

A Translation Problem

Olam, Aion, Aionios
An Age, Ages, or Eternal

“And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers” Deut. 6:23).

“As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in” (Josh. 14:11).

“And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in” (I Kings 3:7).

The preceding three verses, together, describe a major dual subject matter of this Scripture.

Scripture, in this respect, is about being BROUGHT OUT in order to be BROUGHT IN relative to things having to do with the present heavens and earth.

For ISRAEL in the type, this had to do with being BROUGHT OUT of Egypt in order to be BROUGHT INTO the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, realizing an inheritance therein.

For CHRISTIANS in the antitype, this has to do with being BROUGHT OUT of this present world in order to be BROUGHT INTO the heavenly land presently occupied by Satan and his angels, realizing an inheritance therein.

THEN, on the other hand, Scripture is about being BROUGHT OUT of the present heavens and earth in order to be BROUGHT INTO the new heavens and earth.

Scripture is about the present heavens and earth — from the “TIME” of their creation to the “TIME” of their destruction — with very little stated about the new heavens and earth.

BUT, in another respect, all activity associated with the present heavens and earth is preparatory to that seen in the new heavens and earth in Rev. 21, 22. And thoughts about being BROUGHT OUT in order to be BROUGHT IN relative to different things pertaining to the present heavens and earth and the new heavens and earth would address that issue as well.

NOW, note again the three verses of Scripture preceding this introductory material:

The FIRST verse, Deut. 6:23, introduces the statement pertaining to being brought out in order to be brought in.

The SECOND verse, Joshua 14:11, describes someone FULLY AWARE of, COMPLETELY FAMILIAR with, what it means to be brought out in order to be brought in.

The THIRD verse, I Kings 3:7, describes someone COMPLETELY UNAWARE of, COMPLETELY UNFAMILIAR with, what it means to be brought out in order to be brought in.

Note what could be said in the antitype about each of these three verses in Christendom today:

a) In Deut. 6:23, the matter is introduced. *Christians are being called out of this world to realize an inheritance in another land, a heavenly land.*

b) In Joshua 14:11, the mature Christian is introduced. *He understands his calling, will make it sure, and will one day realize an inheritance in this heavenly land (II Peter 1:10, 11).*

c) In I Kings 3:7, the immature Christian is introduced. *He doesn't understand his calling, can't make it sure, and will one day be rejected for an inheritance in that heavenly land (I Cor. 9:24-27).*

THIS three-part, succinct dissertation on GOING OUT and COMING IN lies at the HEART of God's complete dealings with Israel in the O.T., extending into the Gospels and Acts.

And, as well, THIS SAME three-part, succinct dissertation on GOING OUT and COMING IN lies at the HEART of God's complete dealings with the Church in the N.T., extending from Acts, through the epistles, and into the first four chapters of the Book of Revelation.

Accordingly, this article, calling attention to "A Translation Problem," will deal with a MAJOR REASON WHY that seen in I Kings 3:7 would describe the Church of today in an almost universal respect, with that seen in Joshua 14:11 all but absent.

And NO segment of Christendom has escaped that seen in the WHY of I Kings 3:7, something which could ONLY have had a MAJOR part in the evidently completely leavened state of the Church today (Matt. 13:1-33; cf. Rev. 2, 3).

And that being referenced is the MISTRANSLATION and subsequent MISUSE of "olam" (O.T.), "aion," and "aionios" (N.T.).

These words have to do with cycles of "TIME," having beginning and ending points, NOT with ETERNITY. And the words should be understood and translated in THIS manner, in line with BOTH their meaning and the foundational, septenary structure beginning each Testament.

BUT, they are erroneously translated "eternal," "forever," and "everlasting" throughout both Testaments, completely OUT of LINE with NOT ONLY their meaning and usage BUT with THIS foundational, septenary structure as well.

And, beyond the preceding, because of this mistranslation, the SUBJECT matter at hand is invariably mishandled and misdealt with, as "salvation by grace" rather than "the Word of the Kingdom."

Genesis, beginning the O.T., lays the foundational material for ALL which follows.

And John, beginning the N.T., simply references and builds upon this previously laid foundational material.

Both books, through their *UNCHANGEABLY SET* septenary structure at the beginning, provide the “*TIME-ELEMENT*” involved in revealed events seen in both Testaments — 7,000 years of “*TIME*,” Man’s Day lasting 6,000 years and the Lord’s Day lasting the final 1,000 years.

NOW, understanding this septenary structure beginning both Testaments, providing a foundation upon which the subsequent material in each Testament is built and rests, *it should be a simple matter for anyone to see that a problem exists in the vast majority of English translations.*

And this is not some type negligible translation problem. Rather, this is a problem which has skewed Biblical interpretation to such an extent that any type correct interpretation of numerous things in Scripture, has been thrown to the winds.

Olam, Aion, Aionios

Again, Scripture deals with events during “*TIME*,” with beginning and ending points, *FROM the creation of the heavens and the earth TO the destruction of the heavens and the earth.*

And, more specifically, Scripture deals with the *LAST 7,000 years of THIS “TIME.”*

Then, more specifically beyond that, *EVERYTHING occurring during the FIRST 6,000 years (Man’s Day), after some fashion, points to and moves toward the LAST 1,000 years (the Lord’s Day).*

Aside from creative activity and God arranging the ages around the preplanned activity of His Son within the frame-

work of these ages (cf. Heb. 1:1, 2; John 1:1-3; I John 1:1, 2), Scripture is *SILENT* about events preceding the creation of the heavens and the earth (note Job 26:7; 38:4-7, relating events occurring at the “*TIME*” of the creation of the heavens and the earth); and Scripture has *VERY LITTLE* to say about events following the destruction of the heavens and the earth (with parts of Rev. 21, 22 the most extensive).

Again, Scripture deals with “*TIME*,” and this “*TIME*” has beginning and ending points. And this “*TIME*,” a cycle or cycles of “*TIME*,” *CANNOT* somehow be seen *AS* “*TIME*” continuing from ages which may have existed prior to the creation of the heavens and the earth *OR* “*TIME*” continuing into ages, into endless cycles of “*TIME*,” which will follow the destruction of the heavens and the earth.

The O.T. begins with a seven-word statement (Heb. wording) regarding the creation of the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:1). This is then followed by an eight-word statement (Heb. wording) regarding the ruin of the creation (Gen. 1:2a). And this is, in turn, followed by a rather lengthy description of how God restored the ruined creation (Gen. 1:2b-25).

And the N.T. begins and continues EXACTLY the SAME way.

The N.T. begins with a thirty-six word statement (Gk. wording) regarding the creation of the heavens and the earth, *providing commentary on Gen. 1:1* (John 1:1-3).

This is then followed by *commentary* on Gen. 1:2a ff, *NOT ONLY, again*, calling attention to a ruined creation *BUT ALSO, again*, relating *HOW* God restores a ruined creation, *remaining COMPLETELY within the framework of that previously seen in Gen. 1:2b ff* (John 1:4-2:11).

The restoration in Genesis had to do *with the ruined material creation*, and the restoration in John had/has to do *with ruined man*.

(Note that God's restoration of man in John *MUST* follow the *EXACT* pattern previously *ESTABLISHED* and *UNCHANGEABLY SET* in God's restoration of the material creation in Genesis.

Once God had *ESTABLISHED* the pattern [in Genesis] *NO CHANGE* could *EVER* occur [in John]. God established the pattern *PERFECT* at the outset, in the beginning; and, to remain in *COMPLETE* accord with that which God had established, the latter *MUST* follow the former in *EXACT* detail.

Understanding the pattern in Genesis and following this *SAME* pattern in John will allow an individual to correctly align events occurring on particular days, preventing mistakes often made in interpretation.)

The restoration and creation of animal life in Genesis was immediately followed by man's creation, *for a REVEALED PURPOSE*.

Man was created *to RULE* the restored domain in the stead of the incumbent, disqualified ruler, Satan (Gen. 1:26-28; cf. Luke 4:5, 6 [in *BOTH HEAVENLY* and *EARTHLY* spheres, shown by the previously created different forms of animal life]).

And man in John is being restored *to RULE* the *SAME* domain, which will *AGAIN* be restored (presently under a curse because of man's fall in Genesis chapter three).

Accordingly, God's *PURPOSE* for the restoration of the earth and man's creation will ultimately be realized (Rom. 11:29).

And as seen in both the opening thirty-four verses in Genesis (1:1-2:3) and the opening sixty-two verses in John (1:1-2:11), this will be realized at the end of six days, *on the seventh day, the seventh and last of the 1,000-year periods, followed by the destruction of the present heavens and earth*.

As previously stated, Scripture deals with events during "*TIME*," *FROM* the creation of the present heavens and earth *TO* their destruction, with the emphasis placed on the *LAST 7,000* years of this time, particularly on the *LAST 1,000* years immediately preceding this destruction.

And Scripture uses words having to do with “*CYCLES of TIME*,” NOT words having to do with “*ENDLESS TIME*.” Scripture uses “*olam*” for this purpose throughout the O.T. and “*aion*,” with its adjective “*aionios*,” throughout the N.T.

These words are used in connection with “*TIME*” throughout Man’s 6,000-year Day and the Lord’s subsequent 1,000-year Day, often referring to an “age,” or to “age-lasting,” particularly used in this manner referencing *the Lord’s Day*.

1) *From the Beginning*

Now, to clearly show the preceding, let’s pick up at the beginning of the N.T. (i.e., at the beginning of John’s gospel) and continue from that point.

John, at the outset, *EXACTLY like Moses beginning Genesis*, deals with the restoration of a ruined creation, over a six-day period; and the purpose for this restoration is to be realized on the seventh day, on the Sabbath.

This purpose is seen realized in the first of eight signs in John’s gospel (2:1-11) — turning water to wine at festivities surrounding a wedding in Canaan of Galilee on the seventh day, foreshadowing festivities associated with God’s restoration of Israel as the restored wife of Jehovah on the seventh day.

And matters have to do with *the PRESENT heavens and earth and the septenary structure of Scripture beginning each Testament. And they DO NOT, they CANNOT, move beyond the seventh day ending this septenary structure.*

And so it is with the other seven signs in John’s gospel.

Six of these remaining signs have specific days mentioned in connection with the signs (three or seven days, the Sabbath, and the Passover [which will be fulfilled on the seventh day]), connecting the fulfillment of that foreshadowed by *ALL six signs with the seventh day, the Sabbath.*

The only sign which doesn't have specific days associated with it is the fifth sign in John 6:15-21. However, events which occur throughout this sign — Christ's appearance and deliverance of the disciples from a storm out on the sea, foreshadowing Christ's appearance and deliverance of the Jewish people from the nations following the Tribulation — *can ONLY point to a seventh-day fulfillment as well.*

(For additional material on the eight signs in John's gospel, refer to the author's book, *Signs in John's Gospel*.)

NOW, a QUESTION:

*SINCE the eight signs in John's gospel ALL point to the SAME thing, to something which will be fulfilled on the seventh day — the seventh and final 1,000-year period having to do with the present heavens and earth, completely in line with the septenary structure beginning John (previously having begun Genesis) — WHY are the words *aion* and *aionios* NOT translated after a manner in KEEPING with NOT ONLY their MEANING BUT with the SUBJECT MATTER in the book?*

The SUBJECT MATTER has to do with "EVENTS" occurring during "TIME," announced through a septenary structure beginning John (paralleling Genesis) and, accordingly, seen in each of the eight signs in the book.

*BUT, the translation in almost any English text of both *aion* (appearing thirteen times) and *aionios* (appearing seventeen times) is COMPLETELY out of line with the SUBJECT MATTER in John.*

Both words have consistently been translated in a sense depicting "eternity," changing the SUBJECT MATTER FROM that being dealt with in the book (events occurring during the last 7,000 years of the present heavens and earth) TO that NOT being dealt with in the book (an event [salvation by grace] continuing into all the ages beyond, in the new heavens and the new earth).

NO WONDER Christendom finds itself in the state in which it currently exists — shot THROUGH and THROUGH with LEAVEN!

We have a gospel which, by its own testimony (revelation), deals with “*TIME*”; but, as well, this gospel dealing with “*TIME*,” by its own testimony (translation), deals with “eternity.”

And *this same thing* is seen elsewhere in Scripture, *NOT ONLY in the N.T. BUT in the O.T. as well.*

(To better understand *HOW and WHY this has happened, along with WHY the existing state of affairs continues WITHOUT change, refer to the author’s book, Till the Whole Was Leavened.*)

2) *Aion* — John, Revelation, Remainder of the N.T.

Aion appears in both singular and plural forms in the N.T., with the word used mainly in the singular (discounting Revelation, where the word is used only in the plural).

In this respect, with the use of *aion* having to do with “*TIME*,” the reference is usually to an “age,” or the plural to “ages.” *And the words SHOULD be so translated.*

BUT, with *aion* seen in a “timeless” respect in English translations, translated as and referencing “eternity,” then the singular and plural could only be rendered the same way, apart from distinction (seen in almost any English translation for at least the past four hundred years).

John uses only the singular form of *aion* in his gospel (thirteen times) and only the plural form in Revelation (twenty-eight times in fourteen verses — a double use of *aion* each time, with both words articular and plural, with one exception).

The Greek structure in all but one of the verses in his gospel is *eis ton aiona*, meaning, “with respect to [or, ‘unto’] the age” (e.g., ref. 6:51, 58; 8:35, 51, 52; 11:25, 26).

In the lone exception (9:32), only the preposition has changed (*ek* instead of *eis* — *ek tou aionos*), meaning, “out of [or, ‘from’] the age.”

In the Greek text of Revelation, John uses *eis tous aionas ton aionon* thirteen times, meaning, “with respect to [or, ‘unto’] the ages of the ages” (i.e., “with respect to the endless cycles of TIME” [e.g., ref. 1:6, 18; 4:9, 10; 5:13, 14]). Then, one other time he omits the articles in a double use of *aion* (14:11), though still referencing the same thing — *multiplied ages*.

All but four of the fourteen double usages of *aion* in Revelation have to do with God or His Son (e.g., 1:6, 18; 4:9, 10).

The four exceptions have to do with the end of Beast worship (14:11), the end of Israel’s harlotry (19:3), the final condition and abode of Satan and his angels (20:10), and the reign of the saints during future ages in the new heavens and the new earth (22:5).

Moving outside of John’s writings, in the remainder of the N.T., along with the mainly singular use of *aion*, there is a scattering of both plural usages and the same double use seen in Revelation. And, as in Revelation, almost all of these reference something about the person of God or His Son (e.g., ref. Matt. 6:13; Luke 1:33; Rom. 1:25; 11:36; Gal. 1:5).

Then, there is an interesting, one-of-a-kind, double and articular use of *aion* in Eph. 3:21. The first use of *aion* in this verse is singular, the second plural. And the use of these two words together in this manner has been translated in the KJV, “world without end.”

The words ending the verse in the KJV, “...throughout all ages, world without end,” should be translated, “...unto all the generations of the age of the ages.”

“The ages” (plural of *aion*) ending the verse, would be a reference back to verse eleven, which should be translated, “According to the purpose of the ages [past to present].”

And “the age” (singular of *aion*) preceding this plural usage *can ONLY* be a reference to the Messianic Era (translated “world” in the KJV, with the following plural of *aion* translated “without end”).

The entirety of Ephesians chapter three has to do with *the mystery revealed to Paul* — Jew and Gentile in one body, forming *the one new man* “in Christ,” from which the co-heirs who are to rule and reign with Christ will be taken.

And this is being made known to the present rulers (Satan and his angels) through the new man, through the Church (v. 10).

In short, God has chosen to make known, *through the Church, that the PRESENT contingent of rulers is about to be replaced by a NEW contingent of rulers.*

And THIS ALONE will explain WHAT Satan’s warfare against the new man throughout the dispensation is all about — rendering the new man, the Church, powerless to make this known.

And the latter is very much where the Church finds itself today — *powerless to make this known, for few Christians know anything about the mystery* — with the mistranslation and misuse of the words under discussion in this part of the article *playing NO small part in the matter.*

Note what the mistranslation of *olam* in the O.T. and *aion* and *aionios* in the N.T. has done.

This mistranslation has replaced Scripture’s emphasis on the Messianic Era in connection with this present heavens and earth with thoughts of endless ages in connection with the new heavens and the new earth.

And part and parcel with this, Scripture’s emphasis on the Messianic Era has been replaced with an emphasis on salvation by grace, often to the complete exclusion of the Messianic Era (a large segment of Christendom, placing an emphasis on salvation by grace, doesn’t even believe in a future Messianic Era.

(Statements in the preceding two paragraphs are very general, for different facets of the matter existing in today's Christendom are too numerous to discuss.

Aside from that, it would be best to simply leave the matter alone anyway, for knowing error is of little to no value. THAT of value is KNOWING the TRUTH; and THIS is of IMMENSE value.)

3) Aionios — John, Remainder of the N.T.

With the preceding information on *aion*, at times covering *aionios* as well, little really need be said about *aionios* at this point in the article.

Aionios is simply the adjective form for the noun *aion*, meaning *EXACTLY* the same as the noun and being used *EXACTLY the SAME way*, except as an adjective.

The word is found seventeen times in John's gospel (e.g., John 3:15, 16, 36; 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68) and an additional fifty-three times throughout the remainder of the N.T.

And understanding *HOW* the noun, *aion*, is used in the N.T. will leave *NO* room to misunderstand *HOW* the adjective, *aionios*, is used as well.

The adjective, as the noun, is used in connection with "*TIME*" existing between the creation of the heavens and the earth and the destruction of the heavens and the earth.

With only several exceptions, *aionios* is used throughout the N.T. to reference "*TIME*" during the future Messianic Era. And with *aion* properly translated "age" when used in this respect, *aionios* would be properly translated "age-lasting."

(Information is readily available on *HOW* and *WHY* the meaning of *olam*, *aion*, and *aionios* has gradually changed over centuries of time, *FROM* that clearly seen in the Scriptures *TO* that foreign to the Scriptures.

However, suffice it to say, correct Biblical interpretation *ALONE* *PLAINLY REVEALS* that a change of this nature has occurred over time, completely in line with Matt. 13:33.)

Israel, Signs, the Kingdom, Translation Problems

John's gospel has been extensively dealt with thus far in this article, for a reason, which could only be quite evident.

John's gospel, the counterpart to Genesis in the O.T., begins the N.T. *THIS* gospel forms the bridge between the O.T. and the N.T., introducing the Synoptics, Acts, the Epistles and Revelation.

Begin the N.T. in a correct manner, beginning with John — understanding HOW that seen in the septenary structure opening John draws from the OLD and introduces the NEW — and the N.T. will begin opening to your understanding.

BUT, begin the N.T. ANY other way, and...

The foundations have *ALL* previously been laid in Moses, particularly in Genesis; and *EVERYTHING* beyond rests on *THIS* previously laid foundational material.

And an individual *MUST* understand *THIS* previously laid foundational material in order to properly understand and deal with subsequent material forming the superstructure.

Proper building will result in correct interpretation. BUT, improper building — dealing with the foundation incorrectly, or ignoring the foundation and beginning with the superstructure — can ONLY result in...

Thus, before continuing to deal with *aion* and *aionios* in John's gospel, along with other parts of the N.T., *NOT ONLY MUST* the structure of and place which John's GOSPEL occupies in the N.T. be properly understood *BUT* the *PLACE* which *ISRAEL* occupies in God's Economy *MUST* be properly understood as well.

John's gospel, with its eight SIGNS, introducing the N.T., is directed to the nation of Israel during the re-offer of the kingdom to the nation, as seen in John 20:30, 31. And, apart from understanding the PLACE which Israel occupies in God's Economy, the whole of the matter CANNOT be properly understood.

In this respect:

FIRST, time will be spent on God's dealings with the Jewish nation itself.

THEN, we can better understand and deal with certain things directed to the Jewish people in John's gospel during the re-offer of the kingdom to the nation.

1) *In the Tents of Shem, Abraham*

"And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem...

God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem..." (Gen. 9:26a, 27a).

"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:1-3).

"Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22).

(For comments on John 4:22, refer to the author's article, "Salvation Is of the Jews.")

God has always carried out His plans and purposes *ONE unchanging way* — *through INDIVIDUALS* in the lineage from Adam through Seth, Shem, and Abraham to Moses (twenty-six generations), *THEN through a NATION* brought into existence during Moses' day (thirty-six more generations to Christ).

Then, even during the ensuing *TIME*, during the present dispensation — with Israel set aside and God dealing with *the one new man* "in Christ" — *matters have NOT changed in the preceding respect; NOR will they ever change!*

The one new man uses a Jewish book, has a Jewish Saviour, has been grafted into a Jewish trunk, and possesses a positional standing "in Christ," resulting in those comprising the one new man being seen as "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Rom. 11:1-29; II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:26-29).

And God HAS carried and WILL ALWAYS carry matters out in this respect (through INDIVIDUALS in ONE lineage, resulting in a NATION and SAVIOUR/MESSIAH from this lineage) for ONE unchanging, central purpose — the GOVERNMENT of the EARTH, ultimately effecting a COSMOS out of what had become a CHAOS.

EVERYTHING is BOTH "JEWISH" and "REGAL!"

A far-reaching purpose has to do with the new heavens, the new earth, and evidently God's GOVERNMENT of the UNIVERSE. BUT, this is only briefly dealt with in Scripture, mainly in Rev. 21, 22.

(For information on governmental powers and authorities in the new heavens and new earth, refer to the author's article, "Regality Throughout.")

Insofar as Christians occupying positions with Christ in a future kingdom, Scripture confines itself to the PRESENT proffered kingdom, to be realized during the existence of the PRESENT heavens and earth.

With God working matters out toward the preceding end — having to do with REGALITY in connection with the PRESENT heavens and earth — Shem is seen in Genesis chapter nine (sixteen and one-half centuries beyond the creation of Adam) as the ONLY one of Noah's three sons possessing a God.

And, in this respect, IF the other two sons (Ham and Japheth) were to receive spiritual blessings, inseparably, ultimately associated with REGALITY, they could receive these spiritual blessings ONLY ONE WAY.

In the words of Scripture, *they could receive spiritual blessings ONLY through dwelling “in the tents of Shem.”* That is, *they could receive these blessings ONLY through an affiliation with the ONE son possessing a God, wherein these blessings lay* (Gen. 9:25-27).

AS WELL, essentially the SAME thing could ONLY have been true in the lineage of Shem going back eleven generations to Adam, as it is seen going forward nine generations to Abraham (1,558 years from Adam to Shem [at the time of the statement in Gen. 9:25-27], 450 additional years to the birth of Abraham, with Shem STILL living during the first 150 years of Abraham’s life [Shem lived 600 years, Abraham only 175; ref. to the author’s article, “Time and Events,” for information on THIS disparity, along with WHY there was a continued decrease in man’s longevity]).

THEN, the SAME place in God’s Economy which Shem occupied is subsequently seen being occupied by Abraham over four hundred years later (in Ur, at age seventy), with the offspring from his lineage — four hundred thirty years, six generations later, during Moses’ day — forming a nation through which THESE promises would be fulfilled, with the Saviour appearing following another thirty-six generations (Matt. 1:17; Gal. 3:16-18).

Throughout the first 4,000 years of human history, from Adam to Christ, sixty-two generations, God worked out His plans and purposes THROUGH particular individuals in ONE continuous lineage, later forming a nation, THROUGH which His plans and purposes would continue to be worked out, FROM which the Messiah would ultimately come (Gen. 5-12; Matt. 1).

And things have NOT changed during the 2,000 years since Messiah’s appearance.

Spiritual blessings can be derived today ONLY through the SAME MEANS originally seen in Genesis chapter nine — dwelling “in the tents of Shem” — taking you back to Seth, then Adam (the first man, the first Adam), and forward to the nation of Israel and Christ (the second Man, the last Adam).

NOR will things relative to Israel and the nations EVER change in this respect. Scripture CANNOT be circumnavigated!

Note in Zech. 8:23 the position which Israel will occupy during the future Millennium, following their conversion and restoration (*the SAME position occupied by the nation at the time of its inception in Ex. 12ff*):

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations [‘ten,’ a number showing *completion*, referencing *ALL nations, ALL languages*], even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.”

And ALL of this MUST be kept in mind when interpreting Scripture. The WAY which God works out His plans and purposes, in the preceding respect, permeates ALL Scripture.

And IF God’s ways and purposes are NOT followed, which they all too often are NOT, THIS can ONLY result in havoc in Biblical interpretation.

2) *Foundational, Then Building on the Foundation*

But the preceding is only foundational; it is where one begins. There are numerous things built on the foundation which *MUST be understood as well*.

To illustrate and deal with things in this respect, note two parallel passages in the opening three chapters of John’s Gospel — being brought forth from above, followed by references to Christ as the Lamb of God in chapter one; and being brought forth from above, followed by a reference to Christ’s crucifixion (which would be as both the Son of Man and the Lamb of God) in chapter three.

There are several things invariably done with both of these passages which, *from a Scriptural standpoint, CANNOT be done with either passage.*

Both passages are invariably dealt with *relative to the unsaved, worldwide*.

BUT, Scripture would clearly reveal that the unsaved are NOT the subject matter in EITHER passage.

NOR can EITHER passage have ANYTHING to do with individuals worldwide (1:10, 29; 3:16), OTHER than God dealing with the nations THROUGH ISRAEL.

As well, in the second part of the passage in chapter three, "eternal" and "everlasting," appearing in the English text (vv. 15, 16), *CANNOT be the correct translation either.*

And *ALL* of the preceding can easily be shown, though seldom readily accepted.

a) Salvation by Grace through Faith

In the preceding respect, note *HOW* John's gospel begins, something *NOT* seen at the beginning of the Synoptics, Acts, or the Epistles which this gospel introduces.

John's gospel, in its septenary structure introduced in the opening sixty-two verses (1:1-2:11), *BEGINS with the message of salvation by grace* (1:4, 5; *ref. data on next page*).

And, as previously stated, John's gospel is *the ONLY* one of the four gospel accounts (or, five gospel accounts, including Acts) that begins this way. *The others ALL begin with a message BEYOND that of salvation by grace.*

And *THIS* is *EXACTLY* as the matter should exist, for two main reasons:

1a) Salvation by grace has been established in John, at the beginning, and need not be repeated beginning the Synoptics and Acts.

2a) The Synoptics and Acts have been written to and about saved individuals.

Thus, *WHY* should salvation by grace be redealt with in these four books? The base has already been established and dealt with, at the beginning, in John (*cf.* Heb. 6:1).

The same thing is seen at the beginning in Genesis, or at the birth of the nation in Exodus (chs. 12ff).

In Genesis, *ONLY* the opening part of the activity on day one has to do with salvation by grace (Gen. 1:2b, 3):

“And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters
[the raging, darkened waters, v. 2b].

And God said, let there be light: and there was light.”

And *EXACTLY the SAME thing* is seen at the beginning on day one in John (1:4, 5):

“In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”

And *THAT’S* the extent of the message pertaining to salvation by grace at the beginning of either Testament.

The text *THEN* continues in Genesis by a division *OF THAT* having been brought into existence *FROM THAT* which had previously existed by itself (darkness alone, Light shining out of the darkness, then a division between the two).

OR, in Exodus, immediately following the death of the firstborn, the journey toward the land begins. The nation, under Moses, *was THEN BROUGHT OUT of Egypt to be BROUGHT INTO the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*

OR, in John, immediately following Light shining out of darkness, *there is THEN a PROCLAMATION of THAT LIGHT.*

(Note *HOW* John 1:4, 5 forms commentary on Gen. 1:2b, 3, providing additional information [as John 1:1-3 had previously provided commentary for Gen. 1:1].

In Genesis, “Light” and “darkness” alone appear. In John, “Life” appears as synonymous with “Light,” portending “death” as synonymous with “darkness.”

Then, for several verses beyond [vv. 6-9], John uses “Light” alone, as synonymous with “Life.”)

THEN, note the disparity between the time and space given in Scripture to things pertaining to salvation by grace at the beginning and that which then follows, that resulting from and made possible because of salvation by grace.

In Genesis, it's one and one-half verses; in Exodus, it's the opening part of one chapter; in John, it's two verses; and after this, in each case, it's material covering chapters and books, dealing with the things which follow salvation by grace.

WHY has all of this been turned around in Christian circles today, *placing the emphasis where God HAS NOT placed it and NOT placing the emphasis where God HAS placed it?*

The answer is evident.

The foundations have been ignored (cf. Ps. 11:3; Matt. 7:24-27).

b) Salvation in Relation to the Proffered Kingdom

The Light shining out of darkness in Genesis has to do with the beginning point in the restoration of the material creation, with man subsequently brought into existence to rule the restored creation in the stead of Satan and his angels.

The Light shining out of darkness in John has to do with that foreshadowed in the Genesis account. It has to do with the beginning point in the restoration of man, with man ultimately ruling the earth in the stead of Satan and his angels, with man realizing that stated in Gen. 1:26-28.

And man's rule, in this manner, after this fashion, occurs on the seventh day within the septenary structure set forth, on the final 1,000 years of the present heavens and earth's existence, seen in both Genesis and John.

Then, John's gospel, forming commentary on Genesis, adds something to the Genesis account. John's gospel — following the beginning point, Light shining out of darkness, — immediately begins dealing with the descendants of Shem, with the nation descending from Jacob's twelve sons.

Thus, John DOESN'T deal with the descendants of Adam in a GENERAL respect BUT in a SPECIFIC respect. John BEGINS and CONTINUES his gospel by centering on and dealing with the nation of ISRAEL (1:7ff).

WHY?

The answer is quite simple.

THIS is NOT ONLY HOW matters had been UNCHANGEABLY ESTABLISHED and SET in the O.T. BUT THIS is the ONLY WAY John could HAVE BEGUN and CONTINUED his gospel, remaining completely in line with previous revelation leading into the N.T.

Israel is "the apple [i.e., 'the pupil'] of God's eye" (Deut. 32:10; Ps. 17:8; Zech. 2:8). God NOT ONLY views Israel in a special and particular respect BUT views and deals with ALL of the other descendants of Adam (the nations) THROUGH Israel.

Immediately following his statement about Light shining out of darkness (vv. 4, 5), John calls attention to the ministry of John the Baptist (vv. 6-36).

In John's gospel, John the Baptist is called forth to proclaim the Light.

In Matthew's gospel, John the Baptist is called forth, as the forerunner of the Messiah, to proclaim the offer of "the kingdom of the heavens" to Israel, based on national repentance (commenting on, further explaining John).

(John the Baptist was the Elijah of his day, as Elijah will be the John the Baptist of his day [cf. Isa. 40:1-5; Mal. 4:5, 6].)

Both John and Matthew present *the SAME message (regarding the kingdom), to the SAME people (Israel).*

And EXACTLY the same thing is seen in the offer of the kingdom to Israel in Mark, Luke, and in the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel in Acts.

Note John 1:10-13 in this respect:

“He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God [“the children of God”], even to them that believe on his name:

Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

In verse ten, the word “world” (Gk. *kosmos*) appears three times. The first two reference the material world, and the third references individuals in the world.

(*Kosmos* is used in this broad respect, not only in John’s gospel but elsewhere in the N.T. as well.

But we’ll stay with John’s use of the word, for the word *kosmos* is used more times in John’s gospel and first epistle than in all the remaining books of the N.T. combined [used 185 times throughout the N.T., used in John’s gospel and first epistle 101 times].)

Through the use of *kosmos* to reference individuals in the world, John *could ONLY* have been referencing a particular segment of mankind, previously identified contextually (beginning in Genesis) and identified textually in subsequent verses in John.

The statement, “the world knew him not,” could NOT possibly refer to the world at large. This would *NOT ONLY* be out of line with *HOW* God deals with the nations (*THROUGH ISRAEL*) *BUT* out of line with Christ’s appearance and ministry (*to ISRAEL ALONE*, which the text goes on to state and deal with in vv. 11-13; cf. Matt. 10:5-8; 15:22-24).

In verse twelve, Christ came “to His Own” (“His Own things,” a neuter, relative pronoun in the GK. text).

He was “born King of the Jews” (Matt. 2:1, 2), He appeared to Israel as their Messianic King, with a message regarding His kingdom (Matt. 4:17ff; 16:13-17), and, *in THIS respect*, “His Own things” *could ONLY have had to do with REGALITY*.

But note the remainder of the verse, “His own received Him not” (“His Own people,” a masculine, relative pronoun in the Gk. text).

And “His Own people” rejecting Him *had to do with REGALITY as well*.

They rejected and crucified Him as “the Son of Man” (John 3:14-16), a Messianic title (Ps. 8:3-6; Dan. 7:13, 14).

They rejected their Messianic King and the proffered kingdom of the heavens, choosing, instead, Caesar and their subjection to the Roman kingdom of that day, (John 19:15).

However, in verses twelve and thirteen, *some from the nation DID receive Him. And to THESE* He gave the power, authority to become “the children of God” (“sons,” KJV, should be “children” [teknon (“child”), not huiois (“son”), in the Gk. text]).

Those receiving Him were placed in a position to be child-trained with a view to sonship and regality (*cf.* Heb. 12:5-8).

That is to say, they were placed in a position to be the new order of sons (Rom. 8:17-19) who would rule with God’s Son in the proffered kingdom (Matt. 3:1ff; 4:17ff; John 1:49).

And those being “born...of God” (v. 13) through receiving Him *were NOT* unsaved individuals hearing and responding to the message of salvation by grace. *THAT was dealt with at the beginning, in verses four and five.*

Rather, in verses eleven through fourteen, individuals in a position to respond to the proclaimed message regarding the kingdom are being dealt with, *saved individuals in a position to bring forth FRUIT for the kingdom, individuals being brought forth from ABOVE rather than from BELOW.*

And John the Baptist's statement about Jesus as "the Lamb of God" in verses twenty-nine and thirty-six must be understood *in this SAME respect, as having to do with ISRAEL in relation to the proffered KINGDOM, NOT* relative to the world at large in relation to salvation by grace, as almost universally taught.

Note first of all that these two statements occur on the second and third days in the septenary arrangement of days and events in John 1:1-2:11, paralleling Gen. 1:1-2:3, *NOT* on the first day, *where any reference to salvation by grace MUST occur.*

(For information on Christ's finished work at Calvary having to do with *BOTH the saved and unsaved*, refer to the author's article, "Proclaiming the Cross.")

Then, note *HOW* "world" (*kosmos*) has already been used, *with Israel ALONE in view, NOT the world at large*, back in verse ten.

(*Kosmos* is used seventy-eight times in John's gospel [but only sixteen times in all three Synoptics and Acts], with the word referencing Israel numerous times [*e.g.*, note Jesus' use of the word *kosmos* in this respect in John 18:19, 20].

And, at the time John's gospel was written, because the kingdom had previously been taken from Israel and the Spirit was then/now in the world searching for a bride for God's Son [Gen. 24:1ff], John used *kosmos* for this particular segment of mankind as well [16:8]. Or, note this same type usage of *kosmos* by John in his first epistle [2:2].

THEN, note something about the overall structure of John's gospel, which would be the same as Matthew's gospel and Acts, or in keeping with Romans and Hebrews.

Seven of the eight signs in John's gospel occur within the first eleven chapters. In that respect, *these opening eleven chapters could be understood as the Jewish section of the book.*

Beginning with events in chapter twelve to the time of the crucifixion [ch. 19], *there are NO signs* [only referenced twice (12:18, 37)]. And all of the events in these eight chapters occur within a six-day period [12:1ff].

And it is within this part of John's gospel that the one new man "in Christ," the one now in a position to bring forth fruit for the kingdom," is seen [cf. Matt. 21:43; John 16:7-14].

Matthew's gospel and Acts [in reality, a fifth gospel] are structured in a similar, two-part manner.

In Matthew's gospel, the division occurs at the beginning of chapter thirteen, following a climactic rejection by the Jewish religious leaders in chapter twelve, when Christ departs the house [Israel], and goes down by the seaside [goes to the Gentiles (v. 1)].

In Acts, the division occurs at the end of chapter seven and the beginning of chapter eight, with a climactic rejection by the Jewish religious leaders, the dispersion of believing Jews, and the Gentiles coming into view [7: 51-60; 8:1-5; 10:1-48].

In all three books, though signs and a continuance of the offer/re-offer of the kingdom to Israel are seen throughout, there is a marked difference between the two parts of each book relative to the prevalence of the proclaimed message and the attendant signs.

THEN, because of Israel's place in God's Economy, note something about Israel's continued presence in the epistles [during the present dispensation, with the previous Jewish dispensation having been interrupted and Israel set aside for a time]. Both Romans and Hebrews have Jewish sections in the latter part of each book [cf. Rom. 9-11; Heb. 8-10].)

c) *The Reason for and Proper Use of Signs*

Or, Let's look at the word "world" (*kosmos*) and *the whole of the matter* — brought forth from above, signs, the kingdom in view — dealt with again in John 3.

Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus in John 3:1-21 parallels the section in chapter one that we've been dealing with.

The section in John chapter one ends with the first sign in John's gospel, on the seventh day, having to do with a restored Jewish nation in the Messianic Kingdom (2:1-11).

And the parallel section in John chapter three *could be NO different*. John 3:1-21 continues with *the same subject matter* and picks up where John 1:10-2:11 left off, *with a reference to "SIGNS," the proffered "KINGDOM"* (vv. 1-5), and *"the LAMB of God"* (vv. 14-16; cf. John 1:29, 36).

THEN, note the use of *kosmos* ("world") in verse sixteen. Because of the continuance of *the SAME subject matter* from chapter one, this word *NOT ONLY* has to be understood *the SAME way* that it is seen back in chapter one *BUT ALSO* understood in keeping with the way God deals with Israel and the nations.

To understand *kosmos* in John 3:16 as referencing *other than Israel ALONE* (i.e., also referencing the nations worldwide) would be out of line with all Scripture dealing with *HOW* Israel and the nations are seen within God's Economy, dating all the way back to the opening chapters of Genesis.

(Note the introduction of the Paschal lamb at the time of the birth of the Israeli nation in Ex. 12.

The Paschal lamb was given to ISRAEL, and ONLY ISRAEL could SLAY this lamb and APPLY the blood.

Those in Egypt [typifying those in the world] *were estranged from ALL things connected with THIS lamb* [cf. Eph. 2:11, 12].

The ONLY possible way for an Egyptian to have had any part in the entire matter would have been for that Egyptian to have gone to Israel and be found inside an Israeli home when the Lord passed through the land at midnight, bringing to pass the death of the firstborn for those not having already experienced this death via a substitute, the death and shed blood of the Paschal lamb.

In the words of Gen. 9:27, for an Egyptian to have availed himself of a substitute lamb dying in his place, *he would have had to dwell "in the tents of Shem."*

NO alternate existed!

NOR did an alternate exist in the antitype in 33 A.D!

NOR does an alternate exist today!

NOR will an alternate ever exist!

The Paschal Lamb, Whom Israel slew in 33 A.D. NO more died and shed His blood for the whole world than did the Paschal lambs 1,500 years earlier, in Ex. 12, die and shed their blood for all Egypt. The UNCHANGEABLE type was SET in Ex. 12!

For the death and shed blood of the Paschal Lamb to be efficacious for those out in the world [the nations], there is ONLY ONE, UNCHANGING alternate!

THEY will HAVE to dwell "in the tents of Shem!"

And "world" [kosmos] in John 3:16 will HAVE to be understood accordingly!

NO alternate exists HERE as well!

The matter has been UNCHANGEABLY ESTABLISHED in Genesis!

The type has been UNCHANGEABLY SET in Exodus!

The antitype MUST follow the type in EXACT detail!)

d) A Proper Use of Aion and Aionios

Little need be added beyond what has already been stated about the proper translation of *aion* and *aionios* in John's gospel and elsewhere in the N.T. (ref. to the author's article, "Aion and Aionios").

Note a translation of John 3:16, with comments added and *aionios* properly translated:

"For God so loved the world [the kosmos, referencing Israel], that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever [those in the Jewish nation] believeth in Him [believe the message which He had proclaimed, attended by signs, having to do with the kingdom referenced back in vv. 3, 5] would not perish [in relation to the proffered kingdom], but have age-lasting life [life in the proffered kingdom on the seventh day]."

To understand John chapter one and Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus in chapter three after the manner that the vast majority of Christians have understood these sections of Scripture for at least the past five hundred years, dating back to the reformation, *is to understand them from BOTH a non-textual and non-contextual standpoint.*

And, inseparably associated, it is to understand the passages apart from interpreting them in the light of the place which Israel occupies in God's Economy.

But all of this is little more than the prophesied direction which *the new creation "in Christ"* (II Cor. 5:17) has taken over time, toward the close of the dispensation, preceding Christ's return, paralleling the prophesied direction which *the old creation "in Jacob"* (Isa. 43:1) took over time, toward the close of the prior dispensation, preceding Christ's first coming.

It was ALL foretold in places like Isa. 5 and Matt. 13, and "the Scriptures CANNOT be broken" (John 10:35)!

(For additional material on "John Chapters One, Three," refer to the author's book, *From the Beginning*.

Relative to a history of the mistranslation of *aion* and *aionios*, the matter is almost always traced back to Jerome's use of *aeternum* [the Latin word from which the English word "eternal" is derived] to translate *aion* and *aionios* in his Latin Vulgate [383-405 A.D.], a translation which influenced future translation work for centuries.

During the days of the Greek philosophers [dating back to about the 6th century B.C.], *aion* and *aionios* were understood as having to do with "time," NOT with eternity.

And so it was at the time that the N.T. was penned.

But, a few centuries later, during Jerome's day, extending into modern times...)