>1</sup>. Later, spaces were put between the words instead of dots, so maybe that is when mistakes started to happen. I don't know when the mistakes happened or why, but I think they did happen.

Some ancient languages did not put spaces or dots between words, but wrote all of the words in long lines of letters called continuous writing. Experts don't know if the Hebrew Bible was originally written this way or not, but if it was, the letters might have been divided into words wrong later.

Since Hebrew does not have letters for every vowel sound, and without the vowel letters, words are hard to recognize, it would have been easy to divide the words wrong. Also, Hebrew words can be very hard to recognize anyway. For example, sometimes you add letters to the beginning, middle, or end of verbs, and

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<sup>1</sup> "Writing." *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. 1995. Page 1148.

sometimes you drop letters in the beginning, middle, or end of verbs, and sometimes you have to add and drop letters to the same verb.

There are also a few quotes in the Masoretic (traditional) Jewish text that have some words written without spaces between them. For example, JOB 38:1 and 40:6 have "from the storm" written as one word instead of two. Also, DEUTERONOMY 33:2 has "fire of a tradition" as one word instead of two. PSALM 23:4 says "the valley of the shadow of death" with the words "shadow of death" written as one word.

Since all of our manuscripts in Hebrew, Aramaic, and other languages were written hundreds of years to two thousand years after the original manuscripts, we can't know for sure if the letters originally were divided into words differently.

Some people say that you should not say the letters were divided differently if you can't prove it with an ancient manuscript. It is possible that thousands of years ago people did not understand certain quotes, so they had to guess what those quotes said. Maybe they guessed wrong and the mistakes became accepted and common, so that is why there are no manuscripts with the letters divided differently.

## NUMBER OF WORDS

The whole Hebrew Bible (the Five Books of Moses plus all of the other prophets and writings) has around three hundred thousand words.<sup>2</sup> Since all of these were written down by hand for thousands of years, it is possible that mistakes might have happened and been passed down from generation to generation without people knowing it.

## DIFFERENT ALPHABET

Thousands of years ago, Hebrew was written with a different alphabet. When the Jewish people went into exile in Babylon, they learned to speak Aramaic and they started to use the Aramaic alphabet. Some letters of the new alphabet had a different form if the letter was at the end of a word which makes it harder to accidentally group Hebrew letters into words wrong.<sup>3</sup>

The old Hebrew alphabet did not have these

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<sup>2</sup> Freedman, David Noel. *The Unity of the Hebrew Bible*. The University of Michigan Press. United States. 1991. Page 4.

<sup>3</sup> "Writing." *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. 1995. Page 1148.

different end letters, so words written in the old letters might have been divided into words wrong already. Also, some of the people might have been better at Aramaic than Hebrew, so they might have made mistakes when the Hebrew Bible was rewritten with the new letters.

## MASORETIC TEXT TODAY

Many commentators say that ancient Jewish scribes were extremely careful about copying the Hebrew Bible by hand and that they even counted the letters and words to make sure every word was copied correctly.

It might be true that they were very careful, but that does not mean they always did that. They might have started being extremely careful after mistakes already existed. Also, counting the letters and words does not prevent mistakes because you can write all of the letters and still have some of them divided into words wrong.

Also, ancient scholars could not pass down the vowels in writing because they did not have written symbols for all of the vowel sounds until thousands of years later when they invented them and added them to manuscripts. By then, they could have been wrong

about what the correct vowels were in many words.

Some people say that the Masoretic (traditional) Jewish text is almost exactly the same all over the world today, so that shows that everyone passed down the same text every where. The text is almost identical because the Masoretic scholars all over the world spent hundreds of years fixing the differences in Masoretic manuscripts and because they probably started with similar manuscripts that could have had the same mistakes in them already.

Not every ancient manuscript is the same as today's Masoretic text. If you compare the Dead Sea scrolls' text of ISAIAH called the Great Isaiah Scroll with the Masoretic text, you will find over two thousand six hundred differences<sup>4</sup>.

## ORAL TRADITIONS

Some people say that ancient people were very good at passing down oral (unwritten) traditions, so the Hebrew Bible was probably passed down almost perfectly. First, the Hebrew Bible was passed down in

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<sup>4</sup> According to the internet site of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem which has that scroll.

writing and orally because the consonants were written down, but the vowel sounds were not, so they had to be memorized. Second, there is no proof that they could pass down an oral tradition almost perfectly unless you can show an original oral tradition and compare it to what they had thousands of years later. If you don't have the original version, how can you say the latest version is the same as the original? Thirdly, Jewish scribes and scholars would have had to memorize the written Hebrew Bible and a very large oral tradition that was later written down in the Talmud. I doubt most people could memorize that much information perfectly.

#### DID PEOPLE READ THE HEBREW BIBLE A LOT THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO?

It is possible that Jewish people thousands of years ago might not have studied all of the Hebrew Bible all day every day like some people today think. They might have focused on the Five Books of Moses and barely studied the rest.

It is also possible that people did not have copies of most of the Hebrew Bible easily available to them even if they wanted to read it all day because they were handwritten and might have cost a lot for that time.

Maybe the few people who had copies read them, but did not memorize everything they read.

## PSALM 12:7-8

Some people say that PSALM 12:7-8 says that G-d will preserve His words, so the Hebrew Bible must have been passed down absolutely perfectly. They translate the quotes as “the sayings (feminine plural) of the L-rd are pure sayings...” and “You, L-rd, will keep them (masculine plural them). You will preserve them (it really says us, it, or him) from this generation forever.”

The word “sayings” is a feminine plural noun, so this does not fit their belief that the psalm says that G-d will preserve His sayings. The quote says He will keep them (masculine plural.) The quote could mean that G-d will preserve the poor and righteous people mentioned in PSALM 12:2 and 6 because those words are masculine plural. The quote also does not say “You will preserve them (feminine plural)...”,but “You will preserve us, it or him.”

## USUAL TRANSLATIONS

Most Bible translations are very similar, except

for a few minor details, so I usually don't quote any particular Hebrew Bible translation, but I give what I call the "usual translation" of a quote which sounds like what most of them say. I also don't cite many scholars or commentaries when I explain how quotes are usually explained because most scholars and commentaries say the same things.

When I quote the Jewish Publication Society of America's 1917 translation of the Hebrew Bible called *The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text, A New Translation*, I modernize the English, so that "thee", "thy", and "thou" become "you" and "your." I also make some other minor changes.

## ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATIONS

The alternative translations in this book are my own translations. Usually, I just show that the quotes can say different things without changing any of the letters. And sometimes, I divide the Hebrew letters into words differently without changing any of the letters.

Although this book seems very difficult because it is about different ways to translate Hebrew quotes, you don't have to know Hebrew to understand it because I try to explain everything as easily as possible in English.

## RARE DETAILS

Sometimes people say that the translations and explanations in my books are wrong because no other Hebrew Bible quotes say the same thing. They know that some words and phrases are only used once in the Hebrew Bible, and some verbs are used only once in some forms, and most prophecies are not repeated.

When something fits their beliefs, they don't consider if it is rare or common, but when something disagrees with their beliefs, they want to see more examples of the same thing to prove that it can be right. They ignore all of the rare word meanings, phrases, verbs, and prophecies that they accept as correct, but they want proof that does not exist for things they disagree with.

## CONTRADICTIONS

There are many books that discuss possible contradictions in the Hebrew Bible and explanations for them. I don't discuss possible contradictions very much in this book because I am more interested in trying to understand what confusing Hebrew Bible quotes say.

I know that some quotes and stories in the

Hebrew Bible are written in more than one place with minor differences in the quotes or stories. In my opinion, if there is more than one version of a quote or a story, that does not mean every version is wrong and that the whole Hebrew Bible is false. One of the versions could be right, even if you don't know which one. Also, I think there could be reasonable explanations if you look carefully, but I don't do that very much in this book.

#### FOOTNOTES AND WORKS CITED

I am going to try to cite sources of some of the information that is in this book, but I am not going to follow the unnecessarily complicated rules that scholars follow. I am just going to try to give the information in what I consider a simpler way.

I am not going to cite a lot of sources because almost every translation and commentary says the same things. Also, you can easily look on the internet and find many books and articles on every Bible quote, so it doesn't really matter if you look at the same book or article that I mention.

#### BOOK, CHAPTER, LINE (VERSE)

In case you are new to reading the Hebrew Bible, you need to understand that quotes are cited by the book title, chapter number, and line or verse numbers. For example, JEREMIAH 9: 22-23 means the book of JEREMIAH (which I like to capitalize), chapter 9, lines or verses 22-23.

Also, you need to know that the quotes in this book are from the Jewish version of the Hebrew Bible. Quotes from other versions of the Hebrew Bible are different some times.

# MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS

Before I discuss specific Hebrew Bible quotes, I would like to discuss some miscellaneous topics that I think are important.

## 1. ADDING TO THE HEBREW BIBLE

Many commentators explain Hebrew Bible quotes by saying things that are not written anywhere in the Hebrew Bible as if they were undeniable facts. It is hard to find written quotes to disprove these unwritten claims, so sometimes I just say that the Hebrew Bible does not say what these commentators are claiming and that is all I can do.

Also, translators often add words to translations that are not actually written in the Hebrew Bible, so quotes sound better and make more sense.

## 2. CAN G-D BE SEEN?

EXODUS 33:20-23 (JPS 1917)

“And He (G-d) said: ‘You cannot see My face, for a man shall not see Me and live.’ ”

“And the L-rd said: ‘Behold, there is a place by Me and you shall stand upon the rock. And it shall come to pass, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in a cleft (crack) of the rock, and will cover you with My hand until I have passed by. And I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen.’ ”

In EXODUS 33:20-23, G-d tells Moses that He will pass by him, but Moses can only see His back because a man can't see G-d's face or front and live. For thousands of years, people have been trying to understand why the Hebrew Bible says that G-d can't be seen, but in some quotes G-d is seen.

### VISIONS OF G-D

Most prophets saw G-d in visions and dreams, and I think that they could do this because they were

not really seeing G-d. I think they were actually seeing an image of G-d. The problem is that the Hebrew Bible does not always say that a prophet saw an image of G-d in a vision or a dream. Sometimes, it just says that a prophet saw G-d, and then it describes what the prophet saw.

For example, ISAIAH 6:1-5 says that Isaiah saw G-d in the Temple with his eyes. This sounds like the prophet saw G-d in reality, and not in a vision, but a prophet could see G-d with his eyes in a vision too.

For example, EZEKIEL 8:4 says that the prophet Ezekiel saw G-d in a vision, and then EZEKIEL 8:5 says that G-d told Ezekiel to turn his eyes to look in a certain direction, and Ezekiel turned his eyes that direction and looked, even though he was looking in a vision.

In EZEKIEL 40:2, G-d brought Ezekiel to the Temple in a vision, and in EZEKIEL 40:4, He says to Ezekiel to look with his eyes and to listen with his ears, even though this was taking place in a vision.

In GENESIS 31:10-12, Jacob tells about a dream he had while watching his father-in-law's flock where the angel of G-d spoke to him. GENESIS 31:10 says that Jacob lifted up his eyes and saw what the male goats looked like, and in GENESIS 31:12, the angel tells Jacob to lift up his eyes and see the male goats. Even though he sees them in a dream, he still lifts up his eyes to see

them.

## EXODUS 33:20-23

EXODUS 33:20 says people can't see G-d's face and live, although Moses was allowed to see G-d's back, but not His face, in EXODUS 33:23.

## SEEING G-D "FACE TO FACE"

The Hebrew Bible says that G-d spoke to people of Israel "face to face" in DEUTERONOMY 5:4, but that does not have to mean they saw G-d's face. The phrase "face to face" could mean G-d is talking to a person in reality, outside of the person's mind, and not in a vision or a dream in a person's mind.

DEUTERONOMY 5:4 says G-d spoke to Israel "face to face" (or "face against face" because it does not really say the word "to"), but DEUTERONOMY 4:12-15 says they saw no form or image, they only heard a voice. This shows that "face to face" does not mean they actually saw His face or any image.

EXODUS 33:11 says that G-d spoke to Moses "face to face", but in EXODUS 33:20 G-d said to Moses that he won't be able to see G-d's face, but only G-d's back, as G-d passes by him.

## WHY MOSES WAS A UNIQUE PROPHET

I think Moses was unique as a prophet because he could talk to G-d “face to face” and not just in visions and dreams. DEUTERONOMY 34:10-12 says: “And did not rise up a prophet again in Israel like Moses, who the L-rd knew him face to face, for all of the signs and wonders that the L-rd sent him to do in the land of Egypt for Pharaoh and for all of his servants and for all of his land, and for all of the strong hand and for all of the great terror that Moses did to (before) the eyes of all of Israel.”

I think other people could not take hearing G-d speak, except in a vision or a dream. For example, when G-d gave the ten commandments to the people, He spoke to them “face to face” (DEUTERONOMY 5:4), but they could not take hearing Him speak, and they told Moses to talk to G-d for them because they were afraid that they were going to die. See EXODUS 20:15-18 and DEUTERONOMY 5:19-24 (which repeats the story).

EXODUS 25:21-22 and NUMBERS 7:89 describe how Moses would hear G-d’s voice in the tent of meeting when they were traveling in the wilderness.

EYE TO EYE

NUMBERS 14:14 is usually translated "...face to face You, L-rd, are seen...", but the quote really says "eye against eye You, L-rd, are seen..." or "eye to eye, L-rd, You are seen..." Then it says that G-d's cloud and pillar of fire were with the people. Maybe this shows that they saw G-d because they saw the cloud and pillar of fire He traveled in. The same words are used in ISAIAH 52:8 which says that G-d will be seen "eye to eye" (eye against eye) returning to Zion.

Maybe seeing G-d "eye to eye" means they saw G-d in reality like "face to face" might mean, and not in a vision or dream.

#### EXODUS 24:9-11

In EXODUS 24:1-2, G-d told Moses to come up to Him on the mountain with some other people and seventy elders, but only Moses would come close to Him. Later, EXODUS 24:12-18 says that G-d called Moses and his servant Joshua to come up to Him on the mountain and that a cloud covered the mountain and G-d's glory was like a fire on the top of it.

Before Moses and Joshua went up the mountain, EXODUS 24:9-11 says that Moses and some other people saw G-d, but it does not say if they saw him in a vision, a dream, or face to face. I think they saw Him in

a vision because EXODUS 33:20 says that people can't see G-d and live. EXODUS 24:9-11 says they saw G-d, and they ate and drank, but they did not go up the mountain to where G-d's glory was.

EXODUS 24:10-11 also says that they saw G-d, and G-d did not stretch forth His hand to the nobles of the children of Israel. Some commentators say that this means that G-d did not punish them for looking at Him. Other commentators say that it means that G-d did not put His spirit on them like He did later in NUMBERS 11:16-17 and NUMBERS 11:24-26 when He made many elders become prophets to help Moses with the people.

For examples of quotes where G-d put His hand to or against people to punish them, see EXODUS 3:20, 1 SAMUEL 5:6-7, 1 SAMUEL 5:9, 1 SAMUEL 7:13, and EZEKIEL 13:9. For examples of quotes where G-d put His hand to or on prophets to make them prophesy when they were awake, see 1 KINGS 18:46 and 2 KINGS 3:15. For examples of G-d putting His hand to or on a prophet to make him prophesy in a vision, see EZEKIEL 1:1-3, EZEKIEL 3:14, EZEKIEL 37:1, and EZEKIEL 40:1-2.

EZEKIEL 8:1-3 is similar to EXODUS 24:1-11 because Ezekiel the prophet was sitting with seventy elders when the hand of the L-rd fell on him and he saw visions of G-d. It doesn't say anything about the elders

seeing anything too.

### 3. THE "PUPPET ANGEL": DOES G - D SPEAK THROUGH AN ANGEL?

The word "angel" in Hebrew means "messenger" and can be used for people like in GENESIS 32:4 and 32:7 or for angels from heaven like in many quotes in the Hebrew Bible.

Sometimes an angel called "the angel of the L-rd" appeared to people and said "thus says the L-rd" and gave a message from G-d, and sometimes it appeared and spoke like it was G-d without saying "thus says the L-rd." For examples, see GENESIS 16:10 and GENESIS 31:11-13.

The identity of this angel is controversial. Some commentators believe that G-d appeared to people in the Hebrew Bible as this angel. Other commentators say that an angel is a messenger that represents G-d, so it does not have to say "thus says the L-rd" always. When it speaks as G-d, you are supposed to understand that it is just giving a message from G-d.

I think the angel of the L-rd was an angel that brought messages from G-d sometimes, so it said “thus says the L-rd” Other times, I think G-d spoke through the angel’s mouth directly to the person like the angel was a telephone or a puppet, so the angel did not have to say “thus says the L-rd.”

#### G-D'S PRESENCE (NAME) IN ANGEL?

EXODUS 23:20

USUAL TRANSLATION

“Behold, I am sending an angel (a messenger) before you to keep you (to guard you) in (on) your way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared.”

EXODUS 23:21

USUAL TRANSLATION

“Be careful from (of) his presence and listen to his voice. Do not rebel against him because he will not forgive your sins because My name is in his midst.”

EXODUS 23:22

USUAL TRANSLATION

“But if you will listen to his voice and you will do all that I will speak, then (and) I will be an enemy to your enemies (then My hatred is with your enemies), and I will oppress your oppressors.”

## G-D'S NAME IN AN ANGEL

EXODUS 23:20-22 mentions an angel that has G-d's name in it and that the people should listen to it's voice and do all that G-d will speak. I think that G-d's name in the angel was really His presence in the angel, so G-d could speak to people through the angel's mouth if He wanted to. It probably sounded like the angel was talking, but really G-d was talking through it to people. I think the person would hear the angel's voice, but G-d would be speaking.

DEUTERONOMY 12:5, 11, and 21 and DEUTERONOMY 14:23-24 and some more quotes mention that G-d will put His name a certain place. This could mean He will put His presence in a certain place, but the Hebrew Bible does not really explain what G-d meant by this.

I think G-d put His spirit on prophets who spoke for Him, but He put His name (or His presence) in the angel that He spoke through. The Hebrew Bible does not say if only one angel spoke as G-d or if more than

one angel did it.

ISAIAH 63:9 also mentions the angel of G-d's presence which might be the same angel mentioned in EXODUS 23:20-22.

### JACOB WRESTLED AN ANGEL

In GENESIS 32:31, after wrestling a man (an angel), Jacob called a place "G-d's Presence" (which also can mean "G-d's face") because he saw G-d face to face. If G-d's presence was in the angel, and Jacob was not having a vision or a dream, then he was seeing G-d in reality, although he did not actually see G-d.

Some commentators say that the Hebrew word for G-d in this quote can mean "G-d" or "divine being", so it can be used for an angel. They say GENESIS 32:31 says Jacob saw "a divine being face to face" instead of "G-d face to face." I don't think this is correct.

HOSEA 12:4-5 also mention Jacob wrestling this angel which might be the angel of G-d's presence with G-d's presence (name) in it. HOSEA 12:4 says "in his youth" or "by his strength", Jacob wrestled with G-d (with gods) and he prevailed to (against) an angel. ("To" is also used this way in JEREMIAH 1:19 and 15:20.)

Maybe it means Jacob wrestled with gods while living with Laban (an idol worshipper). Maybe he

fought the belief in them. Or maybe it means he wrestled G-d because G-d's presence was in the angel.

### “FACE” OR “PRESENCE”

The plural noun “panim” פָּנִים can mean “face, surface, front, or presence”, and it is used with a plural verb. For example, GENESIS 4:5-6 says that Cain’s “face” fell (plural verb) which probably meant that he was sad or upset about something.

The word “panim” is used to mean “a presence” in only a few quotes.

In EXODUS 33:12, Moses asks G-d who G-d will send with Moses to lead the people, and in EXODUS 33:14, G-d says, “My face (My presence) will go...” Then in EXODUS 33:15, Moses says, “If Your face (Your presence) is not going...”, then G-d should leave them where they are.

In ISAIAH 63:9, an angel is called “the angel of His face (His presence)” meaning the angel of G-d’s face or presence.

DEUTERONOMY 4:37 says, “...and He caused you to go forth with (in) (by) הַיְהוָה His face (His presence) with (by) His great strength (great power) from Egypt.”

In 2 SAMUEL 17:11, a man says to another man,

“...and your face (your presence) is going (plural verb) into the battle.”

#### GENESIS 32:29

GENESIS 32:29 says "...not Jacob will be called still (again) your name, but Israel, because (when) ׀ ׀ you (Jacob) have wrestled with G-d (gods) and with men, and you have prevailed (and you will prevail)."

Maybe in the future when Jacob successfully beats idol worship, then he (or his descendants) will not be called Jacob, but Israel. Maybe that is why he was still called Jacob after that event.

#### ISALIAH 30:20 AND 27

ISALIAH 30:20 says "...and your eyes will be seeing your Teacher (G-d)...", and ISALIAH 30:27 says "behold, the name of the L-rd is coming..." Maybe ISALIAH 30:20 means they will see a vision of G-d, or they will see the angel of G-d's presence with His name in it.

#### APPEARANCES OF ANGELS

In GENESIS 31:11, Jacob saw the angel of G-d in a dream, and the angel spoke like it was G-d. It did not say "thus says the L-rd..." Still Jacob did not say he saw G-d "face to face" that time because I think it means when a person is awake and sees G-d.

In EXODUS 3:2-6, G-d appeared to Moses in a burning bush. It also says the angel of G-d was there. Maybe G-d spoke to Moses through the angel's mouth. It also says that Moses was afraid to look at G-d. Maybe at that time Moses did not understand that the angel has G-d's name (presence) in it, and that G-d was speaking to him through the angel, so he was afraid to look at G-d. Or maybe G-d's presence was there and not in the angel, so Moses was right to not want to look at G-d's presence.

In JUDGES 13, Samson's father and mother thought the angel of the L-rd was actually a man of G-d (a prophet), but later they realized it was an angel when it went up a fire to heaven. In JUDGES 13:22, Samson's father said he thought they would die because they saw G-d. Maybe he thought the angel was G-d, or that the fire going up to heaven was G-d taking up his sacrifice, or the angel was the angel of G-d's presence with G-d's presence (name) in it.

Samson's father was wrong to think they would die because the angel of the L-rd had appeared to other

people in the Hebrew Bible before him, and they did not die. If he knew about the Torah, he should have known that people did not die from seeing that angel. He might have also been wrong about the angel being G-d, although it is possible that people then considered the angel of G-d's presence to be G-d since His presence was in it. Maybe they understood that G-d did not appear as an angel, but in an angel.

In JUDGES 6:11, an angel appears to a man called Gideon, and talks to him. Then in JUDGES 6:14-16, G-d talks to Gideon, but it doesn't say if G-d is speaking through the angel's mouth or not. I think G-d is speaking to him through the angel's mouth, but I am not sure. After that, in JUDGES 6:17-21, Gideon brings some food for the angel, and the angel touches it with a staff, and a fire goes up from it, and the angel disappears. In JUDGES 6:22-23, Gideon realizes that he saw the angel of the L-rd face to face and he becomes afraid, but G-d says to him that he should not be afraid because he won't die from seeing the angel. G-d continues to talk to him in JUDGES 6:25-26.

JUDGES 6:21-26 is confusing because the angel talking to Gideon "left from his eyes", but G-d is still talking to him somehow. Maybe the angel was still there, but could not be seen, and G-d could still speak through it. In NUMBERS 22:22-31, a man could not see

the angel of the L-rd standing near him until G-d opened his eyes and let him see it. Also, in 2 KINGS 6:8-17, the prophet Elisha and his servant is surrounded by an Aramean army, but he is not worried because he can see many chariots and horses of fire from heaven that are protecting him and his servant. The Aramean army and his servant can't see them, even though they were all around them. In 2 KINGS 6:17, G-d opens the servant's eyes, and he sees them also.

It is also possible that G-d spoke to Gideon in JUDGES 6 in a vision or by His spirit being on Gideon, but it doesn't say that the spirit of G-d is on him until JUDGES 6:34.

In JOSHUA 5:15, the ground by an angel was holy. Maybe that is where they did the circumcisions in Gilgal in JOSHUA 5, which might have made the ground holy from the blood, or maybe G-d's presence (name) was in the angel, so the ground was holy from G-d's presence (name) being there.

Some translations say that Joshua fell to his face to the ground and worshiped the angel, but the word translated "worshiped" in this quote is also used to mean "bowing." It could say that Joshua fell to his face to the ground and bowed.

There are many examples of this word being used when people bowed to other people to show

respect without worshipping them. For examples, see GENESIS 23:7, 23:12, 43:26 and 1 KINGS 1:23. It also would make sense for Joshua to bow to the angel to show it respect because it had G-d's presence in it and it was a very important angel.

In DANIEL 3, the king of Babylon has three of Daniel's friends thrown into a furnace, but they survive, and the king sees a fourth man in the furnace with them. In DANIEL 3:25, the king of Babylon says that the fourth man looks like "a son of G-d" or "a son of gods." He probably meant an angel because he also calls the man an angel in DANIEL 3:28. Angels might also have been called "sons of G-d" in GENESIS 6:2, JOB 1:6, and JOB 2:1.

ECCLESIASTES 5:5 is not very easy to understand. It mentions an angel that seems to keep track of vows.

## THE ANGEL AND FORGIVENESS

Some commentators say that the angel in ZECHARIAH 3 must be G-d appearing in the form of an angel because in ZECHARIAH 3:4 the angel says that it has caused to pass away from upon the high priest Joshua his iniquity, and that since an angel can't forgive sins, this angel must really be G-d.

It is possible the angel in ZECHARIAH 3:4 had G-d's name or presence in it, so that G-d spoke through the angel to the high priest, and it sounded like the angel was speaking as G-d. It is also possible that the angel was speaking as itself and that it had removed the high priest's sin somehow, possibly by removing his dirty clothing. I discuss ZECHARIAH 3:4 in it's own chapter in volume 3.

There are some other quotes that mention angels and the forgiving of sins.

EXODUS 23:20-22 says that G-d sent an angel with G-d's name (presence) in it before the children of Israel in the wilderness, and that they should obey it because the angel won't forgive their sins if they don't.

In ISAIAH 6:5-7, Isaiah sees G-d sitting on His throne, and Isaiah says he has unclean lips, so an angel (one of the seraphim) touches a coal against his lips, and then the angel says that his sin has turned away, and his sin was atoned for.

The Hebrew Bible does not say that the angel in ZECHARIAH 3 or in ISAIAH 6 was told what to do, but somehow they knew what to do. I think angels do what G-d wants without G-d having to always say out loud what to do.

## 4. PLURAL WORDS FOR G-D

### THE PLURAL WORD FOR "G-D" OR "GODS"

One of the words for G-d in Hebrew אֱלֹהִים is a plural word that can also mean "gods." This word is used for "G-d" many times in the Hebrew Bible, and almost of all of the time it takes a singular verb. There are a few quotes where it is used with a plural verb, but I think those quotes are misunderstood in some way. I discuss all of those quotes in their own chapters throughout these books. For some examples, see GENESIS 20:13 and EXODUS 22:8.

This plural word was also used for the other gods as individual gods, just like it was used for the G-d of Israel. For examples of individual gods of other nations being called this word, see GENESIS 31:53, JUDGES 6:31, JUDGES 8:33, JUDGES 11:24 (used with a singular verb), JUDGES 16:23-24 (used with a singular verb), 1 SAMUEL 5:7, 1 KINGS 11:5, 1 KINGS 11:33, 1 KINGS 18:16-27, 2 KINGS 1:2-16, and ISAIAH 37:38.

There are also some singular words for G-d. For examples of the singular word אֱלֹהֵי, see DEUTERONOMY 32:4 and GENESIS 14:22. For examples of the singular word אֱלֹהֵי, see

DEUTERONOMY 32:15 and DEUTERONOMY 32:17.

### MOSES CALLED "G-D"

Some commentators say that Moses is called the plural word for G-d in EXODUS 4:16 and EXODUS 7:1, so they say that the word must have a singular meaning. Those two quotes say that Moses will be "G-d" or "a god", and Aaron his brother will be a "mouth" or a prophet for him, because Moses didn't think he could talk for G-d in EXODUS 4:10-16.

Even though it says Moses will be to Aaron "for G-d" or "for a god", it could mean he will represent G-d or he will act like a god to Aaron who will speak for him. In this case, you can't say the plural word for G-d has a singular meaning just because it is used for a man because he might be representing the G-d of Israel.

### THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

The ten commandments in EXODUS 20:3 and DEUTERONOMY 5:7 could show that the plural word for G-d in Hebrew can have a singular meaning because the verb "will be" in both quotes is singular, even though the words "other gods" are plural.

## USUAL TRANSLATIONS

"You will have no other gods before Me."

Literally: "**Other** (plural adjective) **gods** (plural noun) will not be (singular verb) to you before Me (against My presence) (above My presence) (upon My presence)."

If the quote says, "**Other gods** (plural) will not be (singular verb) to you before Me", it should have a plural verb.

## ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION

"**Another** (plural adjective) **god** (plural noun with a singular meaning) **will not be** (singular verb) to you before Me (against My presence) (above My presence) (upon My presence)."

Written more simply:

"**Another god will not be** (singular verb) to you before Me (against My presence) (above My presence) (upon My presence)."

I think this quote shows that the plural word for G-d can have a singular meaning for other gods too.

## TO BE

Usually when the verb "to be" is used with a plural subject, the verb is plural. NUMBERS 3:12 says "the Levites (plural) will be (plural) for Me (Mine)." NUMBERS 3:13 "...all of the first born in Israel...will be (plural) for Me (Mine)." DEUTERONOMY 21:15 "if (when) will be (plural feminine) two wives to a man..." Also see GENESIS 48:5-6.

There are examples of a special form of the verb "to be" (yehi) being used with plural subjects and singular verbs. Some examples are 1 KINGS 5:29, JUDGES 10:4, JUDGES 12:9, GENESIS 1:3, and GENESIS 1:14.

## G-D CALLS HIMSELF I, HE, AND BY HIS OWN NAME

Sometimes G-d uses "I" and "He" to talk about Himself. For example, in the ten commandments EXODUS 20 and DEUTERONOMY 5, G-d uses "I" and "He."

Sometimes G-d says "I" more than once in a

quote. For example, G-d says "I, I..." in DEUTERONOMY 32:39. In DEUTERONOMY 16:20, G-d said "justice, justice...", in JEREMIAH 22:29 He said "land, land, land...", in EZEKIEL 21:32 "a ruin, a ruin, a ruin...", and in EZEKIEL 21:13 and 33 "sword, sword..." It is possible that G-d just repeats some words sometimes.

G-d also calls Himself by His own name which is usually translated as "the L-rd." For examples, see NUMBERS 14:20-21 and NUMBERS 18:25-26.

Just for interest, King David also calls himself by his own name, David, in 1 SAMUEL 25:22, 1 CHRONICLES 17:18, 2 SAMUEL 7:20, and in PSALM 18:51.

## PLURAL NOUNS

Not every word in Hebrew is singular. Face, life, sky, water and some other words are plural, and they take plural verbs. The plural word for G-d is different because it usually has a singular verb.

Some words in Hebrew have plural endings even if the meaning of the word is singular, like the word "father." "His father" אביו אבות and "father of" אביו אבות in GENESIS 34:4-6 look plural, but are not plural.

## FACE OR PRESENCE

The Hebrew word פָּנִים is a plural noun that means "face" or "presence", and it is used with plural verbs. For example, GENESIS 4:5 says that "...his (Cain's) face (plural) fell (plural)..." GENESIS 4:6 says "...Why has your face fallen (plural verb)?" 1 SAMUEL 1:18 says "...her face was not (plural verb)..." In EXODUS 33:23, G-d says to Moses that he can see G-d's back, but His face (His presence) "will not be seen (plural verb)." EXODUS 33:14 says "... My presence (G-d's presence) (plural) will go (plural verb)..." EXODUS 33:15 says "...if Your presence (G-d's presence) (plural) is not going (plural verb)..."

## LORD

There are two words translated in English as "L-rd." One word is the four letter name for G-d that Jewish people don't say out loud. The other word is the word "master" or "lord" אֲדֹנָי. The word "lord" is also used for people. For example, Joseph is called "the man, the lord (plural) of the land" in GENESIS 42:30 and 33. Abraham is called "his lord" (plural) in GENESIS 24:9 and in many other quotes. ISAIAH 19:4 says "cruel (singular adjective) master (lord) (plural noun)" about

a person. The singular form of "lord" is used for people in JEREMIAH 34:5 and in GENESIS 45:8 and 9.

The word "lord" looks plural in Hebrew in "his lord" and "lord of", but there are examples of the word meaning "lord of" using the singular form. G-d is called "L-rd (plural) of lords" in DEUTERONOMY 10:17 and PSALM 136:3, and "the L-rd (singular) of all of the earth" in JOSHUA 3:11, ZECHARIAH 4:14, ZECHARIAH 6:5, and PSALM 97:5.

In MALACHI 1:6, G-d calls Himself "L-rd" in plural. In EXODUS 34:23 He uses "L-rd" in singular.

## OTHER PLURAL NOUNS

ISAIAH 54:5 "your Maker" (plural) and "your Husband" ("your Master") (plural) are about G-d. ISAIAH 30:20 "your Teacher" (plural) is about G-d probably. ECCLESIASTES 12:1 "your Creator" (plural).

The Hebrew word for "owner" or "husband" לַיְיָ is used in singular or plural for a single person. EXODUS 21:29 "it's owner" is a plural word for a single person, and is also used with a singular verb. Also, EXODUS 21:36, EXODUS 22:10, ECCLESIASTES 5:10 (also called KOHELETH 5:10), ECCLESIASTES 5:12. For some reason, when the same word is used with "her", the singular form is used. For example, "her husband"

in DEUTERONOMY 24:4, 2 SAMUEL 11:26, PROVERBS 12:4, PROVERBS 31:11, PROVERBS 31:23, and PROVERBS 31:28.

## PLURAL ADJECTIVES

In ISAIAH 19:4, "cruel (singular adjective) master (plural noun)" about a person is unusual because normally the adjective should be plural too. JOSHUA 24:19 says "holy (plural adjective) G-d (plural noun)." 1 SAMUEL 6:20 says "this holy (singular adjective) G-d (plural noun)." PSALM 7:10 says "righteous (singular) G-d (plural)."

In JOSHUA 24:19 "holy (plural adjective) G-d (plural noun)" the plural adjective might be used with the plural noun, even if the noun really has a singular meaning because normally plural adjectives are used with plural nouns.

2 KINGS 19:4 and ISAIAH 37:17 say "living (singular) G-d (plural)." DEUTERONOMY 5:23 and 1 SAMUEL 17:26 and 36 say "living (plural) G-d (plural)."

## BEHEMOT

In JOB 40:15 a single creature is called the word "behemoth" which is a feminine plural Hebrew word that

means "beasts". This might be an example of a plural word used for a singular thing.

## SINGULAR WORD WITH PLURAL MEANING

Just like G-d (plural) in Hebrew sometimes means G-d (singular) and sometimes gods (plural), the word "man"  $\psi \text{ } \text{ } \aleph$  sometimes means man, and sometimes means men (plural). Some quotes that are translated as "the men of Israel" actually say "the man of Israel" in Hebrew. Also, the singular word "man" is used with singular or plural verbs in these quotes. See JUDGES 7:23 (singular verb), JUDGES 9:55 (plural verb), JUDGES 20:17, 20:20 (singular and plural verbs), 20:38, 20:39, 20:41 (also has "man of Benjamin" translated as "men of Benjamin"), 20:42, 20:48 (plural verb), JUDGES 21:1, and 1 CHRONICLES 10:1.

## THE WORD "HOLY ONES"

Some commentators say that the plural word "holy ones" should be translated "the H-ly One" in HOSEA 12:1, PROVERBS 9:10, and PROVERBS 30:3. The plural word in these quotes might refer to G-d because sometimes plural words are used for G-d, or it could refer to the priests, the angels, or the people who

are holy, or maybe to holy things.

## 5. G-D'S SPIRIT AND SOUL

### G-D'S SPIRIT ON PEOPLE

There are many quotes in the Hebrew Bible that mention the spirit of G-d being put on a prophet who then prophesies. For examples, see NUMBERS 11:24-30 and 1 SAMUEL 10:5-11.

Maybe 2 SAMUEL 23:2 describes the experience because it says the spirit of G-d spoke in the writer of the psalm or by the writer of the psalm. Maybe it means the writer heard G-d speak inside of him or that G-d spoke through the writer's mouth.

Sometimes, G-d's spirit is called His holy spirit, but it is also called His good spirit in NEHEMIAH 9:20 and PSALM 143:10. G-d also sent a lying spirit to many prophets in 1 KINGS 22:22, and an evil spirit from G-d scared King Saul in 1 SAMUEL 16:14, and an evil spirit of G-d scared him in 1 SAMUEL 16:15-16. 1 SAMUEL 16:23 calls this spirit a spirit of G-d and an evil spirit. 1 SAMUEL 18:10 also mentions Saul having an evil spirit of G-d.

It is interesting that the four hundred prophets in

1 KINGS 22:22 could not tell they had a lying spirit in them. The Hebrew Bible does not explain how people can tell if a spirit in them is good or bad.

ISAIAH 48:16

Some books translate ISAIAH 48:16 as "...and now, My L-rd, the L-rd, and His spirit has sent me (the prophet Isaiah)."

Actually, ISAIAH 48:16 says "...and now, My L-rd, the L-rd, has sent me (Isaiah the prophet) and His spirit."

In the first translation, it sounds like Isaiah the prophet is saying that G-d and His spirit have sent him. In the second translation, it sounds like Isaiah the prophet is saying that G-d has sent him and G-d's spirit because usually G-d puts His spirit on a prophet when the prophet speaks for G-d.

I have a whole chapter on ISAIAH 48:16 in volume 2.

SPIRIT OF G-D AS AN EMOTION

ISAIAH 63:10 says "...and they rebelled and hurt (and grieved) His holy spirit (G-d's holy spirit)."

I think this quote is about G-d being hurt

emotionally by the people who rebelled against Him.

Usually G-d's spirit refers to His presence that He puts on prophets, but it is also possible that G-d's spirit can refer to His feelings just like the word "spirit" is used for people's emotions.

The word "spirit" רִיחַ is often used for people's emotions in the Hebrew Bible. For example, GENESIS 41:8 says "and his spirit (the king of Egypt's spirit) was disturbed." NUMBERS 5:14 says a spirit of jealousy is upon a man. See also DANIEL 2:1 "...and his spirit (the king of Babylon's spirit) was troubled..." and 2:3 "...and my spirit (king of Babylon's spirit) was troubled...", ECCLESIASTES (KOHLELET) 10:4 "If the spirit of the ruler will rise up against you...", PSALM 106:33 "...because they made bitter his spirit (Moses' spirit)", and PSALM 143:7 "...my spirit has failed (wasted away)..."

ISAIAH 54:6 says "...like a woman abandoned and grieved of spirit..." with the same verb "to grieve" as in ISAIAH 63:10 "...and they rebelled and hurt (and grieved) His holy spirit."

In JOB 21:4, Job asks if his spirit should be short (impatient). MICAH 2:7 asks "Is the spirit of the L-rd short (impatient)?" with the same verb.

In 2 KINGS 19:7, the prophet Isaiah said that G-d will put a "spirit" in the king of Assyria to cause him to

return to his land. In 2 KINGS 19:28, G-d also said that He will put a hook in the king's nose and His bridle in his lips and turn him back to where he came from. I don't know if the word "spirit" in 2 KINGS 19:7 meant an emotion or an actual spirit, but it worked.

## FEMININE SPIRIT

Some commentators say that the spirit of G-d is feminine because the word "spirit" רוּחַ is feminine. Some nouns in Hebrew are feminine and some are masculine, and some can be both, but that does not mean the thing a noun stands for is also feminine, masculine, or both. Also, the word "spirit" (feminine) is used with a feminine verb even when it is about a man's spirit. For example, GENESIS 41:8 says "and his spirit (the king of Egypt's spirit) was disturbed (feminine verb)", and GENESIS 45:27 says "...and the spirit of Jacob their father revived (feminine verb)."

The spirit of the L-rd or of G-d usually takes a feminine verb. For examples, see NUMBERS 24:2, JUDGES 3:10, JUDGES 14:6, and 1 SAMUEL 16:14.

The spirit (or wind) of the L-rd takes a masculine verb in 2 KINGS 2:16, but it might be about the wind of the L-rd carrying the prophet Elijah away because 2 KINGS 2:11 mentions Elijah going up to heaven in a

storm or whirlwind.

1 KINGS 18:12 also says that the spirit or wind of the L-rd might carry away a prophet using a masculine verb.

1 KINGS 22:21-22 tells about a lying spirit sent by G-d to four hundred prophets. The lying spirit takes masculine verbs.

## LYING SPIRIT

1 SAMUEL 15:29 says G-d will not lie, but 1 KINGS 22:21-22 says that G-d sent a lying spirit to four hundred prophets (1 KINGS 22:6). I am not sure if this spirit is the spirit of G-d or a different spirit.

## GENESIS 1:1

The word "spirit" (ruach) can also mean "wind" in some quotes.

GENESIS 1:1 says "...and the spirit (wind) of G-d is hovering over the surface of the water..."

It could just mean G-d's spiritual presence was over the water since G-d is a spirit, or it might mean a wind from G-d.



Some commentators say that the word "soul" נַפְשׁ can also mean "breath", so they sometimes say that the word is used for living things that breathe. I am not sure if they think that G-d breathes because the word is used for G-d's soul in many quotes like JEREMIAH 14:19, LEVITICUS 26:30, and JUDGES 10:16. The word is also used for dead people who are not breathing in LEVITICUS 21:1, LEVITICUS 21:11, NUMBERS 6:6, NUMBERS 6:11, NUMBERS 9:6, NUMBERS 9:7, NUMBERS 19:11, and NUMBERS 19:13.

## 6. THE WORD OF THE L-RD

The "word of the L-rd" in the Hebrew Bible was a message from G-d to a person or a prophet. Some quotes say the word of the L-rd "came" to someone, but the word "came" was not actually used in the quotes. For example, GENESIS 15:1 is usually translated "...the word of the L-rd came to Abram", but it really says "...the word of the L-rd was to Abram."

In EXODUS 9:18-19, G-d warns the Egyptians to protect their property and animals from a hail storm He is going to send. EXODUS 9:20-21 says that the people who feared "the word of the L-rd" listened to Him. The "word of the L-rd" in these quotes was the warning by

G-d.

1 SAMUEL 3:1 says "And the word of the L-rd was rare in those days. Vision (prophecy) was not widespread."

In 1 KINGS 17:24, a woman says to Elijah the prophet "...the word of the L-rd in your mouth is truth."

In JEREMIAH 44:24-26, Jeremiah the prophet says to the people twice "...hear the word of the L-rd... Thus says the L-rd of hosts..."

In 1 KINGS 22:19 and 2 CHRONICLES 18:18, a prophet says to "hear the word of the L-rd" and then he tells what he heard G-d say.

The word "word" was also used for things people said. For example, GENESIS 44:2 says "...according to (like) the word of Joseph that he spoke", and 1 SAMUEL 4:1 says "...and the word of Samuel was to all of Israel."

## 7. SONS OF G-D (ANGELS AND MEN?)

### G-D'S SONS AND DAUGHTERS

PSALM 89:27-28 says that King David will call G-d "my Father" and that G-d will make him a first born

son, the highest to the kings of earth. King David's son, King Solomon, is also compared to a son by G-d in 1 CHRONICLES 17:13, 2 SAMUEL 7:14, 1 CHRONICLES 22:9-10, and 1 CHRONICLES 28:6.

In PSALM 2:7, the psalm writer, who is a king of Israel, says that G-d said that the psalm writer is His son and that G-d begot him that day. This does not have to be meant literally. DEUTERONOMY 32:18 says that G-d "begot" the people of Israel, and DEUTERONOMY 32:19 calls them "His sons and His daughters." Also, PSALM 90:2 says mountains were begotten which is not meant literally.

Not only kings are called G-d's son. Israel is called G-d's first born son in EXODUS 4:22. DEUTERONOMY 32:18 says "A Rock (G-d) begot you..." and "G-d brought you forth..." about G-d begetting Israel. DEUTERONOMY 32:19 says the children of Israel are G-d's sons and daughters.

G-d said Israel will call Him "my Father" in JEREMIAH 3:19, and MALACHI 2:10 (JPS 1917) says "Have we not all one Father? Has not one G-d created us?" DEUTERONOMY 32:6 says the L-rd is Israel's father, and He made them. And in DEUTERONOMY 32:19 the people of Israel are called G-d's sons and daughters.

In ISAIAH 63:16, G-d is called Israel's Father

twice.

I have a whole chapter in volume 4 about PSALM 2, and I also have a chapter about DEUTERONOMY 32:18 in this book.

## SONS OF THE PROPHETS

The word "sons" could be used for followers and not just literal sons. Many quotes like 1 KINGS 2:3 mention "the sons of the prophets" which could be the prophets or the followers of the prophets.

## SPIRITUAL BEINGS AS SONS OF G-D

Some commentators say that the Hebrew Bible teaches that there were many gods and that the G-d of Israel was the top G-d who ruled over them. They say that the other gods were in G-d's council and might have been called the "sons of G-d (plural word)" or "the sons of gods" in quotes like GENESIS 6:2, JOB 1:6, JOB 2:1, and JOB 38:7.

Other commentators say that the "sons of G-d" were angels who were also part of G-d's council in ISAIAH 6, 1 KINGS 22:19-22, DANIEL 7:9-10, DANIEL 10:5-21, DANIEL 12:1, and PSALM 89:6-8.

There are a few examples of G-d talking to angels

or "sons of G-d." In 1 KINGS 22:19-22, G-d asks the angels who will entice King Ahab to go to a battle, so he will be killed there, and different angels answer him. In ISAIAH 6:1-8, G-d asked the angels "Who will I send, and who will go for us?" In JOB 1:6 and JOB 2:1, the sons of G-d and the accuser (who I think is one of them) come to G-d, and G-d talks to the accuser. In JOB 16:19-21, it says a witness in heaven can argue (can reason) with G-d to defend a man. And in JOB 33:22-24, it says an angel can defend a man to G-d, and G-d will let the man live and heal him.

Maybe G-d calls people and angels His sons (His children) because He created them. People have parents, but maybe angels don't, so they are created directly by G-d.

## PSALM 82 AND THE SONS OF G-D

PSALM 82:1 says that G-d stood in a council with gods. Based on this quote, many scholars say that all of the other quotes about a council of holy ones are about gods, but they could be a council of angels who were not called gods because none of the other quotes mention gods being in them. I don't think it is right to decide that all of these quotes are about gods because one questionable psalm mentions that.

PSALM 82 might have been written by someone with different religious beliefs. Some people might have believed in one G-d only, and other people might have believed in many gods with one highest G-d that they served. Each group could have had their own prophets and slightly different scriptures. I have a separate chapter on PSALM 82.

## 8. THE EXISTENCE OF OTHER GODS

The Hebrew Bible mentions other gods often. Sometimes, quotes seem to say that they exist, and sometimes they seem to say they don't exist. There are also some quotes that are different in the traditional (Masoretic) Hebrew Bible and in the Greek Septuagint (an ancient translation) and in some of the Dead Sea scrolls.

### DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

I think some of these quotes are misunderstood, and some of them were written by people with different religious beliefs. Some of the people of Israel believed in

the existence of only one G-d and no other gods, and some of the people of Israel believed in the existence of many gods with G-d as the highest one.

I think both groups of people probably existed at the same time in Israel, although one group might have existed first. No one knows which group existed first. Personally, I think that at first the people of Israel believed in one G-d and no other gods, but later some of them copied the nations around them and believed in many gods with G-d as the highest one.

#### JUDGES 11:24

In JUDGES 11:24, Jephthah says to the king of the Amorites that the god of the people of Ammon gave Ammon certain land and the G-d of Israel gave Israel certain land. It sounds like he believed that each land had it's own god, but he still believed in G-d too. I am not sure if Jephthah was a prophet at the time because it doesn't say he was a prophet or that the spirit of the L-rd was upon him until JUDGES 11:29.

#### DIFFERENT SCRIPTURES

I think that each group might have had slightly different scriptures to fit their beliefs. For examples of

differences, see the chapters on DEUTERONOMY 32:8-9 and DEUTERONOMY 32:43.

I also believe that PSALM 82, which specifically mentions the existence of other gods, probably belonged to the people that believed in the existence of many gods with G-d as the highest one, but was later accepted with a different explanation by the people who believed in only G-d.

I have a whole chapter on PSALM 82 in volume 4.

## PSALMS AS PROPHECIES

I also think it is a bad idea for people to decide what the religious beliefs of the people of Israel were based on psalms because it is hard to know who wrote the psalms and what their religious beliefs were. Each religious group might have had their own prophets and psalm writers with different religious beliefs.

The prophets of Israel often mentioned false prophets who claimed to speak for G-d or who spoke for other gods, so some of their writings might have survived and been preserved with the writings of the real prophets and psalm writers.

## EVIDENCE OF IDOL WORSHIP

Some commentators say that there is no evidence that ancient Israel ever believed in only one G-d, but lots of evidence that they believed in many gods. It is easier to find evidence of idol worship because you can find ancient idols, but you can't find evidence of the worship of one G-d without any idols because there would be nothing to find.

According to the prophets of the Hebrew Bible, idol worship was common in ancient Israel and Judah, so it would make sense to find proof of ancient idol worship in the land of Israel.

## NO OTHER GODS BESIDES G-D

Certain Hebrew Bible quotes specifically say that there are no other gods besides G-d. For examples, see DEUTERONOMY 4:35, 4:39, ISAIAH 43:10, 44:6, 45:5, 45:21, 46:9, 2 SAMUEL 7:22, 1 CHRONICLES 17:20, and PSALM 86:10.

DEUTERONOMY 4:35

USUAL TRANSLATION (JPS 1917)

“Unto you it was shown that you might know

that the L-rd, He is G-d; there is none יְיָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים besides Him.”

DEUTERONOMY 4:39

USUAL TRANSLATION (JPS 1917)

“Know this day, and lay it to your heart, that the L-rd, He is G-d in heaven above and upon the earth beneath; there is none יְיָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים.”

IN THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

ISAIAH 45:5 says:

“I am the L-rd, and there is not more. Besides me there are not gods.”

ISAIAH 46:9 says:

“...I am G-d, and there are not more gods...”

OTHER GODS

Usually, the gods of the nations are mentioned as idols of wood and stone. PSALM 82 is different because it mentions the existence of other living gods.

The Hebrew Bible also says that G-d allotted other gods to the nations in DEUTERONOMY 4:19 and in DEUTERONOMY 29:25. This does not have to mean that they actually existed, but that G-d gave the belief in other gods to the other nations.

Other gods are called "no gods" and "demons" in DEUTERONOMY 32:17 and 32:21. They are also called "no gods" in 2 KINGS 19:18, 2 CHRONICLES 13:9, ISAIAH 37:19, and JEREMIAH 5:7. And they are called idols and "demons" in PSALM 106:36-37.

It is possible that some people worshiped "demons" that might not have even existed spiritually. It is also possible that they did exist as evil spirits, but not as gods, but people worshiped them as gods. The Hebrew Bible does not say if they really existed or not.

LEVITICUS 19:31 and LEVITICUS 20:27 and other quotes mention a "familiar spirit" which was some kind of spirit that was used in magic. Maybe some people also worshiped them as gods. They might have been considered "demons" too.

Anything people worshiped could be called a god, but that does not mean it was actually a god that existed.

## IDOLS

Some Hebrew Bible quotes say that the gods of the other nations are wood and stone and are not alive (they can't see or hear or do anything). For examples, see DEUTERONOMY 4:27-28, 28:36, 28:64, EZEKIEL 20:32, DANIEL 5:23, PSALM 115:3-7, PSALM 135:5, 15-17, ISAIAH 37:14-19, and 2 CHRONICLES 32:17-19.

In ISAIAH 37:14-19, King Hezekiah says that G-d is the G-d of all of the kingdoms of earth and that the gods of the other lands are not gods, but the work of man's hand, wood and stone.

2 CHRONICLES 32:17-19 says that the Assyrians spoke about the G-d of Jerusalem like about the gods of the peoples of the earth that are the work of man's hand made from wood and stone.

If the gods of the nations are not alive, then the idols are their gods, even if they are not alive. That might explain why idols were called gods in the Hebrew Bible.

## OTHER GODS ARE LOWER THAN G-D

There are many quotes that mention other gods being lower than G-d. For example, DEUTERONOMY 10:17 and PSALM 136:2 call G-d "the G-d of gods." Some of them mention other gods and then say things against them. For example, PSALM 135:5-6 says that G-d is

greater than all of the gods and that He can do whatever He wants to. PSALM 135:15-17 then says that the idols can't do anything at all. PSALM 96:4-5 says G-d is above all of the gods and the other gods are "idols" or "worthless things."

Some people say that it does not make sense to say that G-d is greater than gods that don't exist, but that is what the quotes I just listed say. They say that G-d is greater than the other gods because they are idols (or possibly "worthless things") that can't do anything. They are gods that don't really exist except as pieces of wood, stone, or metal.

Even the people who worshiped the sun, the moon, and the stars also made wood or stone idols of them, instead of only praying directly to them. Maybe the sun, the moon, and the stars were also considered to be idols, even if people did not make them because they were objects that people worshiped.

In EXODUS 18:11, Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, says that G-d is greater than all of the gods, but he was the priest of Midian and probably worshiped other gods or at least believed they existed.

## G-D OF GODS

In DEUTERONOMY 10:17, G-d is called "the G-d

of gods and the L-rd of lords." If the other gods don't exist, then G-d would rule over the idols of the gods which are also called gods.

G-d is the G-d of many non-living things in the Hebrew Bible. He is "the G-d of faithfulness" in DEUTERONOMY 32:4, "the G-d of truth" in PSALM 31:6, "the G-d of my righteousness" in PSALM 4:1, "the G-d of my salvation" in PSALM 18:46, "the G-d of my mercy (my kindness)" in PSALM 59:18, "the G-d of my praise" in PSALM 109:1, "the G-d of justice" in ISAIAH 30:18, and more things in many other quotes.

## 9. FALSE PROPHETS AND REAL MIRACLES

### FALSE PROPHETS ARE CALLED PROPHETS

A prophet is a person who claims to have a message from G-d or other gods in the Hebrew Bible. The word "prophet" in the Hebrew Bible is used for false prophets who tell the future using magic, and not just for real prophets in EZEKIEL 13:7, JEREMIAH 14:14, JEREMIAH 23:9-40, and DEUTERONOMY 18:20. Prophets for other gods are also called this. For an

example, see 1 KINGS 18:19.

## RECOGNIZING FALSE PROPHETS

In 1 KINGS 13, a real prophet came to a king and gave a prophecy. Then the king asked him to eat and drink at the king's house, but the prophet said he couldn't because G-d told him to not eat or drink in that place and to return home by a different road than he used to go there. A false prophet later said to the real prophet that an angel told him a message from G-d that the real prophet should eat and drink in that place. The real prophet listened to him and ended up being killed by a lion as a punishment. The real prophet could not tell the other one was a false prophet without G-d telling him in 1 KINGS 13:20-22 through the false prophet who temporarily became a real prophet.

In JEREMIAH 28, the prophet Jeremiah could not tell a false prophet was lying until G-d told Jeremiah that he was lying. Jeremiah said in JEREMIAH 28:9 they would have to see if the false prophet's prophecy came true or not to know if he was really sent by G-d.

If real prophets could not even know if other prophets were real or false unless G-d told them, then average people can't know if a prophet is telling the truth just by what the prophet says. DEUTERONOMY

18:20-22 says that people should not obey prophets who speak in the name of other gods, and they can tell if a prophet is real if what he says about the future comes true.

Some commentators say you can tell if a prophet is real by checking what he says against what earlier prophets said, but that would mean prophets could not say new things and would only repeat what earlier prophets said.

## THE PUNISHMENT OF FALSE PROPHETS

Some commentators say that certain prophets could not have been false prophets because they were willing to die for their beliefs. This would not be a proof that prophets are real because the punishment for all false prophets is death (DEUTERONOMY 18:20), so all false prophets are willing to die for their beliefs.

## G-D'S SPIRIT ON PROPHETS

There are many quotes in the Hebrew Bible that mention the spirit of G-d being put on a prophet who then prophesies. For examples, see NUMBERS 11:24-30 and 1 SAMUEL 10:5-11.

Maybe 2 SAMUEL 23:2 describes the experience

because it says the spirit of G-d spoke in the writer of the psalm or by the writer of the psalm. Maybe it means the writer heard G-d speak inside of him or that G-d spoke through the writer's mouth.

## EVIL SPIRITS

Sometimes, G-d's spirit is called His holy spirit, but it is also called His good spirit in NEHEMIAH 9:20 and PSALM 143:10. G-d also sent a lying spirit to many prophets in 1 KINGS 22:22, and an evil spirit from G-d scared King Saul in 1 SAMUEL 16:14, and an evil spirit of G-d scared him in 1 SAMUEL 16:15-16. 1 SAMUEL 16:23 calls this spirit a spirit of G-d and an evil spirit. 1 SAMUEL 18:10 also mentions Saul having an evil spirit of G-d.

It is interesting that the four hundred prophets in 1 KINGS 22:22 could not tell they had a lying spirit in them. The Hebrew Bible does not explain how people can tell if a spirit in them is good or bad.

## MIRACLES ARE NOT PROOFS

The Hebrew Bible is full of stories about miracles that G-d did, and that He had different prophets do. Some of them were given by G-d as signs about future

events. Because of this, people think that miracles are the main proof that a person is a prophet. For example, Moses was given miracles to show the people that he was a prophet (EXODUS 4:1-9). G-d also made the ten plagues against Egypt to prove to them and the world that He is G-d (EXODUS 9:16). In EXODUS 19:9, G-d said He would speak to Moses in front of the people so they would believe Moses forever.

After all of those miracles, the Hebrew Bible seems to say that the real proof that someone is a prophet is not a sign or a wonder. DEUTERONOMY 18:18-22 says that a real prophet speaks in G-d's name and tells the future correctly.

## EVIL MIRACLES

In DEUTERONOMY 13:2-6, the Hebrew Bible mentions the possibility of a false prophet using a miracle to mislead people. It does not say exactly how a false prophet would do this, but DEUTERONOMY 13:2-6 says G-d will test Israel's faith by a man who does a miracle, and DEUTERONOMY 13:14 mentions a group of men who try to convert people to a false religion.

If prophets with G-d's holy spirit could do miracles, maybe people with an evil spirit from G-d

could do miracles too, if G-d let them. If an evil spirit can make someone sick, maybe it can heal someone to confirm a false religious belief. If it can go into someone, then maybe it can also make an exorcism look successful by removing an evil spirit to confirm a false religious belief. Maybe it can also be used to call up dead people's spirits like a woman did to a dead prophet in 1 SAMUEL 28.

Maybe a false prophet with an evil spirit can know the past and present, but not the future, because in DEUTERONOMY 18 :22 it says a only real prophet knows the future.

Maybe a lying spirit or an evil spirit or angel can know ancient Hebrew and the past and can help someone write an ancient sounding book as a proof of a religion.

## MAGIC

The Hebrew Bible says that some miracles in the past were done by magicians. For example, in EXODUS 7 and 8, Egyptian magicians changed staffs to snakes by magic, and they also performed some other miracles using magic. Some commentators say they only pretended to do these things, but the Hebrew Bible says they did do these things.

## TESTS OF FAITH

If G-d tests Israel's faith, then there is no limit to what a false prophet can do. DEUTERONOMY 13:2-6 does not say exactly what a false prophet can or cannot do, so no one can say that raising the dead, for example, is something only a real prophet can do.

The miracle might not be the false prophet raising the dead, but being raised from the dead also by someone else. A miracle can be faked or just a lie spread by people, but it could also be true. A dead body could be moved by angels or spirits or it could be revived miraculously. It is also possible that people could see an angel or spirit sent by G-d to look like that person is alive again. There is no limit to what G-d can do to test Israel's faith with a miracle or miracles.

## TESTS OF FAITH IN JOB

G-d let a certain angel test Job in JOB 1:15-20 by killing Job's servants and children, and in JOB 2:7 by making him sick. In JOB 1:19, this angel made a strong wind, and in JOB 1:16 it made a fire (which can light up the sky) come down from heaven. Maybe this angel could also test people's faith by doing opposite miracles like reviving the dead, healing the sick, calming a storm,

and darkening the sky.

Maybe G-d will let this angel, other angels, evil spirits, a lying spirit, or false prophets do other miracles that are not mentioned in JOB in order to confirm false religious beliefs and test Israel's faith like DEUTERONOMY 13:2-6 describes.

If G-d is testing Israel's faith, then this angel could do any kind of miracle to confirm a false religious belief.

## REVIVING THE DEAD

In 2 KINGS 13:21, when a dead man's body touched Elisha's bones, the dead man came back to life. There are two other examples of prophets reviving the dead in 1 KINGS 17:22 and 2 KINGS 4:32-35, so reviving the dead was not a miracle that had never happened before.

## A FALSE PEOPLE

G-d said in DEUTERONOMY 32:21 that Israel will make Him jealous from no-gods (false gods), so He will make them jealous with a no-people (a false people). Maybe a false prophet could say that another people is now G-d's people.

# HEBREW BIBLE QUOTES

## GENESIS 1:24-26 AND GENESIS 2:7

In GENESIS 1:26 G-d said "let us make man in our image."

G-d could have been talking to the angels. Some commentators say that the angels did not exist before people were created. They think the angels' souls become people's souls when people are born, and that dead people become angels. Both beliefs are assumptions that are not written in the Hebrew Bible.

Some commentators say that G-d did not speak to the angels when He said "let us make man in our

image" in GENESIS 1:26 because G-d created people by Himself in GENESIS 1:27. Also, they say people were not created in the image of angels, but in some quotes angels look like people. GENESIS 18 and 19 for example.

The physical world was created during the six days of creation, but the angels are spiritual and could have been created a long time before the physical world. GENESIS does not say when they were created, so they could have existed already when people were created by G-d. Also it is possible that G-d talks to the angels and includes them in what He does, like creating the world. He also talked to them in 1 KINGS 22:20, ISAIAH 6:8, ZECHARIAH 3:2, and JOB 1:7.

I don't think we can know if any angels participated in creation in any way, but that does not mean G-d did not talk to them when He created the world.

There are a few examples of G-d talking to angels or "sons of G-d." In 1 KINGS 22:19-22, G-d asks the angels who will entice King Ahab to go to a battle, so he will be killed there, and different angels answer him. In ISAIAH 6:1-8, G-d asked the angels "Who will I send, and who will go for us?" In JOB 1:6 and JOB 2:1, the sons of G-d and the accuser (who I think is one of them) come to G-d, and G-d talks to the accuser. In JOB



"And G-d said, 'Let the earth bring forth a living soul' נַפְשׁוֹ, for it's kind (earth's kind or the living soul's kind) **is** a beast and a crawling thing, and a beast (a living thing) וְכָל חַי הָאָרֶץ **for it's kind'**, and it was so."

Or: "And G-d said, 'Let the earth bring forth a living soul' נַפְשׁוֹ, **for it's kind** (earth's kind or the living soul's kind), a beast and a crawling thing, and a beast (a living thing) וְכָל חַי הָאָרֶץ of earth is for it's kind', and it was so."

The word nephesh נַפְשׁוֹ could be translated as "soul" and was often used about people. Maybe in this quote it is about an angel or soul that represents earth. Maybe G-d spoke to this angel or soul and said "let us make man in our image" because G-d is spiritual and the earth is physical, and man is both.

## SOUL AND BREATHING

Some commentators say that the word "soul" נַפְשׁוֹ can also mean "breath", so they say that the word is used for living things that breathe. They might say that the living soul in GENESIS 1:24 has to be a living creature that breathes, but I am not sure if they think

that G-d breathes also because the word is used for G-d's soul in many quotes like JEREMIAH 14:19, LEVITICUS 26:30, and JUDGES 10:16. The word is also used for dead people who are not breathing in LEVITICUS 21:1, LEVITICUS 21:11, NUMBERS 6:6, NUMBERS 6:11, NUMBERS 9:6, NUMBERS 9:7, NUMBERS 19:11, and NUMBERS 19:13.

#### THE VERB "TO KEEP ALIVE OR GIVE LIFE"

"And G-d said, 'Let the earth bring forth a living soul, **for it's kind** (earth's kind) (or the living soul's kind) **is** a beast and a crawling creature, and His keeping alive (giving life) ו ת י ח earth is for it's kind', and it was so."

Or: "And G-d said, 'Let the earth bring forth a living soul **for it's kind** (the earth's kind), a beast and crawling thing, and His keeping alive (His giving life) ו ת י ח earth is for it's kind', and it was so."

The word ו ת י ח might be the infinitive of the piel form of the verb ה י ח which means "to let live", "to give life", or "to keep alive" in some dictionaries.

#### EARTH AS A LIVING BEING?

"And G-d said, 'Let the earth bring forth a living soul (an angel?), **for it's kind** (earth's kind) (or the living soul's kind) **is** a beast and a crawling creature, and His living thing תו יתו ח, earth, is for it's kind (earth's kind or the living soul's kind), and it was so."

The word תו יתו ח might mean "His living thing" from the word ח י ח which means "a living thing." It could mean that G-d made the earth a living thing somehow.

GENESIS 1:25

USUAL TRANSLATION

"And G-d made the living thing (living things) תו י ח of the earth for it's kind (the creature's kind or earth's kind), and the beast of the earth for it's kind, and every crawling thing of the ground for it's kind..."

I am not sure if it says the plural or singular of the word "living thing." Maybe the first thing He made was the living thing or the living soul for the earth, if that is what the quote means.

**GENESIS 2:7**

GENESIS 2:7

## USUAL TRANSLATION

"And the L-rd G-d formed אָדָם the man אֶדָם הָאָדָם from the dust of the earth, and He blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (soul or person)."

More literally:

"And the L-rd G-d formed the man dust (noun) אֶדָם הָאָדָם from the earth, and He blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (soul or person)."

I don't think it literally says G-d formed the man "from the dust of the earth."

The word "adam" אָדָם usually meant "mankind", but it could also mean "an individual man." For examples, see LEVITICUS 1:2, NUMBERS 19:14, NEHEMIAH 2:10, ZECHARIAH 13:5, PROVERBS 24:30, and ECCLESIASTES 11:8.

## GENESIS 2:7

### ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION

"And the L-rd G-d formed the man **throwing**

**dust** ר פ ע (infinitive of verb) from the earth, and He blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (soul or person)."

The verb "to throw dust" is used in 2 SAMUEL 16:13.

GENESIS 2:7

REGROUPING THE LETTERS

"And the L-rd G-d formed with her ה ת א a man א ד א of dust ר פ ע from the earth, and He blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (soul or person)."

Maybe the letter ה is moved from the beginning of א ד א ה to the end of ת א. "With her (it)" could mean "with the living soul" G-d said the earth should bring forth in GENESIS 1:24. If G-d made the man with this living soul (angel?), then it would fit GENESIS 1:26 "let us make man in our image..."

Or: "And the L-rd G-d formed with her ה ת א a man א ד א throwing dust ר פ ע from the earth, and He blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (soul or person)."

I don't think this sounds as good.

GENESIS 2:6 says "and a mist went up from the earth (feminine noun) and watered all of the surface of the ground (every surface of the ground)."

Maybe "with her (it)" means G-d made a man of dust from the ground with the earth (feminine noun) or the living soul (feminine noun) that came forth from the earth.

## GENESIS 2:5-6

### ONE OR TWO CREATION STORIES?

GENESIS 1 tells the creation story, and GENESIS 2 repeats some of it differently, so some commentators think that two different creation stories were combined into one story, but I think some parts of GENESIS 2 are misunderstood. I think GENESIS 1 tells the basic creation story and then GENESIS 2 tells more details about what happened on the third day and on the sixth day.

### SEA PLANTS AND TREES

GENESIS 1:11-12 says that G-d created the plants on the third day, but GENESIS 2:5 says that every plant was not in the earth because it did not rain yet. Maybe some kinds of grass, plants, and trees were growing in the seas and at the edges of bodies of water. For example, sea grass, seaweed, mangrove trees, and swamp trees. It might not mean that there were no plants growing anywhere at all. Maybe after a mist covered the earth in GENESIS 2:6, plants started growing from the rest of the earth too.

## PLANTS AND TREES ON LAND

GENESIS 2:5

USUAL TRANSLATION

"And every shrub of the field will not yet be in the earth, and every herb of the field will not yet sprout, because the L-rd G-d did not make it rain upon the earth, and there is not a man (mankind) to work the land."

GENESIS 2:5

ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION

"But (and) every shrub of the field will not yet be

in the earth (in the land) and every grass will not yet sprout...”

Then GENESIS 2:6 says that a mist went up from the earth and watered the ground.

Some commentators say that the plants and trees were created before the man was created in GENESIS 1, but after the man was created in GENESIS 2 based on GENESIS 2:5. They say that GENESIS 2:5 says that there were no plants or grass in the fields because it did not rain yet and there was no man to work (to till) the ground, but they ignore what GENESIS 2:6 says next. It says that G-d sent a mist from the ground to water all of the ground. Then it says that G-d created the man and planted a garden for him to work in.

I don't know if the plants grew from seeds or not when they were created, but it makes sense to water the ground after the plants and trees were created for them to grow. If G-d watered the ground and then created the plants and trees, I don't know if they would be able to benefit from the water as much.

If the ground was watered first, then the plants could have been growing everywhere before the man was created. It doesn't say that G-d created the plants after He created the man. It only says He planted the

garden of Eden for the man to work in.

The details described in GENESIS 2 could fit the story in GENESIS 1 that G-d created the plants on the third day by sending a mist to water them. This detail does not have to change the story at all unless it means the watering of the plants did not happen on the third day. It just tells the reader a little more information about what happened in GENESIS 1 probably on the third day.

#### ANOTHER POSSIBLE EXPLANATION

GENESIS 1:11-12 says that G-d made the earth bring forth grass, an herb, and a fruit tree. It does not say that every kind of grass, herb, and fruit tree grew right away, so maybe it means that grass, and one kind of herb, and one kind of tree grew then, but later, after the earth was watered by a mist, the rest of the plants and trees grew. Maybe grass was able to grow everywhere right away because the ground might have had enough water left in it from the seas that were gathered together the same day (GENESIS 1:9), but the ground was not moist enough for plants and trees to grow.

I am not sure if "every herb" and "every shrub" will not be in the earth in GENESIS 2:5 means that there

will not be any herbs and shrubs in the earth at all, or if it means that not every kind of herb and shrub will be in the earth until the ground is watered.

I am also not sure if GENESIS 2:6 means that G-d sent the mist before He created the grass, plants, and trees in GENESIS 1:11-12, or maybe He sent the mist after He created them so they could grow. GENESIS 2:6 does not really explain this.

GENESIS 2:5

USUAL TRANSLATION

"And every shrub of the field will not yet be in the earth, and every herb of the field will not yet sprout, because the L-rd G-d did not make it rain upon the earth, and there is not a man (mankind) to work the land."

GENESIS 2:5

ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION

"But (and) every shrub of the field will not yet be in the earth (in the land) and every grass will not yet sprout..."

Then it says that G-d did not make it rain yet, and a mist went up from the earth and watered the

ground, and then G-d made the man and the woman.

## GENESIS 2:18-20

In GENESIS 2:18-20, G-d says that it is not good for the man to be alone and that he needs a "help mate", so G-d forms the animals and brings them to the man who names them.

### GENESIS 2:19-20 USUAL TRANSLATION

"And the L-rd G-d formed from the ground every living thing of the field and every bird of the sky, and He brought (and He came) to the man to see what he will call to it (to him) ו ל, and all that the man will call to it (to him) a **living soul**, it is **it's name** ו נ ש."

Some commentators say that GENESIS 2:19 says that G-d "had formed" the animals from the ground on the sixth day before He created the man, and now He was bringing them to Adam, so Adam would name

them. I don't know if this is a good translation or not, but many commentators explain the quote this way.

I think the usual translation does not make sense because it says "...to see what he will call to it (to him)" and that that would be "it's name (his name)." This translation uses the masculine "him" and "his", but the "living soul" is feminine, so it should say "...to see what he will call to it (to her)" and that that would be "it's name (her name)."

It also sounds unusual to say "and He brought to the man" instead of "and He brought them to the man", but the word "them" is not really in the Hebrew. The verb is used the same way in GENESIS 37:32 where it says "and they brought to their father." The quote is about Joseph's coat, but there is no word after the verb to show what they brought to him.

GENESIS 2:19-20

ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATIONS

"And the L-rd G-d formed from the ground every living thing of the field and every bird of the sky, and He brought (and He came) to the man to see what he will declare is his (is for him), and all that he will declare is his (is for him), a living soul **He gave it (He is giving it) וַיִּבְרָא.**"



animals were made for their own kind (GENESIS 1:25). Maybe the second time in GENESIS 2:18-19, G-d did not create the animals, but only formed them for the man to choose a help mate (a helper) from among them because G-d said it was not good for the man to be alone, so He will make a help mate (a helper) for him.

I also think the animals in GENESIS might have been a physically a little different because the serpent in the garden of Eden in GENESIS 3 probably had legs and could talk. Maybe the other animals that were created as possible helpers or mates for the man were also different than the ones created for their own kind because they might have been able to talk to the man too. GENESIS does not say if they were the same or different, or if other animals could speak too.

G-d also let a donkey talk in NUMBERS 22:28-30.

## NO MATE WAS FOUND FOR ADAM

GENESIS 2:20 says "...and (but) for Adam (for the man) He (G-d or Adam) did not find a help mate (helper)", so in GENESIS 2:21-22, G-d made the woman from one of Adam's ribs. G-d or Adam had to be looking among the animals for a help mate for Adam because it says He (G-d or Adam) did not find a mate for him. The only other possibility was that G-d or

Adam looked for a mate among the angels, but it does not say that.

## NUMBERS 24:17

USUAL TRANSLATION (JPS 1917):

Numbers 24:17

“A star כוכב is stepping forth דרד from Jacob, and a scepter (or tribe) is rising up from Israel.”

Numbers 24:18-19 says that this star or scepter (or tribe) will fight Moab and possess Edom. I think the star, scepter, or tribe could be about the tribe of Judah or King David, who was from the tribe of Judah.

In GENESIS 37:9, Jacob’s sons (including Judah) were seen as stars in Joseph’s prophetic dream. Maybe King David could also be compared to a star because he was a descendant of Jacob, or maybe the quote is about King David’s symbol, the star of David.

(A scepter is a rod that a ruler holds up.)

ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATIONS:

Numbers 24:17

“A generation  $\text{ר ד}$  is like  $\text{כ}$  a star  $\text{ב כ ו כ}$  from Jacob, and (but) will rise up a tribe (or a scepter) from  $\text{מ}$  Israel.”

Or: “A generation  $\text{ר ד}$  is like  $\text{כ}$  a star  $\text{ב כ ו כ}$  from Jacob, and (but) will rise up a tribe (or a scepter) more than  $\text{מ}$  Israel.”

Maybe the future generation will be high like a star, but a tribe (or a scepter) will be higher than the rest of Israel.

The people of Israel are called Israel or Jacob. Both words refer to the same people.

USUAL TRANSLATION (JPS 1917):

Numbers 24:17

“...There shall step forth a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite through the corners  $\text{י ת א פ}$  of Moab  $\text{ב א ו מ}$  and shall break down  $\text{ק ר ק ר}$  all  $\text{ל כ ל}$  of the sons  $\text{י ב נ}$  of Seth  $\text{ת ש ת}$ .”

Some translations say "the two sides (corners) of

Moab."

USUAL TRANSLATION (JPS 1917):

Numbers 24:18

"And Edom shall be a possession, Seir  $\text{ר י ע ש}$  also, even his enemies, shall be a possession while Israel does valiantly."

USUAL TRANSLATION (JPS 1917):

Numbers 24:19

"And out of  $\text{מ}$  Jacob  $\text{ב ק ע י}$  shall one have dominion  $\text{ד ר י}$  and shall destroy the remnant from a city."

King David beat Moab in 2 Samuel 8:2 and Edom in 2 Samuel 8:13-14.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATIONS:

Numbers 24:17-18

"...And it (the scepter or the tribe) will smite a side (a corner)  $\text{ת א פ}$  of a sea  $\text{ד י}$  and  $\text{ו}$  a father  $\text{ב א}$  and a crown of a head (a top of a head)  $\text{ד ק ד ק}$  of every (each) son  $\text{ב}.$ '

“It (the scepter or the tribe) will be dry (תַּשׁוּ as תַּשׁוּ), and Edom will be a possession, and will be a possession the goat (Seir) יַעֲשֶׂה of it's (his) enemies, and Israel is doing valiantly (is making wealth).”

#### ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION:

Numbers 24:19

“And Jacob יַעֲקֹב will rule them (will subdue them) יַרְדֵּם, and he (it) will destroy a remnant from a city.”

Numbers 24:17-19 might describe how King David conquered Edom at the Valley of Salt which is probably near the Dead Sea (which is a salt lake) in 2 Samuel 8:13-14. Maybe the king of Edom and his sons were killed there.

I think Numbers 24:17 says "a crown of a head" דִּקְדִּק instead of the verb "and it will destroy or break down" קִרְקִר. The letters ר and ד look a lot alike, so it might have been a mistake in this quote.

Seir means "goat", but it is also the name of an important city in Edom, so the quote saying the goat or Seir will be a possession could be a play on words. Numbers 24:21 mentions the Kenites living in a nest which is a similar sounding word to Kenites, so that

could be a play on words too. The quote that might say that Israel is making wealth could refer to 2 Samuel 8:7-11 which says that David took gold, silver, and copper from the nations he conquered. In Numbers 24:19 I moved the letter מ to the end of the verb which could be (ד ד ר as ר ד ך) "to subdue" or the verb ר ד ה "to rule."

#### ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION:

Numbers 24:17

If the verb "to destroy or break down" ר ק ר ק ר is used instead of "a crown of a head" ק ד ק ד ק, then the quote might say this:

"...And it (the scepter or the tribe) will smite a side (a corner) ת א פ of a sea ם י and ן a father ב א and it will destroy (it will break down) every (each) son ן ב."

#### USUAL TRANSLATION (JPS 1917):

Numbers 24:22

"Nevertheless, Kain (the Kenites) shall be wasted."

"How long? Asshur shall carry you away captive."

ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION:

Numbers 24:22

“Until (unto) what (?) will Asshur take you captive?”

USUAL TRANSLATION:

Numbers 24:23

“And he took up his parable, and he said:  
Alas, who shall live after G-d has appointed him  
ו מ ש מ?”

ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION:

“Alas, who will live from מ his being desolated  
ו מ ש (from the verb ו מ ש as ו ש), G-d?”

Maybe Balaam was asking G-d who will live after G-d makes Kain desolate because Asshur will take away it's people.

USUAL TRANSLATION:

Numbers 24: 24

“But ships shall come from the coast of Kittim,

and they shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall come to destruction."

## DEUTERONOMY 6:4 AND THE WORD "ONE"

### THE WORD "ONE" IN HEBREW

Some commentators say that the word "one" (echod) in Hebrew can mean a "unity" of several things. They point out a few quotes that they say use the word "one" to show several things united into one thing. For example, a man and his wife become "one flesh" in GENESIS 2:24. GENESIS 11:6 says "...behold a people is one..." The word "one" is probably used like this in most languages, so the Hebrew word for "one" (echod) is not unusual in some way.

The word "one" is also used for single objects like "one man" in DEUTERONOMY 1:23, one silver bowl (basin) in NUMBERS 7:13, and one bull and one male goat in NUMBERS 7:15-16, and for single people like in GENESIS 42:27 "and the one opened his sack..."

The word "one" (echod) might mean "alone" in a few quotes. ISAIAH 51:2 says "...one (alone) I called him (Abraham), and I blessed him, and I multiplied him." EZEKIEL 33:24 says "...one (alone) was Abraham..." 1 CHRONICLES 29:1 says "...Solomon my son is one (alone), G-d chose him, a youth and soft, and the work is great..."

GENESIS 3:22 "LIKE ONE FROM (OF) US"

In GENESIS 3:22, G-d says "...and, behold, the man has become like one (echod) from (of) us to know good and evil..."

G-d might have been talking to the angels in this quote. ISAIAH 6:6 says "...one (echod) of (from) the seraphs (a kind of angel)..." flew to Isaiah.

ZECHARIAH 14:9

USUAL TRANSLATION

"And the L-rd will be king over all of the earth. In that day, the L-rd will be one (alone), and His name one (alone)."

Maybe this quote means that G-d will be one (alone) and that His name will be one (alone) because

people will not believe in other gods, and the names of other gods will be cut off in that day. Maybe this is connected to ZECHARIAH 13:2 "In that day, the L-rd will cut off the names of the idols from the earth (from the land), and they will not be remembered anymore."

DEUTERONOMY 6:4  
USUAL TRANSLATIONS

"Listen, Israel, **the L-rd is our G-d, the L-rd is one.**"

Or: "Listen, Israel, **the L-rd our G-d, the L-rd is one.**"

Or: "Listen, Israel, the L-rd is our G-d, the L-rd **alone (one).**"

Or: "Listen, Israel, the L-rd is our G-d, the L-rd **is alone (one).**"

Or: "Listen, Israel, the L-rd our G-d **is one L-rd.**"

Some commentators say that DEUTERONOMY 6:4 can't say "Listen, Israel, the L-rd is our G-d, the L-rd is one" because the Hebrew Bible only says "the L-rd

our G-d", "the L-rd your G-d", or any other form of this expression, but not "the L-rd is our G-d" and similar expressions. They say it would have to say "Listen, Israel, the L-rd our G-d, the L-rd is one."

Even if certain expressions are used a lot in the Hebrew Bible, that does not mean those words can't be used in other ways too. "The L-rd our G-d" could be common and "the L-rd is our G-d" could be rare, but they both might be in the Hebrew Bible.

I think the following quotes show that DEUTERONOMY 6:4 could say "the L-rd is our G-d":

2 CHRONICLES 13:10 says "as for us, **the L-rd is our G-d**, and we did not abandon Him..."

ZECHARIAH 13:9 says "...and he (it) (the people) will say, '**the L-rd is my G-d.**' "

PSALM 33:12 says "Happy is the nation that **the L-rd is it's G-d (his G-d)**..."

PSALM 144:15 "Happy is the people that **the L-rd is it's G-d (his G-d)**."

"One L-rd"

"Listen, Israel, the L-rd our G-d is **one L-rd.**"

I don't think the translation sounds right because the word "L-rd" in this quote is the four letter name of G-d, so this would be like saying "Listen, Israel, David our king is one David".

On the other hand, maybe the word "L-rd" is not just a name, but also a title because many quotes like 1 SAMUEL 1:3 and 1 SAMUEL 4:4 say "the L-rd of hosts" or maybe literally "the L-rd hosts." 2 SAMUEL 5:10 and 1 KINGS 19:10 and more quotes call G-d "the G-d of hosts." PSALM 59:6 and PSALM 80:5 say "the L-rd G-d hosts" instead of "the L-rd G-d of hosts."

#### LONG VERSION OF DEUTERONOMY 6:4

DEUTERONOMY 6:4 makes more sense combined with DEUTERONOMY 6:5.:

"Listen, Israel, the L-rd is our G-d, the L-rd is one (alone), and you will love the L-rd your G-d with all of your heart..."

Maybe G-d was telling Israel through Moses that there are a few main things that they should always remember and teach their children, and that they should write these things down in certain places

(DEUTERONOMY 6:9). It's possible that they were supposed to write down these things without the words "listen, Israel" which Moses might have said to get their attention.

## DEUTERONOMY 18:14-22

### PROPHET LIKE MOSES

DEUTERONOMY 18:9-14 says that the people of Israel should not copy the ways of the other nations living in Canaan, when they enter the land G-d is giving them. It lists all kinds of sins they committed, including how they predicted the future using magic and spirits.

### DEUTERONOMY 18:14

#### USUAL TRANSLATION (JPS 1917)

“For these nations that you are to dispossess, hearken ( listen) unto soothsayers (someone who tells the future) and unto diviners, but as for you, the L-rd your G-d has not suffered you so to do.”

More literally, it says:

“Because these nations that you are inheriting (taking possession of) them, will listen to soothsayers and to diviners, and (but) you ה ת א, not thus is giving to you the L-rd your G-d.”

DEUTERONOMY 18:14  
ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION

“Because these nations that you are inheriting (taking possession of) them, will listen to soothsayers and to diviners, and (but) with it (with her) (with the land) ה ת א, not thus is giving to you the L-rd your G-d.”

The word “land” is a feminine noun, so it is called “her” or “it.”

I think DEUTERONOMY 18:14 means that G-d is giving them the land, but not false prophets with the land (with her). The word “land” is a feminine noun.

Or: “Because these nations that you are inheriting (taking possession of) them, will listen to soothsayers and to diviners, and (but) her (it) (the land) ה ת א not thus is giving to you the L-rd your G-d.”

Instead, DEUTERONOMY 18:15-18 says that G-d

will raise up a prophet like Moses because the people were afraid of G-d and did not want to hear His voice at Mount Sinai (Horeb). G-d said that they were right and that He will raise up a prophet like Moses from among the people, and He will put His words in His mouth, and he will speak to them all that G-d commands him. Also EXODUS 20:15-16 tells about the people being afraid of hearing G-d speak.

#### A GREAT PROPHET?

Some commentators say that Moses was a very great prophet, so DEUTERONOMY 18:15-18 must be describing a prophet like Moses who is also great. DEUTERONOMY 18:15-18 does not say anything except that a prophet will be from the people of Israel and that he will speak the words that G-d tells him to speak. If G-d meant that he would be a great prophet like Moses, He could have just said so.

Other commentators say that DEUTERONOMY 18:18-22 is just saying that G-d will raise up a regular prophet like Moses, instead of a prophet like the nations that use magic and spirits.

#### MOSES' MISTAKE

No one ever says the prophet like Moses will also make a big mistake like Moses did when he hit a rock to get it to give water, instead of speaking to it in NUMBERS 20:6-12.

## JOSHUA

If Moses was speaking about that generation in DEUTERONOMY 18:15 and 18:18, he could have meant that G-d will raise up a real prophet like him from among them, and they will have to obey that prophet. This could refer to the prophet Joshua who led the people after Moses died (DEUTERONOMY 34:9).

In JOSHUA 1:5, G-d tells Joshua that He will be with him like He was with Moses. Then in JOSHUA 3:7, G-d tells Joshua that He will now make him great in the eyes of all of Israel so that they will know that He will be with him like He was with Moses. Then JOSHUA 4:14 says that G-d made Joshua great in the eyes of all of Israel and they feared him like they feared Moses all the days of his life.

## DEUTERONOMY 34:10-12

Some commentators say that DEUTERONOMY

34:10-12 shows that there were no other prophets like Moses, including Joshua.

DEUTERONOMY 34:10-12 says:

“And did not rise up a prophet again in Israel like Moses, who the L-rd knew him face to face, for all of the signs and wonders that the L-rd sent him to do in the land of Egypt for Pharaoh and for all of his servants and for all of his land, and for all of the strong hand and for all of the great terror that Moses did to (before) the eyes of all of Israel.”

I think that there was no prophet like Moses who G-d spoke to face to face (in reality) for all of the signs and wonders that he did in Egypt and before the people of Israel which made him unusual as a prophet. In DEUTERONOMY 34, G-d said how Moses was different than other prophets, but that does not mean there were no other prophets like Moses who spoke G-d's words. In DEUTERONOMY 18, G-d did not say He would speak to another prophet “face to face” like Moses. He only said a prophet would be from the people of Israel and speak His words which would make the prophet like Moses.

Someone can be like someone else in one way

and different in another way. A prophet can be like Moses and still be different in some ways. I don't think G-d meant that the person would be identical in every detail.

### SEEING G-D FACE TO FACE

The Hebrew Bible says that G-d spoke to people "face to face", but that does not have to mean they saw G-d's face. The phrase "face to face" could mean G-d is talking to a person in reality, outside of the person's mind, and not in a vision or a dream in a person's mind.

DEUTERONOMY 5:4 says G-d spoke to Israel "face to face" (or "face against face" because it does not really say the word "to"), but DEUTERONOMY 4:12-15 says they saw no form or image, they only heard a voice. This shows that "face to face" does not mean they actually saw His face or any image.

EXODUS 33:11 says that G-d spoke to Moses "face to face", but in EXODUS 33:20 G-d said to Moses that he won't be able to see G-d's face, but only G-d's back, as G-d passes by him.

## DEUTERONOMY 32:8-9

The Masoretic (traditional Jewish) version of DEUTERONOMY 32:8-9 says the borders of peoples were set according to the number of the sons of Israel, but the Dead Sea scrolls' version of these quotes says the borders of peoples were set according to the number of the sons of G-d or gods,.

I believe that there are two versions because there were two groups of people with different religious beliefs and slightly different scriptures. One group believed in one G-d and no other gods, and the other group believed in many gods with G-d as the highest one. I think the group that believed in one G-d had "...according to the number of the sons of Israel" and the other group had "...according to the number of the sons of G-d or gods" because they believed in many gods.

DEUTERONOMY 32:8-9  
MASORETIC TEXT

## USUAL TRANSLATION

### HIPHIL FORM OF THE VERB

"When the **Most High (G-d) gave nations inheritances** (hiphal infinitive) ל ח נ ה, when He divided the sons of mankind (sons of a man), He set borders of peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel, because the **portion** (noun) ק ל ח of the L-rd is His people, Jacob is the lot (the portion) of His inheritance."

### INHERITANCES

When it says that the nations were given inheritances, it means that they were each given land to possess. This translation makes it sound like the nations were divided into twelve territories because Israel (who was also called Jacob) had twelve sons. (You can read a list of their names in GENESIS 49:2-27.) If you look at GENESIS 10, you will see that originally there were around seventy nations, and not twelve, so this translation does not really make sense.

The reason people think it says the nations were given land that was divided into twelve portions is because they think that the nations were also called

“peoples” in this quote, but that is not necessarily true. The quote could say that at the time G-d gave the nations their inheritances of land, He prepared land for the “peoples” that descended from Israel (Jacob). Those “peoples” would have needed land that was divided into twelve portions because Israel had twelve sons that became tribes and that were given land. Actually, the tribe from his son Levi did not get land, and the tribe from his son Joseph became two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim, that each got their own land.

I think it also sounds poetic that G-d gave the nations inheritances when He divided the sons of mankind, and then He set up the borders of peoples (the tribes) when He divided His people, the sons of Israel. In both cases, He divided people and gave them land to possess.

#### TRIBES CALLED PEOPLES?

The twelve sons of Jacob, who was also called Israel, became tribes, each with their own territory (except Levi). The future tribes might have been called "peoples" in GENESIS 28:3 and GENESIS 48:4 which say that Jacob will become “an assembly of peoples.” In GENESIS 48:19, Jacob says that Manasseh, the son of Jacob’s son Joseph, will become “a people” in the future,

and he did become a tribe. In GENESIS 48:19, he says that Dan will judge his “people.” Dan is one of Jacob’s sons that also became a tribe later on.

## TRIBES CALLED NATIONS?

I think DEUTERONOMY 32:8-9 says that G-d will set up the borders of Israel when He gives all of the “nations” their inheritances, but it is also possible that the “nations” could refer to the tribes of Israel. GENESIS 35:11 says that Jacob (who is also called Israel) will become “a nation and an assembly of nations” in the future, and GENESIS 48:19 says that Ephraim (Jacob’s grandson) will become “a fullness (or a multitude) of nations.”

I think that the word “nations” in DEUTERONOMY 32:8 probably refers to all of the nations of earth and not to Israel as “nations.” I think it is more likely that Israel is called the “peoples.”

## SOME TECHNICAL DETAILS

I think the quote might not say “the Most High” about G-d, but “the most high of nations” referring to Israel. I will explain this later.

According to the usual translation, the verb “to cause to inherit” or “to give inheritances” is the hiphil form and should have a ך in it ל ך ן ן ה, but it doesn’t. That is why I think this verb might be translated wrong. I try to translate the quote with the verb as the hiphil, hophal, and niphal forms to see if any other forms make sense.

DEUTERONOMY 32:8 could say “...When He (G-d) separated (divided) the sons of mankind ם ך ן...” or “...When He (G-d) separated (divided) the sons of a man ם ך ן...” because the word ם ך ן can mean a man or mankind. Some examples where it is used for a single man are LEVITICUS 1:2, NUMBERS 19:14, NEHEMIAH 2:10, ZECHARIAH 13:5, and ECCLESIASTES 11:8.

The quote could also say "He **will be caused to set up** (hophal) ן ץ ך the borders of the peoples according to the number of the children of (sons of) Israel...", instead of "He **will set up** (hiphil) ן ץ ך the borders..." If it was the hiphil form of the verb, it should be spelled ן ך ץ with an extra ך near the left end of the word. I don't think it really changes the translation very much.

Also, I think the quote does not say “...because

the **portion** (noun) ק ל ח of the L-rd is His people..." I think the word "portion" might be a verb instead of a noun. I think it says "...because the L-rd **divided (is dividing)** ק ל ח His people..."

Some commentators say that the verb "to divide" ק ל ח does not mean "to divide", but "to apportion" (to divide and give portions to someone or something). I think it can mean "to divide" without actually mentioning giving portions to anyone. For examples, see GENESIS 14:15, GENESIS 49:7, AMOS 7:17, and EZEKIEL 5:1.

If the verb has to mean "to divide and give portions (to apportion)", then it could mean that G-d divided His people and gave them as portions to the land in different areas, instead of saying He divided the land and gave portions of the land to the people. I think the verb makes sense as "to divide" or "to divide and give portions (to apportion)", so it is not really a problem, in my opinion.

DEUTERONOMY 32:8-9

MASORETIC TEXT

ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION

G-D AS THE "MOST HIGH"

“TO CAUSE TO INHERIT  
HIPHIL FORM OF THE VERB

"When the Most High (G-d) **gave nations inheritances (caused nations to inherit)** (hiphil infinitive), when He divided the sons of mankind (sons of a man), He will set borders of peoples to (for) the number of the sons of Israel, because the L-rd **divided (is dividing)** ק ל ח His people, Jacob, the lot (the portion) of His inheritance."

I think DEUTERONOMY 32:8-9 is about the time when G-d gave all of the nations their territories, and He set up the borders of the peoples (of Israel) to match the number of the sons of Israel because G-d divided Israel into tribes (or peoples) that were then given separate lands, except for the tribe of Levi. I think at first, it is about the nations being given inheritances, and then it is about the borders of the tribes or peoples of Israel being set up.

I think the quote says that G-d "divided His people" translating the word ק ל ח as a verb and not as a noun like in the usual translation where it says "the **portion** (noun) ק ל ח of the L-rd is His people."

DEUTERONOMY 32:8-9

MASORETIC TEXT

ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION

ISRAEL AS THE "MOST HIGH OF NATIONS"

"TO CAUSE TO INHERIT"

HIPHIL FORM OF THE VERB

"When **the most high of nations (Israel) will give inheritances (will cause to inherit)**, when He (he) will divide the sons of mankind (sons of a man), He (he) will be caused to set up borders of peoples for the number of the sons of Israel, because the L-rd **divided (is dividing)** ק ל ה His people, Jacob, the portion of His inheritance."

The same translation with more details:

"When **the most high of nations (Israel) will give inheritances (will cause to inherit)** (hiphil verb), when He (he) (G-d or Israel) will divide the sons of mankind (sons of a man), He (he) (G-d or Israel) will be caused to set up (hophal verb) borders of peoples to (for) the number of the sons of Israel, because the L-rd **divided (is dividing)** ק ל ה His people, Jacob, the

portion of His inheritance."

G-d said He will make Israel **the highest of the nations** in DEUTERONOMY 26:19 and in DEUTERONOMY 28:1 if they keep His commandments. There are no other quotes that actually call Israel "the highest of nations", but that doesn't mean that DEUTERONOMY 32:8 can't say that. Not every thing in the Hebrew Bible is stated more than once.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION

ISRAEL AS THE "MOST HIGH OF NATIONS"

"TO BE CAUSED TO INHERIT"

HOPHAL FORM OF VERB

"When **the most high of nations (Israel) will be caused to inherit**, when He (he) will divide the sons of man, He (he) will be caused to set up borders of peoples for the number of the sons of Israel, because the L-rd **divided (is dividing)** ק ל ח His people, Jacob, the portion of His inheritance."

The same translation with more details:

"When **the most high of nations (Israel) will be caused to inherit** (hophal verb), when He (he) (G-d or Israel) will divide the sons of man (a man), He (he) (G-d or Israel) will be caused to set up (hophal verb) borders of peoples to (for) the number of the sons of Israel, because the L-rd **divided (is dividing)** קלח His people, Jacob, the portion of His inheritance."

I am not sure if there is an infinitive of the hophal form of the verb ל ח נ "to be caused to inherit" that can be used as a gerund, and if it would be ל ח נ ה. If it does exist, I think it would keep the letter נ because of the letter ח, but I am not sure about that either. I don't think the hophal translation of this verb is right, so I don't think this translation is right.

#### ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION

ISRAEL AS THE "MOST HIGH OF NATIONS"

"WAS INHERITED"

NIPHAL FORM OF VERB

"When **the most high of nations (Israel) was inherited (will be inherited)**, when He (he) will divide the sons of mankind (sons of a man), He (he) will be

caused to set up borders of peoples for the number of the sons of Israel, because the L-rd **divided (is dividing)** ק ל ח His people, Jacob, the portion of His inheritance."

The same translation with more details:

"When **the most high of nations (Israel) was inherited (will be inherited)** (niph'al infinitive), when He (he) (G-d or Israel) will divide the sons of man (sons of a man), He (he) (G-d or Israel) will be caused to set up (hoph'al verb) borders of peoples to (for) the number of the sons of Israel, because the L-rd divided (is dividing) ק ל ח His people, Jacob, the portion of His inheritance."

There are no other examples of the niph'al form of the verb "to inherit" in the Hebrew Bible, but that does not mean it didn't exist. Not every form of every verb is used many times in the Hebrew Bible. A form of a verb might occur only once.

## DEAD SEA SCROLLS AND DEUTERONOMY 32:8-9

DEUTERONOMY 32:8-9  
DEAD SEA SCROLLS  
(4QDEUTQ)

USUAL TRANSLATION

"When **the Most High (G-d)** gave nations **inheritances** (hiphil infinitive) ל ה נ ח ל, when He divided the children of (sons of) man, He will set up borders of peoples according to the number of the sons of G-d (or gods), but **the portion** ק ל ח of the L-rd is His people, Jacob is the lot (the portion) of His inheritance."

Some commentators say that DEUTERONOMY 32:8 in the Dead Sea scrolls' version can be understood two ways:

DEAD SEA SCROLLS  
NATIONS RECEIVED INHERITANCES

"When **the Most High (G-d)** caused nations to **inherit**, He set borders of peoples according to the number of the sons of G-d (or gods), but the portion ק ל ח of the L-rd is His people, Jacob is the lot (the portion) of His inheritance."

In this translation, “when **the Most High (G-d) caused nations to inherit...**”, G-d gave the nations their own lands.

#### DEAD SEA SCROLLS NATIONS BECAME INHERITANCES

“When **the Most High (G-d) caused to inherit nations**, He set borders of peoples according to the number of the sons of G-d (or gods), but the portion (noun) ק ל ן of the L-rd is His people, Jacob is the lot (the portion) of His inheritance.”

In this translation, “when **the Most High (G-d) caused to inherit nations...**”, G-d gave the nations as inheritances, but it doesn’t say to whom. The belief that G-d gave them to the sons of G-d is based on their borders matching the number of the sons of G-d.

#### DEAD SEA SCROLL FRAGMENTS

In the Dead Sea scrolls (4QDeutq), it says "He set the borders of peoples to (for) the number of the sons of G-d (or gods)" instead of to “the number of the sons of Israel” like the Masoretic text says. I read that part of

the fragment after the word “G-d” is missing, so they don’t know if it is the plural word for “G-d” or not. One of the words for “G-d” in Hebrew is a plural word that can mean G-d or gods, but this fragment might have the singular word for “G-d.” Either way, the Dead Sea scrolls fragment 4QDeutq still says “sons of G-d.”

The Greek Septuagint also says the borders were set to the number of the angels of G-d which is very similar.<sup>5</sup>

The hiphil infinitive of the verb “to cause to inherit” or “to give inheritances” לָּוּנָה should have the letter וּ in it, but it doesn’t in this Dead Sea scroll fragment (4QDeutq)<sup>6</sup> or the Masoretic text. There is another Dead Sea scroll fragment of DEUTERONOMY 32:8 (4QDeutj) that also says “sons of G-d (or gods)”, but it has the letter וּ in the hiphil form of the verb “to

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<sup>5</sup>Brenton, Sir Lancelot. *English Translation of the Greek Septuagint Bible.* 1851. (Online)

<sup>6</sup> Crawford, Sidnie White. Joosten, Jan. Ulrich, Eugene. “Sample Editions of the Oxford Hebrew Bible: Deuteronomy 32:1-9, 1 Kings 11:1-8, and Jeremiah 27:1-10 (34G).” *Vetus Testamentum* 58. 2008. Page 354. (Online).

cause to inherit.<sup>7</sup>”

## SONS OF G-D

Some commentators say that the sons of G-d were lower gods, and other commentators say that the "sons of G-d" were just angels or holy beings who might have represented all of the nations in G-d's council in 1 KINGS 22:19-22, DANIEL 7:9-10, and possibly in DANIEL 10:13-21. PSALM 89:6 and 89:8 mention the council or assembly of "holy ones" which could refer to angels who are also holy.

Many scholars believe that the “sons of G-d” in the Dead Sea scrolls were given to the nations to be their gods because two quotes in DEUTERONOMY say that G-d assigned other gods to the nations. DEUTERONOMY 4:19-20 says that the sun, the moon, and the stars were assigned to all of the nations, so the

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<sup>7</sup> Duncan, Julie A. “Considerations of 4QDtj in Light of the ‘All Souls Deuteronomy’ and Cave 4 Phylactery Texts.” *The Madrid Qumran Congress: Proceedings of the International Congress on the Dead Sea Scrolls, Madrid 18-21 March 1991*. Edited by Julio Trebelle Barrera and Luis Vegas Montaner. Volume 1. E. J. Brill (publisher). Leiden, The Netherlands. 1992. Page 212.

people of Israel should not worship them. DEUTERONOMY 29:25 says that the people of Israel will be punished for worshipping other gods that Israel was not assigned.

I don't think the Dead Sea scrolls version of DEUTERONOMY 32:8-9 says that "the sons of G-d" are gods at all just because each nation has a son of G-d. It does not explain what a "son of G-d" is and it does not explain what each one does for it's nation, or if they should be worshiped by the nations.

Just because the Hebrew Bible says that gods were assigned to the other nations does not mean the sons of G-d are those gods. The sons of G-d could just be angels that represent the different nations in the council of G-d. The gods that the nations were assigned could be beings that never even existed.

Even if people worshiped the sons of G-d does not mean they were gods that G-d created. People can worship anyone or anything and call it a god, but that does not mean it is really a god.

The main proof that the sons of G-d are gods is in PSALM 82 which was written later and might represent different beliefs than what DEUTERONOMY 32:8-9 represented. I have a separate chapter on PSALM 82 in another volume.

I also have a whole chapter about the “Sons of G-d” in this book.

### WAS DEUTERONOMY 32:8-9 CHANGED?

Some commentators say that the Hebrew Bible originally taught that there were many gods and that the G-d of Israel was the highest one. They think some quotes like this one about the “sons of G-d” were changed to say “the sons of Israel” when people started to believe in G-d only.

It is also possible that people who believed in many gods changed the quote from “the sons of Israel” to make it sound like there were many gods, if “sons of G-d” actually meant gods and not just holy beings or angels to them.

### WHICH TEXT IS OLDER?

You can't know if the Dead Sea scroll version or the Masoretic version is the original version of any of these quotes. The Dead Sea scrolls version is an older manuscript, but that does not mean it is the original version. The Masoretic version could be the original, but they might not have any copies from that long ago. Of course, you could say that another version might be the

original version, but we don't have a copy of an original version to know what it said.

## DEUTERONOMY 32:43

The Dead Sea scrolls' version of this quote mentions other gods bowing to G-d, but the Masoretic (the traditional Jewish) version does not say this.

I believe that there are two versions because there were two groups of people with different religious beliefs and slightly different scriptures. One group believed in G-d and no other gods, and the other group believed in many gods with G-d as the highest one.

I also believe that the usual translation of the traditional Hebrew Bible version might be wrong.

DEUTERONOMY 32:43  
MASORETIC TEXT  
USUAL TRANSLATION

"Nations, cause to rejoice (command form) His people י מ י."

"Because the blood of His servants will rise up, and vengeance He will bring back for (to) His (his) enemies."

"...And He will atone (cleanse) כפר the land of אדמתו His people עמו."

Or "...and He will atone כפר His land אדמתו, His people עמו."

Literally, I don't think it can say "the land of His people."

DEUTERONOMY 32:43

MASORETIC TEXT

ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATIONS

"Nations, **cause to rejoice (cause to shout for joy) (command form)** His people עמו."

Or: "Nations **have caused to rejoice (have caused to shout for joy)** His people."

Or: "Nations **rejoice (shout for joy) (command form)** with Him."

"Because the blood of His servants will rise up,

and vengeance He (it) (G-d or the blood) will cause to return to (for) His enemies (his enemies) (G-d's enemies or His people's enemies.)..."

"...And He will atone (cleanse) אָפַר His land וְ  
תָמַד אֵל, **His people** וְעָמֵי."

Or: "...And He will atone (cleanse) His land **with**  
**it** (the blood or the revenge) וְעָמֵי."

Or: "...And His people וְעָמֵי will atone (will  
cleanse) His land."

Or: "...And the atonement (noun) of His land is  
His people וְעָמֵי..."

Or: "...And the atonement (noun) of His land is  
with it (the blood, the people, or the vengeance)."

Or: "...And the atonement (noun) of His land is  
with Him (with G-d) וְעָמֵי."

The word "with Him (with it)" וְעָמֵי looks the  
same as the word "His people" וְעָמֵי.

DEUTERONOMY 32:43

DEAD SEA SCROLLS (4QDEUTQ)  
USUAL TRANSLATION

"Heaven, rejoice with Him **ו ע מ ו**, and **bow to Him all gods.**"

"Because the blood of His sons (His children) will rise up, and vengeance He (it) (G-d or the blood) will cause to return to (for) His enemies."

"And He will pay back to His haters, and He will atone **ו י כ פ ר** the land of **א ד מ ת** His people **ו ע מ ו**."

The Masoretic text says "nations", but the Dead Sea Scrolls says "heaven<sup>8</sup>." The Dead Sea Scrolls says "bow to Him all gods", but the Masoretic text does not say this. The same line is also in PSALM 97:7. The Dead Sea Scrolls version of DEUTERONOMY 32:43 says "the

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<sup>8</sup> You can see the Hebrew version of Deuteronomy 32:43 from the Dead Sea scroll fragment 4QDeutq on the internet in many books and articles. Here is one book you can look at: Wurthwein, Ernst. *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica*. Third Edition. Revised and expanded by Alexander Achilles Fischer. Translated by Erroll F. Rhodes. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. Michigan, United States / Cambridge, U.K. 2014. Page 224.

blood of His children" instead of "the blood of His servants" like the Masoretic text. Israel is called G-d's children (sons) in DEUTERONOMY 32:19-20. It also has the line "and He will pay back to His haters" which is not in that place in the Masoretic text. In the Masoretic text, DEUTERONOMY 32:41 says "and to My haters I will pay back."

I have a separate chapter on PSALM 97 in volume 4.

DEUTERONOMY 32:43

DEAD SEA SCROLLS (4QDEUTQ)

ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATIONS

"Heaven, rejoice with Him ו מ י,..."

Or: "Heaven has caused His people ו מ י to rejoice, ..."

Or: "Heaven, cause to rejoice (command form) His people, ..."

"...And bow to Him all gods."

Or: "...And will bow to Him all gods."

"Because the blood of His sons (His children) will rise up, and vengeance He (it) (G-d or the blood) will cause to return to (for) His enemies."

"And He will pay back to His haters,..."

"...And He will atone (cleanse) כ פ ר the land of א ד מ ת His people ע מ ו."

I don't think it can say "the atonement of His land" like in the Masoretic text כ פ ר because the word "atone" in the Dead Sea Scrolls has the letter ם at the beginning כ פ ר ם which means "He will atone."

#### WHICH TEXT IS OLDER?

Some commentators say that the Hebrew Bible originally taught that the G-d of Israel was the highest G-d among many gods, but the Hebrew Bible was changed when people started to believe in the existence of only one G-d. They think the Dead Sea Scrolls version of DEUTERONOMY 32:43 is the original version because it mentions gods bowing to G-d. I think it is possible that the original version was changed by people who believed in the existence of many gods with the G-d of Israel being in charge of them. I don't think

you can know who changed the quote.

These commentators also think the Dead Sea Scrolls' version of DEUTERONOMY 32:8-9 is the original and that it was changed to sound like there were no other gods besides G-d which they believe "the sons of G-d (or gods)" were.

You can't know if the Dead Sea scroll version or the Masoretic version is the original version of any of these quotes. The Dead Sea scrolls version is an older manuscript, but that does not mean it is the original version. The Masoretic version could be the original, but they might not have any copies from that long ago. Of course, you could say that another version might be the original version, but we don't have a copy of an original version to know what it said.

The Greek Septuagint has a combination of both versions.<sup>9</sup> Maybe the Greek translators had a manuscript with both versions or maybe they had two manuscripts, each with a different version, so they just combined them together.

The Septuagint says the angels of G-d will worship Him, instead of gods will bow to Him.

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<sup>9</sup> Brenton, Sir Lancelot. "*English Translation of the Greek Septuagint Bible.*" 1851. (Online)



