

Is Your Road Map Accurate?

by Drue Warner

I can't think of anything more disappointing, confusing, or disillusioning than finding out that the road map I've been using to get from Point A to Point B is inaccurate. It doesn't matter how much time, energy, and passion I have for where I want to go, and it doesn't matter how diligently I follow the chartings on the map, if my road map is inaccurate, I'll never get to where I'm hoping to go, and I'll most likely end up lost, frustrated, and confused.

After having very good and engaging conversations with my Jehovah's Witness friends over the years, the evidence is overwhelmingly clear that the same can be said of the Jehovah's Witnesses' New World Translation of the Bible. The unfortunate thing is that many of my well-intentioned Jehovah's Witness friends don't realize that there are very critical errors in the "road map" (i.e. holy scriptures) they're using to find relationship with and acceptance of Jehovah God.

As a result, the road map to God, as taught in the New World Translation, is an inaccurate map that will not lead us to our desired destination of Jehovah's God's acceptance, love, peace, joy, forgiveness, and grace. It only leads us to a destination of self-striving, works-based righteousness, and spiritual exhaustion, all without a real sense of acceptance, love, peace, joy, forgiveness, and grace. At the end of the day, it leaves us tired, unsure, and a never-ending pressure to "do more and try harder." That's not the message of the Bible. Jesus said that he came to set the captives free (Luke 4:18), to give us rest from our heavy burdens (Matthew 11:28), and to fill our hearts with joy (John 15:11). Not only that, but He spoke very harshly to the religious leaders of the day (i.e. the Pharisees) who placed heavy burdens and religious expectations on people who were seeking after God. Jesus even called these religious leaders "a brood of vipers" because they were more concerned about outward appearances (i.e. religious performance) than the inward motivations and desires of the heart (Matthew 23).

The scriptures, when accurately translated, clearly teach that relationship with and acceptance by God of mankind is only made possible by the righteousness of Jesus Christ, not by the righteousness of man. Salvation is based on Jesus Christ doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves. God's requirement for right relationship with Him is perfection. Since all of mankind is sinful, none of mankind is capable of perfection. To put it bluntly, before Christ came, we were lost and without hope. *"But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."* (Ephesians 2:4-10 NAS)

What does the Bible teach about Salvation (i.e. The Gospel)?

21 God made him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. – 2 Corinthians 5:21

9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. - 2 Corinthians 8:9

3 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. 4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior. - Titus 3:3-6

9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. – 1 John 4:9-10

6 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. 7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. 11 And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. – Romans 5:6-8

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. – Romans 8:1-4

15 “We who are Jews by birth and not sinful Gentiles 16 know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified. – Galatians 2:15-16

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. 4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. 6 And God raised us

up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. - Ephesians 2:1-10

9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. 11 In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. 13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. 15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

– Colossians 2:9-15

Researching the New World Translation

In doing my own personal study and research as to the accuracy of the New World Translation text, I came across the following quotes from notes scholars of the Greek language (the original language of the New Testament scriptures). Here's what they had to say...

*"...the Jehovah's Witnesses have incorporated in their translation of the New Testament several quite erroneous renderings of the Greek." - Dr. Bruce Metzger, professor of New Testament Language and Literature at Princeton Theological Seminary and author of *The Text of the New Testament**

*"I have never read any New Testament so badly translated as 'The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures.' In fact, it is not their translation at all. Rather, it is a distortion of the New Testament. The translators used what J. B. Rotherham had translated in 1893, in modern speech, and changed the readings in scores of passages to state what Jehovah's Witnesses believe and teach. That is distortion, not translation." - Dr. Julius Mantey was one of the leading Greek scholars in the world and co-author of *The Dana-Mantey Greek Grammar* and *A Hellenistic Greek Reader*.*

"From beginning to end this volume is a shining example of how the Bible should not be translated...." and he calls it "an insult to the Word of God. - British scholar H. H. Rowley

*"These books possess a veneer of scholarship unrivaled for its daring and boldness in a field that all informed scholars know Jehovah's Witnesses are almost totally unprepared to venture into. As a matter of fact, the authors have been able to uncover partially a carefully guarded Watchtower secret: the names of five of the members of the New World Translation committee. Not one of these five people has any training in Greek...[or Hebrew]" - Dr. Walter Martin, author of *Jehovah of the Watchtower**

*"A sound interpretation of any passage requires a careful grammatical exegesis. Watchtower publications repeatedly present doctrines and interpretations of the Scriptures, which completely misunderstand or ignore grammar. Before the Society entered into the field of translation, there were many verses which gave them trouble because of their direct contradiction of the Witnesses' doctrines. With the appearance of the New World Translation the difficult passages in many cases were weakened or eliminated by a translation that violated or ignored the rules of grammar." - Professor Edmond Gruss, author of a standard historical and theological work, *Apostles of Denial**

It seems that the common theme around the differences in translation between the New World Translation and all other Bible translations is that of the deity of Jesus Christ. It seems that the translators of the New World Translation had an agenda to make sure that Jesus Christ was not seen being God (the same and very essence of God the Father), but that he would be limited only to the Son of God.

This is a very important distinction in our beliefs. It seems difficult to deny (even in the New World Translation) that Jesus Christ is not God. The Old Testament points to Him. When He arrives on the scene, He proclaims to the people that He is, not only the Son of God, He is God. He proves this in His power to heal, forgive sins, prophecy, perform miracles, calm storms, walk on water, raise the dead, and be raised from the dead. Not only that, Jesus receives worship from his disciples (something He would never do if He were not God). In fact, the very reason that Jesus was crucified was for blasphemy (i.e. making Himself to be God).

So, why would the translators seek to limit Jesus' power and authority? The answer is that by limiting Jesus' power and authority, the translators were also able to limit His power and ability to save people from their sins. If Jesus is not God, then He's not our Savior, He's merely our example for how to live. So then, why would we not want a Savior who can save us from our sins? The answer has everything to do with control. If Jesus is Savior, then He's in control. If He's not, then we're in control, and as sinful human beings, we like being in control (or at least the perception that we're in control), not only of our day to day lives, but also of our eternal salvation. Plain and simple, because of our sinful nature and rebelliousness towards a Holy God, we'd rather work our way to Him through our own performance and good works, than have to trust and depend upon Him alone for salvation and relationship. Thus confirming the truth that we experience every day that "it's much easier to give than to receive" (and this is true even in our relationship with God).

So, what are the benefits of believing that Jesus Christ is fully God? One benefit is that we have a great assurance (which leads to deep and abiding peace) that the salvation that Jesus gives us, can never be taken away. The Bible speaks of us being "adopted" into God's family (Romans 4, Galatians 4, Ephesians 1), and we know that once we are adopted as children of God, we have assurance that we will never be un-adopted, abandoned, or un-loved. Another benefit is that of a changed life that reaches to the very core of our being, from the inside out. Relatively speaking, it's much easier to change our behaviors, but it's impossible to change our heart and desires. When we believe that Jesus Christ is fully God, we also believe that the salvation He gives us, not only changes our behaviors, but it starts by changing our hearts, motivations, and desires. As a result, our behavior is motivated out of love (i.e. "want to") rather than duty (i.e. "have to"). A third benefit of believing that Jesus Christ is fully God is that we can experience a peace that surpasses all understanding, even in the most tragic of circumstances, because we know that Jesus (who's name means "God with us") is with us, He's for us, and His power is in us. We can find great comfort in knowing that, because all things were created by Him, for Him, and through Him, He is in control of our circumstances, and this gives meaning and purpose even in our sufferings. Those are just three benefits to believing that Jesus is fully God.

The reality is that, it's not really up to us to choose which we want to believe. We need to be diligent seekers of the truth of God's Word, and to believe what the Bible says about Jesus. If the Bible tells us that Jesus is God, then we need to live our lives in accordance with that truth. If the

Bible tells us that Jesus is not God (but the Son of God whose example we should follow), then we need to live our lives in accordance with that truth. Whether we claim to be a Christian, a Jew, a Jehovah's Witness, a Muslim, or a Catholic, it's more important to be a seeker of truth, and if the religious writings and teachings that we follow are not truth, then we need to align ourselves with that which is truth.

That being said, though much of the New World Translation seems to be identical to other accepted Bible translations, there are key translations of the New World Translation that differentiate from the original Greek texts. Many of these translation differences actually change the whole message of the Bible, especially as relates to salvation, and this should be a cause for concern for any seeker of truth.

On the pages following are very key, detailed, and insightful studies of just a few of these translation differences. If you are truly a seeker of truth (rather than a defender of your current religious preference, whatever that may be), then I would encourage you to read, study, and consider the following information. I'd also encourage you to ask God to lead, direct, and guide your heart and mind to be able to know and discern the truth of who He is, so that you can know for certain that the road map you're using to seek after Him, is one that will truly lead you to Him.

I appreciate your heart and zeal to serve and obey God. I greatly respect, admire, and am convicted by your courage and commitment to engage with strangers that you don't know (like me), in order to tell them about Jehovah God. I have much to learn from you. If you're interested, I'd love to talk more with you about matters of faith. Feel free to contact me anytime at 404-906-9117 (cell) or druewarner@mac.com.

John 1:1

Translation Error: "God" as "a god" in order to deny Christ's deity.

NWT "In (the) beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was **a** god."

NAS "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

The transliterated Greek of this verse looks like this:

En arche en ho logos kai ho logos

(word for word translation)

In beginning was the Word and the word

en pros ton theon kai (no article) theos (predicate nominative precedes the verb) en ho logos (the subject, b/c it is preceded by the article)

(word for word translation)

was toward the God and God was the Word

Translation Errors

"The" cannot be translated as "a." Regardless, "the" is not even in the text, yet the Watchtower Society claims that the article "the" is understood and can be added to the text. However, it was clearly John's intention to NOT write "the God was the Word." He would have been suggesting that all of God (i.e. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) was Jesus, and that was not his intention.

In essence, the Watchtower Society claims it can translate *theos* as "a god" because there is no definite article before this usage of "theos" (God) in the last clause of John 1:1. Note that the first use of the term God ("*pros ton theon*") has the article ("*ton*," the). The second use simply states "*kai theos*" ("and God," not "and *the* God"). **Because it does not say "and *the* God" Jehovah's Witnesses argue they are free to interpret this second usage of God as figuratively meaning a lesser deity, "a god"—signifying Christ's exalted status, even though he is still only a creature. Their main concern here is to escape the clear meaning of this passage. Christ is here called *theos*, God.**

The difficulty is that had the apostle John used the article, he would have declared that "*the* God was the Word." In other words, to declare that "*the* God was the word (Jesus)" would have stated that all of God, i.e., the whole trinity, was Jesus. This would have supported modalistic belief that there is only one Person in the Godhead (i.e., Jesus).

The apostle John had to make a finer distinction and, on the one hand, clearly declare that the person of Jesus was deity, but, on the other, not make it seem as if all three persons in the Godhead were to be considered the same as the person of Jesus. To make this fine distinction he had to use the exact wording he used.

We should also note that *The Kingdom Interlinear* (p. 1158-59) utilizes both Mantey and

Robertson's *Grammar* in defense of their John 1:1 translation. However, Mantey observes:

Since my name is used and our *Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* is quoted on page 744 to seek to justify their translation, I am making this statement...**of all the scholars in the world, as far as we know none have translated this verse as Jehovah's Witnesses have done.** If the Greek article occurred with both Word and God in John 1:1, the implication would be that they are one and the same person, absolutely identical. But John affirmed that "the Word was with (the) God" (the definite article preceding each noun), and in so writing, he indicated his belief that they are distinct and separate personalities. Then John next stated that the Word was God, i.e., of the same family or essence that characterizes the Creator. Or, in other words, that both are of the same nature, and that nature is the highest in existence, namely divine.... **The apostle John, in the context of the introduction to his Gospel, is pulling all the stops out of language to portray not only the deity of Christ, but also his equality with the Father. He states that the Word was in the beginning, that He was with God, that He was God and that all creation came into existence through him and that not even one thing exists that was not created by Christ.** What else could be said that John did not say?⁴⁴

As for Dr. Robertson, they misstate his own position by selectively quoting him. As they observe, Robertson does say that, "the absence of the article here is on purpose." But Jehovah's Witnesses do not explain *why* he says this. He does so to indicate that to *include* the article "would have been Sabellianism."⁴⁵ In his *Word Pictures*, Robertson provides a succinct analysis:

By exact and careful language John denied Sabellianism by not saying *ho theos en ho logos*. (The God was the Word). That would mean that all of God was expressed in *ho logos* (the Word) and the terms would be interchangeable, each having the article. **The subject is made plain by the article (*ho logos*) and the predicate without it (*theos*)** just as in John 4:24 *pneuma ho theos* can only mean "God is spirit," not "spirit is God." So in I John 4:16 *ho theos agape estin* can only mean "God is love," not "love is God" as a so-called Christian scientist would confusedly say. For the article with the predicate see Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 767f. So in John 1:14 *ho Logos sarx egeneto*, "the Word became flesh," not "the flesh became Word."⁴⁶

The Watchtower Society appendix defending the "a god" rendering (*Kingdom Interlinear*, p. 1158-60) again, appears scholarly, but is not. For example, they misquote Dana and Mantey's *Grammar*. In a letter dated July 11, 1974 to the WBTS, Mantey even demanded a public apology for these *repeated* misquotings—as well as requested their discontinuance of the use of his grammar: After citing numerous examples of mistranslations, Mantey writes:

"In view of the preceding facts, especially because you have been quoting me out of context, I herewith request you not to quote the Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament again, which you have been doing for 24 years. Also that you not quote it or me in any of your publications from this time on. Also that you publicly and immediately apologize in the Watchtower magazine, since my words had no relevance to the absence of the article before theos in John 1:1.... On the page before the Preface in the grammar are these words: "All rights reserved—no part of this book may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the publisher." If you have such permission, please send me a photocopy of it. If you do not heed these requests you will suffer the consequences. Regretfully yours, Julius R. Mantey"

Van Buskirk has also documented Watchtower deception in detail in his *Scholastic Dishonesty of the Watchtower* noting they also misquote A. T. Robertson's *Grammar* and other sources as well. They further claim, "**At Acts 28:6 we have a case paralleling that of John 1:1 with exactly the same predicate construction**, namely, with an anarthrous [i.e., no definite article] OEOS [*theos*]" (*The Kingdom Interlinear*, p. 1160). This at first seems to be true for there is no definite article in Acts 28:6. What the Witnesses fail to mention is that **in John 1:1 the predicate nominative (*theos*) precedes the verb**; here in Acts it *follows* the verb and thus is not applicable. Colwell's rule (which is at issue here) states that a definite predicate nominative has the article when it follows the verb and lacks the article when it precedes it:

John 1:1 (God was; since the article comes after the verb an article cannot be added)

ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος
en pros ton theon kai theos en ho logos

(word for word translation)

was toward the God and *God was* the Word

Acts 28:6 (is God; since the verb precedes the predicate nominative an article can be added)

autos is God
 αὐτὸν εἶναι θεόν

(word for word translation)

he is (verb precedes predicate nominative) **a** (article added) **God**

It must be stated quite frankly that, if the Jehovah's Witnesses take this translation seriously, they are polytheists. In view of the additional light which is available during this age of Grace, such a representation is even more reprehensible than were the heathenish, polytheistic errors into which ancient Israel was so prone to fall. As a matter of solid fact, however, **such a rendering is a frightful mistranslation. It overlooks entirely an established rule of Greek grammar which necessitates the rendering, "...and the Word was God."** Some years ago Dr. Ernest Cadman Colwell of the University of Chicago pointed out in a study of the Greek definite article that, "A definite predicate nominative has the article when it follows the verb; it does not have the article when it precedes the verb...." **In a lengthy Appendix in the Jehovah's Witnesses' translation, which was added to support the mistranslation of John 1:1, there are quoted thirty-five other passages in John where the predicate noun has the definite article in Greek. These are intended to prove that the absence of the article in John 1:1 requires that OEOS must be translated "a god." None of the thirty-five instances is parallel, however, for in every case the predicate noun stands after the verb, and so, according to Colwell's rule, properly has the article.** So far, therefore, from being evidence against the usual translation of John 1:1, these instances add confirmation to the full enunciation of the rule of the Greek definite article. Furthermore, the additional references quoted in the New World Translation from the Greek of the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, in order to give further support to the erroneous rendering in the opening verse of John, are exactly in conformity with Colwell's rule, and therefore are added proof of the accuracy of the rule. The other passages adduced in the Appendix are, for one reason or another, not applicable to the question at issue. **(Particularly inappropriate is the reference to Acts 28:6, for no one has ever maintained**

that the pagan natives of Malta regarded Paul as anything other than "a god.")⁴⁸

Van Buskirk points out that the Witnesses have attempted to deny Colwell's Rule by quoting Phillip B. Harner's article in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, "Qualitative Anarthrous Predicate Nouns: Mark 15:39 and John 1:1" (Vol. 92, 1973, p. 87). However, a full year earlier Dr. Mantey's own letter to the Watchtower Society demanding they stop misquoting him pointed out that not only had they misquoted Colwell's rule but that it is impossible to quote Harner in denial of Colwell since Harner himself supports the rule and denies the possibility of an "a god" translation. Van Buskirk observes:

One's mind staggers at the depths to which someone will sink to prove his point. In the Watchtower's case both Colwell and Harner show that in John 1:1 "a god" is not a permissible translation. Yet without blinking an eye they will quote, out of context, the man who refutes them. Harner's article in no way concludes what the Watchtower makes it conclude in their letter.⁴⁹

Van Buskirk goes on to discuss exactly what Harner concluded and how his research is complementary to Colwell's; it simply brings out new information.

Nevertheless, even if we were to assume the truth of what the Watchtower Society claims in their appendix, they have violated their own "rule" in John 1:1 94% of the time. Robert H. Countess, writing in *The Jehovah's Witnesses' New Testament*, documents this in detail.⁵⁰ In John 1 alone they violate their principle (Colwell's rule: the predicate nominative has the article when it follows the verb) at least five times. Checking their interlinear (pp. 417-19) we see the following:

John 1:6 *para theou* (from God) —no definite article

John 1:12 *tekna theou* (gave he authority children God) —no definite article

John 1:13 *ek theou* (of God) —no definite article

John 1:18 *Theon*—no definite article

John 1:23 *odon Kuriou* (way Lord) —no definite article

If the absence of the article demands the "a god" rendering, why is it not so rendered here? In fact, where is it in 94% of the instances of such construction in the NWT? Clearly translating John 1:1 "a god" is not only a violation of Greek grammar, it is unjustified even in light of the vast majority of their own translation. Obviously then, in the above passages in John 1:1 (NWT), the translation should be "God," not "a god."

(As an aside, the NWT at John 1:23 translates the Greek *kurios* (Lord) as "Jehovah," since it is a clear reference to Jehovah God from Isaiah. Yet, according to their John 1:1 rendering, with no definite article it should be "a Jehovah." If "a god" must be different from God, "a Jehovah" must then be different from Jehovah. At this point we would have three Gods: "Jehovah," "a god" and "a Jehovah.")

John 8:58

Translation Error: "I Am" is translated as "I have been" in order to circumvent Christ's deity.

NWT "Jesus said to them: "Most truly I say to you, before Abraham came into existence, **I have been.**"

NAS "Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, **I Am.**'"

Comments from Dr. Julius Mantey (who was one of the leading Greek scholars in the world and co-author of *The Dana-Mantey Greek Grammar* and *A Hellenistic Greek Reader*).

The proper translation of the Greek ego eimi is "I Am" not "I have been" (NWT). This is an attempt to deny Christ's statement of deity (cf. context) and to replace it with something compatible to the Witnesses' concept of Christ's limited pre-existence. Dr. Mantey states:

The translation of it as "I have been" by Jehovah's Witnesses is wrong. The footnote stating that it is in "the perfect indefinite tense" is also wrong. No Greek grammar, to my knowledge, has such a statement. In fact, there is no form eimi in the perfect tense in the Greek New Testament.22

Comments from Michael Van Buskirk (author of *The Scholastic Dishonesty of the Watchtower*)

It is also noteworthy that Michael Van Buskirk, author of *The Scholastic Dishonesty of the Watchtower* has two official Watchtower Society letters which he quotes showing they have assumed four *different* grammatical positions in regard to *ego eimi*: a) "present indicative first person singular" (the correct designation); b) "a historical present"; c) the "perfect indefinite tense"—but only "in a general sense," and d) "perfect tense indicative."²³ Again, **there is no "perfect indefinite tense"** as they claim (see 1950, 1953 eds.). Dr. Mantey also states there is no "perfect indicative in this verse in Greek."²⁴ **The correct answer, of course, is "present indicative, first person singular,"** but this translates as "I Am," *not* as "I have been."

If the Watchtower Society had admitted (at least once) that the grammatical construction was a "present indicative, first person singular," why did they never translate it as such? In fact, one can look at their own Kingdom Interlinear (p. 467) and directly beneath the Greek *ego eimi* we find "I Am"; but the translation column to the right reads "I have been."

Colossians 1:15-20

Translation Error: This verse inserts the word "other" in parenthesis in order to deny the eternal existence of Christ.

NWT "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; because by means of him all (other) things were created in the heavens and upon the earth, the things visible and the things invisible, no matter whether they are thrones or lordships or governments or authorities. All (other) things have been created through him and for him. Also, he is before all (other) things and by means of him all (other) things were made to exist, and he is the head of the body, the congregation. He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that he might become the one who is first-born from the dead, that he might become the one who is first in all things; because (God) saw good for all fullness to dwell in him, and through him to reconcile again to himself all (other) things by making peace through the blood (he shed) on the torture stake, no matter whether they are the things upon the earth or the things in heaven."

NAS "And He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. For by him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven."

In this passage the NWT adds five words not present in the Greek text, again, in order to deny Christ's deity. In Colossians 1:16, 17, 20 the term "other" is inserted in brackets five times. This is done in order to imply the meaning of the passage is that Christ Himself is not *the* Creator. We grant that a translator may insert a word in italics or brackets if it is necessary to accurately express the thought of the original. But even a cursory reading of the context will show that Christ *is* the Creator. Their own interlinear is again embarrassing (p. 896) for it proves the word "other" is not in the Greek. Yet this did not prevent **earlier editions of the *New World Translation* from using "other" without brackets, implying it was part of the Greek** (see the 1950, 1953 eds.). And even the 1965 edition of *Make Sure of All things Hold Fast to What is Fine* quotes Colossians 1:15-18 as if "other" were part of the original Greek. No parenthesis brackets are present: "because by means of him all OTHER things were created.... All OTHER things have been created through him and for him."³⁴

In addition, modern versions of the NWT insert the word "other" in Philippians 2:9, again changing the meaning (i.e., "the name above every OTHER name") and again without brackets or italics, implying it is in the original when, in fact, it is not, as their own interlinear once again demonstrates.

Jehovah's Witnesses' objectivity cannot become more questionable than through examples of this type, where one adds to the divine text what is simply not present in order to deny what is clearly taught. Nevertheless, the Witnesses have somehow overlooked John 1:3 (which the NWT

translates correctly) and which clearly declares the doctrine of Christ's deity which they spuriously removed from Colossians: that if Christ is the Creator of *all* things, He Himself must be uncreated.

All things came into existence through him, and apart from him not even one thing came into existence. NWT

While on the subject of Christ as Creator, Jehovah's Witnesses refer to the word *prototokos* ("first-born" in Col. 1:15) as alleged evidence of Christ being "created." However, the word means **priority and sovereignty over creation**, as the context reveals. Metzger observes:

Here he is spoken of as "the first begotten of all creation," which is something quite different from saying that he was made or created. If Paul had wished to express the latter idea, he had available a Greek word to do so, the word *protoktistos*, meaning "first created." Actually, however, Paul uses the *prototokes*, meaning "first begotten," which signifies something quite different, as the following explanation by a modern lay theologian makes clear:

"One of the creeds says that Christ is the Son of God "begotten, not created" and it adds "begotten by his Father before all worlds." Will you please get it quite clear that this has nothing to do with the fact that when Christ was born on earth as a man, that man was the son of a virgin? We are not now thinking about the Virgin Birth. We're thinking about something that happened before Nature was created at all, before time began. "Before all worlds" Christ is begotten, not created. What does it mean?

We don't use the words *begetting* or *begotten* much in modern English, but everyone still knows what they mean. **To beget is to become the father of: to create is to make. And the difference is just this: When you beget, you beget something of the same kind as yourself.** A man begets human babies, a beaver begets little beavers, and a bird begets eggs which turn into little birds. **But when you make, you make something of a different kind from yourself.** A bird makes a nest, a beaver builds a dam, a man makes a wireless set.... Now that's the first thing to get clear.

What God begets is God; just as what man begets is man. What God creates is not God; just as what man makes is not man."

To return now to Col. 1:15 where Paul speaks of Christ as "the first begotten of all creation," it is important to observe that **the adjective "first" refers both to rank as well as time. In other words, the Apostle alludes here not only to Christ's priority to all creation, but also to his sovereignty over all creation.**³⁵

One can also mention other Scriptures. In Psalms 89:27 "first born" clearly means preeminence. In Jeremiah 31:9 Ephraim is the "first-born" although *Manasseh* was literally born first, hence "first born" must refer to rank or preeminence.

Titus 2:13, 2 Peter 1:1

Translation Error: "our great God and Savior" is translated as "the great God and the Savior" in order to deny Christ's deity.

NWT "...while we wait for the happy hope and glorious manifestation of the great God **and of (the)** Savior of us, Christ Jesus."

NAS "...looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus."

The Greek of these first two verses (in 2 Peter 1:1 and Titus 2:13) is very similar (*megalou* being absent in 2 Peter):

(THE) TOU MEGALOU THEOU KAI

(of our) great God and

SOTEROS HEMON CHRISTOU IESOU

savior of us Christ Jesus

The *New World Translation* changes the proper translation to separate Jesus Christ from the term God, thereby denying His deity. In the *NWT*, the verse is translated as if two persons are being spoken of, God and Jesus, rather than one person only, i.e., Jesus Christ.

This violates a rule of Greek grammar called the Granville Sharp rule. In simplified form it states that, when two singular personal nouns [The rule applies to personal nouns, singular not plural. A personal noun is distinguished from a proper noun in this rule] of the same case ending (God and Savior above, genitive case) are connected by "and" (*kai*) and only the first noun has the modifying article "the" (*tou*) (the second noun does not), it always means both nouns uniformly refer to the same person.³⁹ When defined properly, the rule has no exceptions in the New Testament. (See appendix.) In an exhaustive study of the Granville Sharp rule, including its critics, C. Kuehne in the *Journal of Theology—Church of the Lutheran Confession* (September 1973 to Dec. 1974, Vols. 13, nos. 3,4; Vol. 14, nos. 1-4), found the Sharp rule to be without demonstrable exception in the entire New Testament.⁴⁰ Thus "God" and "Savior" (underlined above) must *both* refer to one person, i.e., to Jesus in Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1. **In fact, in ancient times the same phraseology ("god and savior") was used of a ruling King so that it is obvious only one person was meant. These verses must read "our God and Savior Jesus Christ." Bruce Metzger observes:**

In support of this translation there may be quoted such eminent grammarians of the Greek New Testament as P. W. Schmiedel, J. H. Moulton, A. T. Robertson, and Blass-Debrunner. All of these scholars concur in the judgment that only one person is referred to in Titus 2:13 and that therefore it must be rendered, "Our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.... All that has been written in the preceding section, including the judgment of the grammatical authorities cited there, applies with equal appropriateness to the correct rendering of II Pet. 1:1. Accordingly, in this verse also there is an express declaration of the deity of Jesus Christ, "...of our God and Savior Jesus Christ."⁴¹

The Kingdom Interlinear explanation of their translation on page 1163 is typically biased in its own defense—sounding scholarly but misquoting Moulton's *Grammar*, as we will later document. Dana and Mantey in *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* state: "The following rule by Granville Sharp of a century back still proves to be true:... 2 Pt. 1:1...means that Jesus is our God and Savior. After the same manner Tit. 2:13...asserts that Jesus is the great God and Savior."⁴²

One may also note the Greek scholar A. T. Robertson in his *Word Pictures* Volume 6, page 147 ("One Person *not* two") and Winer-Schmiedel's *Grammatik* 8th ed., Leipzig, Germany, page 158 ("Grammar demands that one person be met.")

The reason why the KJV, the American Standard Version and a few additional earlier versions incorrectly translate such passages as Titus 2:13, 2 Peter 1:1, etc., is, in part, according to Robertson, due to the influence of the grammatical work of George B. Winer. For over 100 years his work was considered the best available and scholars were not inclined to disagree with him.

However, Winer himself, being an anti-trinitarian, admitted that it was not grammatical grounds that led him to reject the correct rendering of Titus 2:13, but theological ones. In the Winer-Moulton Grammar (as cited by Robertson), page 162, Winer said, "Considerations derived from Paul's system of doctrine lead me to believe that *soter* is not a second predicate, co-ordinate with *theou*, Christ being first called *megas theos*, and then *soter*." However, **Robertson put it well when he said, "Sharp stands vindicated after all the dust has settled. We must let these passages mean what they want to mean regardless of our theories about the theology of the writers."**⁴³

Concerning the translation of the YHWH as Jehovah

We can see biased translations in other areas as well, even in the Witnesses' own term *Jehovah* which is so important to them as allegedly signifying the "true" name of God. **The NWT adds Jehovah to the New Testament text over 200 times, in spite of the fact that "Jehovah" is not found anywhere in the Bible, New or Old Testament.** Yet they claim the New Testament originals were "tampered with" and that the tetragrammaton (YHWH) was surreptitiously removed, substituting *kurios* (Lord) and *theos* (God). The fact is that **YHWH never occurs in any New Testament Greek manuscripts and in only one Septuagint copy.**⁵⁴ There is simply no evidence of tampering.⁵⁵

The truth is that YHWH can be translated different ways since the insertion of vowels is arbitrary. YHWH could have been Jehovah or JiHiViH or JaHiVeH, etc. In other words, **the translation of *kurios* and *theos* as JEHOVAH in the New World Translation (237 times) is a completely unjustified translation.** We simply do not know the "true" name of God. Metzger observes: "The introduction of the word 'Jehovah' into the New Testament text, in spite of much ingenuity in an argument filled with a considerable amount of irrelevant material (p. 10-25), is a plain piece of special pleading."⁵⁶

There is another obvious reason for using "Jehovah" in place of "Lord"; it thereby denies the deity of Christ where the term "Lord" (applied to Jesus) connotes the meaning of Jehovah in the Old Testament. Often, when the New Testament refers to Christ as "Lord," it is associating Him with Jehovah in the Old Testament. The Watchtower Society has even had to be **inconsistent in its translation, translating *kurios* variously as "Jehovah" or "Lord" to suit their own theology.** For example, if we look at *The Kingdom Interlinear* (p. 723) for Romans 10:11, *kurios* is translated Lord, but in verse 13 the same word, *kurios*, (which here clearly refers to Jesus) is now translated "Jehovah" rather than "Lord" or "Jesus." In both places the term Lord refers to Jesus and connotes His deity but the *New World Translation* hides this by the translation of "Lord" in verse 11 and "Jehovah" in verse 13 implying the entire section refers to Jehovah—but not to Jesus. **Likewise, Philippians 2:10-11 clearly refers to Jesus and is based on Isaiah 45:22-25, referring to Jehovah (see Rom. 14:9-11).** Yet if *kurios* were translated Jehovah in Philippians 2 it would mean Jesus is identified with Jehovah, and the Watchtower Society could not permit such a translation. Hence, *kurios* is here translated "Lord." Thus, it is only where *kurios* can be translated Jesus and not simultaneously imply His deity, that it is so translated