

# Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

## A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke



The Wisconsin Synod's Translation Evaluation Committee (TEC) hosted a Translation Symposium, January 3-5, at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, WI. Two representatives from each district were invited to attend, along with the TEC, the Translation Feasibility Committee, and representatives from every area of ministry—just over 40 attendees in all. The undersigned was honored to be invited.

Some of you may be aware that I have written a Symposium Summary so as to give a little bit of the “color and flavor” of that Symposium. ([http://www.peacehoughton.org/?page\\_id=19](http://www.peacehoughton.org/?page_id=19)) If you've read that summary, you know that some of the “liveliest” group discussions took place in sessions where we discussed the NIV 2011 and gender accuracy issues or in sessions where we discussed Messianic Prophecy, particularly in the Psalms.

When it comes to Messianic Prophecy, we'd expect nothing less, right? When the original NIV was first being considered for use in our church body, our spiritual leaders went through it with a fine-toothed comb. One of them, Prof. John Jeske wrote,

*Matters of Messianic prophecy deserve special comment, since this area of Scripture will be one of the touchstones by which the new translation will be evaluated in our circles. One of the first criticisms of the Revised Standard Version when it came out 30 years ago was that the Messianicity of half of the Old Testament Messianic prophecies was lost. Given the conservative evangelical orientation of the NIV translators, it will not surprise you that Messianic prophecies come out Messianic in the NIV Old Testament.*

(Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, vol. 75, Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly, Volume 75, electronic edition., Logos Library System; Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly, 300 Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1998).

Messianic Prophecy is a touchstone by which we now need to evaluate the NIV 2011. That's what prompted the aforesaid “lively” discussion at the Symposium. In the context of this “lively” discussion, Pres. Wendland stated that the TEC felt the greatest weakness of the NIV 2011 was in the area of Messianic prophecy.

Should this be a concern for us? Does Messianic prophecy still come out Messianic in the NIV 2011 Old Testament? Let's study the issue.

### **The NIV 2011 and its translational philosophy relative to Messianic Prophecy.**

At the symposium, members of the TEC (Prof. Cherney, Pres. Wendland, and Prof. Nass, in particular) helped illuminate all of us on the translational philosophy employed by the CBT (Committee on Biblical Translation, Biblica). Today, I don't want to study the dynamic (functional) equivalent model employed by the CBT. That is best done another day. For now, I just want to focus on one point: the translational philosophy of the CBT, as it relates to Messianic prophecy. That point is summarized as follows.

#### **1) The Old Testament is translated in isolation from the New Testament.**

## Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

What does this mean? In my original Symposium Summary, I recorded these two comments, both made by members of the TEC.

- *"It's important to understand that the NIV 2011's translation of Messianic Prophecy (at least in the Psalms) is guided by one of their principles of translation. 'The Old Testament will be translated in "isolation" from the New Testament.' In other words, an Old Testament translation will not be affected by a clear reference in the New Testament."*
- *"Functional equivalence means that Psalm 8 has to be read in the flow of the Psalms and the Old Testament. The New Testament and Hebrews 2 are strictly secondary."*

Put another way, the modern translational philosophy employed by the CBT erects a firewall of sorts between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Nowhere is this translational philosophy more evident than in the way the NIV 2011 handles Messianic prophecy, especially in the Psalms. Even if a Psalm (or other Old Testament verse) is quoted in the New Testament and thus identified as Messianic, this "evidence" will not factor into the NIV 2011's translation of the Old Testament verses in question. It can't. The Old Testament is translated in isolation from the New Testament.

In a paper available on the WELS TEC website (<http://www.wels.net/about-wels/synod-reports/bible-translation/other-resources/other-resources>), Prof. Rodney J. Decker ThD, Professor of Greek and New Testament at the Baptist Bible Seminary, Clarks Summit, Penn, speaks in defense of this new translational philosophy as used in the NIV 2011. In a section entitled, "*Changes Related to Messianic Texts*," Prof. Decker states,

"The issues in this use of the OT in the NT are hermeneutical. I happen to think that the TNIV/NIV11 is a more accurate reflection of the text than the original NIV and other similar translations. Exegesis of Psalm 8 would show that in the OT text on its own (i.e., without reading any NT use back into the OT text<sup>49</sup>) would conclude that the entire reference of the psalm as originally written and intended refers only to human beings.<sup>50</sup> The TNIV actually expresses the contextual meaning of 'enos (v. 4; LXX, ἄνθρωπος) quite well. In contrast to the "LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" (v. 1) for whom the heavens are finger work (v. 3), humans are appropriately described as "mere mortals." The point of the psalm is that even though we humans are puny beings in comparison with God, we are special creations by God with privilege and responsibility over the rest of creation (vv. 5-8). God has given us a position lower than angels," yet still one of glory with dominion over the animal kingdom. Both "man" ('enos) and "son of man" (ben-adam) are generic references to the human race, not to any specific person. As such, the use of English plural pronouns following is not only valid, but preferable.<sup>52</sup> There is no hint here of anything messianic. If we had only Psalm 8, we would never suspect that it had any relevance to Jesus. (pg 15 of the paper, [An Evaluation of the 2011 Edition of the NIV 2011 NT](#))

In footnote 49 (from the above section), Prof. Decker summarizes and restates this modern translational philosophy in his own words, when he observes, "I would argue strongly for the hermeneutical autonomy of the OT and reject any hermeneutical approach which uses the NT to re-interpret the OT." (pg 15, [An Evaluation of the 2011 Edition of the NIV 2011 NT](#).)

Will this modern translational philosophy concern us, when we compare it to the translational philosophy employed by *the translators of the original NIV*? A resource readily available on the Biblica website is the book, [The NIV: THE MAKING OF A CONTEMPORARY TRANSLATION](#), 1991, International Bible Society, Colorado Springs. The book is edited by Kenneth L. Barker.

## **Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)**

### **A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke**

Bruce K. Waltke (Th.M., Th.D., Dallas Theological Seminary; Ph.D., Harvard University) wrote chapter 7, which is entitled, “*Translation Problems in Psalms 2 and 4.*” The section is worth a careful read.

In the introduction to this chapter, Prof. Waltke first identifies 7 exegetical challenges which face a faithful translator. They are. . .

“(1) textual (“What is the text?”), (2) lexical (“What does the Hebrew word mean in its historical context?”), (3) grammatical (“What is the value of the Hebrew grammatical form?” and/or “What is the syntax of the clause {s}?”), (4) historical (“What did this text mean to its original audience?”), (5) figurative (“Is the poet using a figure of speech?” If so, “What does it mean?”), (6) poetic (“How should the Hebrew lines of poetry and its strophes be scanned and analyzed?”), and (7) theological (“What does the text mean in the light of the full canon of Scripture?”). Having answered these exegetical questions, he then faces the problem of how to translate his resolutions of them accurately, economically, with the same emotional dynamic, and clearly for his target audience.”

At the end of this same chapter, Prof. Waltke fleshes out his thoughts on the “theological” challenge of translation, as it pertains to Psalm 2 and Psalm 4 (and Messianic Prophecy). Prof. Waltke writes,

#### **“Theological Problems**

Who is the K/king, the one entitled “A/anointed O/one” and “S/son of God,” in Psalm 2? Is he a God-man? Or merely a man? The translator's answer to that question will determine whether or not he uses capital letters (cf. Pss. 18:50; 44:4). He will resolve the problem on hermeneutical and theological grounds. The original audience probably referred this coronation liturgy to Solomon, and succeeding generations in Israel probably applied it to his successors at the time they ascended the earthly throne at Zion. Solomon and his successors were anointed and called “son of God” (2 Sam. 7:14; 1 Chron. 22:10; 28:6-7; Ps. 89:20-30). On the strictly historical level, it is appropriate to translate the reference to the king with lower case (cf. the NIV footnotes to vv. 2, 6-7 and the main text of the KJV, RSV, JB, NAB, and NEB) because a descendant from David's own body is in view.

None of these historical kings, however, were worthy to fulfill the promise that in answer to their petitions the Lord would give them the ends of the earth as their possession (v. 8), which they would bring under their sovereignty (v. 9). When Israel's king was deposed and taken to Babylon in exile and none succeeded him to the throne, the psalm, which predicted one greater than David, became purely prophetic.

The New Testament interprets the psalm with reference to Jesus and finds a fulfillment in his resurrection (Acts 13:33; cf. Rom. 1:4) and his ascension to heavenly Mount Zion (Heb. 1:5; 5:5; cf. 12:22-23). He is the Son of God, with capital letters, for he was begotten by the Holy Spirit and conceived by the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:35) and enjoyed glory with his Father before the world began (John 17:1-5). The KJV, RSV, NEB, NASB, and NIV (contra JB and NAB) cite the psalm in the New Testament and use capital letters.

Although on the historical level one might rightly opt for rendering the references to the king by lower case, on the canonical level one rightly opts for upper case, as in the NIV text. By using upper case in Psalm 2, the NIV translators expose their orthodox views, not only of inspiration, but also of christology.”

That there has been a shift in translational philosophy from NIV 84 to NIV 2011 seems evident.

## Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

**The Old Testament is translated in isolation from the New Testament.** Will this translational paradigm concern us, when we compare it to the Lutheran exegetical principle of “*Let Scripture Interpret Scripture?*” Will we expect our Lutheran exegetical principle to also be a guiding translation principle?

This new translational principle seems especially problematic, when we analyze it in the light of the New Testament. Let’s instead let Scripture interpret Scripture.

Jesus himself could say of the Old Testament Scriptures, “*You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me,*”<sup>40</sup> *yet you refuse to come to me to have life. . . But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set.*”<sup>46</sup> *If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me.*”<sup>47</sup> *But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?”*” (John 5:39, 45-47) Jesus obviously believed and taught that he was at the center of the Old Testament, and that by reading it carefully (even without benefit of a New Testament Commentary), one could clearly be pointed to Him as the promised Messiah.



We see proof of that in Zechariah, father of John the Baptist. “*Filled with the Holy Spirit,*” he “*prophesied:*”<sup>68</sup> *“Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people.”*<sup>69</sup> *He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David*”<sup>70</sup> *(as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),*<sup>71</sup> *salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.”* (Luke 1:67-71)

Consider also Simeon and Anna in the temple. Granted, the Holy Spirit had somehow “*revealed*” to Simeon “*that he would not die before he saw the Lord’s Christ.*” (Luke 2:26) But that revelation would have meant precious little, if Simeon had not already known something about the Lord’s Christ. What he knew, he learned from the Old Testament.

The same goes for Anna. “*Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.*” (Luke 2:38) How could there be anyone “*looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem,*” if not for the Old Testament and clear Messianic prophecy?

On the Road to Emmaus, why did our Savior chide Cleopas and his companion? “*How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!*”<sup>26</sup> *Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?”*<sup>27</sup> *And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.”* (Luke 24:25-27) Would our Savior have called them “*foolish*” and “*slow,*” if Old Testament Messianic Prophecy was nigh on to impossible to ferret out of the text?

But were the prophets themselves aware of the Messianic prophecies they made? As they penned the inspired words, did they see only an immediate fulfillment? The Apostle Peter would be surprised at the very suggestion. By inspiration, he wrote, “*Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care,*”<sup>11</sup> *trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.*”<sup>12</sup> *It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.”* (1 Peter 1:10-12)

## Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

Jesus himself weighed in on this matter, when he added, “*For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.*” (Matthew 13:17, see also Luke 10:23-24)

**The Old Testament is translated in isolation from the New Testament.** Will this translational paradigm concern us, when we compare it to the attitude evidenced by the early Christian Church?

In a paper entitled, “*The Bible Through the Ages,*” Prof. Richard Balge makes the following observation.

### “Early Christian use of the Scriptures

But while the Jews wove ever more tightly the veil which hides Christ from the legalist, how were Christians using the Old Testament? There are those who believe that before any of the books of the New Testament were written, the apostles and others were using a Christian “Book of Testimonies,” a selection of Old Testament passages which prophesied, foreshadowed, or typified Christ. So their use of such a book and their reason for compiling it would have been to show that the Old Testament “urges Christ,” and that Jesus of Nazareth must be the fulfillment of the messianic hope which the Old Testament fostered.

Whether such a “Book of Testimonies” existed or not, we do know that the Holy Spirit moved the authors of the New Testament to use the Old in just that way. Long before Augustine ever expressed it, they were practicing the axiom:

The New Testament is latent in the Old.

The Old Testament becomes patent in the New.

The Apostolic Fathers, for 150 years after the resurrection, also did a major part of their exegetical work on the Old Testament, trying to demonstrate—as the apostolic writers had—that the Law and the Prophets and the Writings find their real significance in Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ.”

(THE BIBLE THROUGH THE AGES. This is a revision of a series of lectures originally presented at a Pastors Institute at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in the fall of 1974. Richard D. Balge. <http://www.wlsessays.net/files/BalgeBible.pdf>)

**The Old Testament is translated in isolation from the New Testament.** One wonders about this translational principle even more, when you ask the simple question, “*How were people in the Old Testament saved?*” They were saved by faith in the Christ who was to come. Borrowing Paul’s words seems most appropriate at this point. “*How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?*” (Romans 10:14) God’s Old Testament people *did* hear. They heard of the Christ through prophets who prophesied clearly.

Dr. Moo, speaking on behalf of the CBT, has stated that the CBT does believe there is Messianic Prophecy in the Old Testament. Nevertheless, we need to ask, “*Does Messianic Prophecy come out as clearly in the NIV 2011?*”

# Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

Let's find out by looking at specific instances. We'll begin our study with Psalm 8 and Psalm 16, the two Psalms considered at the recent Translation Symposium.



## Psalm 8

At the translation evaluation symposium, a study of Psalm 8, paired with Hebrews 2, was the focus of our discussion on “*Messianic Prophecy in the Psalms.*” I suppose this particular Messianic prophecy pair was chosen for Symposium study, because it combines two issues. There is the issue of translating the Old Testament in isolation from the New Testament. There is also the issue of the verses in question being affected by “gender accuracy” concerns.

Let's look at how the verse is handled in the NIV 2011, and compare that with other translations.

### NIV 2011 Psalm 8:3-8

<sup>3</sup> When I consider your heavens,  
the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars,  
which you have set in place,  
<sup>4</sup> what is mankind that you are mindful of them,  
human beings that you care for them?<sup>[c]</sup>

<sup>5</sup> You have made them<sup>[d]</sup> a little lower than the angels<sup>[e]</sup>  
and crowned them<sup>[f]</sup> with glory and honor.  
<sup>6</sup> You made them rulers over the works of your hands;  
you put everything under their<sup>[g]</sup> feet:  
<sup>7</sup> all flocks and herds,  
and the animals of the wild,  
<sup>8</sup> the birds in the sky,  
and the fish in the sea,  
all that swim the paths of the seas.

- [Psalm 8:4](#) Or *what is a human being that you are mindful of him, / a son of man that you care for him?*
- [Psalm 8:5](#) Or *him*
- [Psalm 8:5](#) Or *than God*
- [Psalm 8:5](#) Or *him*
- [Psalm 8:6](#) Or *made him ruler . . . ; / . . . his*

The NIV 84 rendered this as “*What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?*” (The translation continues with the singulars throughout.)

Other translations I consulted come as follows.

<sup>ESV</sup> Psalm 8:4 <sup>a</sup>what is man that you are <sup>b</sup>mindful of him, and <sup>c</sup>the son of man that you <sup>d</sup>care for him?

**Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)**  
**A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke**

<sup>GWN</sup> Psalm 8:4 what is a mortal that you remember him or the Son of Man that you take care of him?

<sup>KJG</sup> Psalm 8:4 What is <sup>1</sup> man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

<sup>KJV</sup> Psalm 8:4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

<sup>NET</sup> Psalm 8:4 Of what importance is the human race,<sup>8</sup> that you should notice<sup>9</sup> them? Of what importance is mankind,<sup>10</sup> that you should pay attention to them,<sup>11</sup>

<sup>HCSB</sup> What is man that You remember him, or the son of man that You care for him?

Luther Was ist der Mensch, daß du sein gedenkest; und des Menschen Kind, daß du dich sein annimmst?

(Note: in this list, the NET stands alone with the NIV 2011.)

The original is as follows.

מִה־אָנוֹשׁ כִּי־תִזְכְּרֵנוּ וּבֶן־אָדָם כִּי תִפְקֹדֵנוּ: <sup>WTT</sup> Psalm 8:5

The Hebrew has the singular throughout, in the 3rd person masculine singular suffixes on the verbs and in terms like “Son of Adam.” Yet the NIV 2011 changes to the plural, consistently. The NIV 2011 footnote is a step in the right direction, but does it go far enough?

**Ask one question.** If you only had the NIV 2011 before you, would you recognize this as Messianic Prophecy? Would *your members* or *evangelism prospects* recognize the Messianic prophecy here?

Now let’s look at Psalm 8, in the light of Hebrews 2:5-8.

**Hebrews 2:5-8**

It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. <sup>6</sup> But there is a place where someone has testified:

“What is mankind that you are mindful of them,  
a son of man that you care for him?

<sup>7</sup> You made them a little<sup>[a]</sup> lower than the angels;  
you crowned them with glory and honor

<sup>8</sup> and put everything under their feet.”<sup>[b][c]</sup>

In putting everything under them,<sup>[d]</sup> God left nothing that is not subject to them.<sup>[e]</sup> Yet at present we do not see everything subject to them.<sup>[f]</sup>

- [Hebrews 2:8](#) Or *You made him a little lower than the angels;/ you crowned him with glory and honor/ and put everything under his feet.*”
- [Hebrews 2:8](#) Or *him*
- [Hebrews 2:8](#) Or *him*
- [Hebrews 2:8](#) Or *him*

## Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

Other translations that I consulted came out this way.

(Please Note: In listings like this that follow in this paper, the "NIV" version cited is the NIV 84)

<sup>NIV</sup> Hebrews 2:6 But there is a place where someone has testified: "What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? (the singulars continue throughout)

<sup>NAS</sup> Hebrews 2:6 But one has testified <sup>a</sup>somewhere, saying, <sup>b</sup>"What is man, that Thou rememberest him? Or the son of man, that Thou art concerned about him?

<sup>ESV</sup> Hebrews 2:6 It has been testified somewhere, <sup>a</sup>"What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him?

<sup>GWN</sup> Hebrews 2:6 Instead, someone has declared this somewhere in Scripture: "What is a mortal that you should remember him, or the Son of Man<sup>1</sup> that you take care of him?

<sup>KJG</sup> Hebrews 2:6 <sup>1</sup> But one in a certain place testified, saying, <sup>2</sup> What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the <sup>3</sup> son of man, that thou visitest him?

<sup>NET</sup> Hebrews 2:6 Instead someone testified somewhere: "What is man that you think of him<sup>7</sup> or the son of man that you care for him?

<sup>HCSB</sup> What is man that You remember him, or the son of man that You care for him? <sup>7</sup> You made him lower than the angels for a short time; You crowned him with glory and honor<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>8</sup> and subjected everything under his feet.<sup>[c]</sup>

<sup>L45</sup> Hebrews 2:6 Es bezeuget aber einer an einem Ort und spricht: Was ist der Mensch, daß du sein gedenkest, und des Menschen Sohn, daß du ihn heimsuchest?

<sup>BNT</sup> Hebrews 2:6 διεμαρτύρατο δέ πού τις λέγων· τί ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος ὅτι μιμήσκη αὐτοῦ, ἢ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ὅτι ἐπισκέπη αὐτόν

The NIV 2011 changes the singulars of the Greek text to plurals. Concerning this switch, the CBT has written:

The big problem here is that Hebrews is quoting Psalm 8:4-6, in which the Psalmist marvels at God's creation and that God should care for puny, mortal humanity in the midst of the entire cosmos. But because the Psalmist spoke of humans collectively as "the son of man," and because, centuries later, Jesus would use "Son of man" as a title for himself, the author of Hebrews realizes that Jesus has now done rightly what Adam and Eve and all previous humans failed to do--exercise proper dominion over all the earth. Many interpreters believe Hebrews does not have Jesus in mind until verse 9, where he is explicitly introduced. Others think he is in view already in the quotation of the Psalm. How does one preserve all of these possible allusions and interconnections, foreclosing on no major interpretive option, while still avoiding exclusively masculine language for both genders if possible?

The solution in the updated NIV is to use "mankind" for "man," to delete the definite article from before "Son of man" (it's not in either the Greek or the Hebrew), to retain the language, "son of man that you care for him," but to make the remaining pronouns plural so that it is clear they refer to all people, including Jesus. (<http://www.niv-cbt.org/niv-2011-overview/translators-notes/>)

*Will we agree with this position of the CBT?*

**Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)**  
**A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke**

At the Translation Symposium, there was a great deal of concern expressed over the way the NIV 2011 handled Psalm 8. In my Symposium Summary, I culled out a few of the comments which were made.

- *“It’s important to understand that the NIV 2011’s translation of Messianic Prophecy (at least in the Psalms) is guided by one of their principles of translation. ‘The Old Testament will be translated in “isolation” from the New Testament.’ In other words, an Old Testament translation will not be affected by a clear reference in the New Testament.”*
- *“Functional equivalence means that Psalm 8 has to be read in the flow of the Psalms and the Old Testament. The New Testament and Hebrews 2 are strictly secondary.”*
- *“Does this gender neutral translation obscure the Messianic thrust?”*

**Please note:** At this point the reader may want to jump ahead to page 27 and the comments that Prof. John Brug makes about Psalm 8. Those comments are contained in his paper, “Principles and Practices of Bible Translation.” You can download this excellent paper at [http://www.peacehoughton.org/?page\\_id=19](http://www.peacehoughton.org/?page_id=19)

Now let’s transition to the study of Psalm 16. This was also studied at the Translation Symposium.

**Psalm 16:10** NIV 2011 “Because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay.”

The NIV 2011 translates “*faithful one.*” There is a footnote for “*holy one.*”

Other translations render it as follows.

<sup>NIV</sup> Psalm 16:10 because you will not abandon me to the grave, {10 Hebrew Sheol} nor will you let your Holy One {10 Or your faithful one} see decay.

*(Notice that what the NIV 84 had in a footnote, the NIV 2011 has elevated to the text. The NIV 2011 has “holy one” as a footnote. Capitalization is removed.)*

<sup>NAS</sup> Psalm 16:10 For Thou <sup>a</sup>wilt not abandon my soul to <sup>1</sup>Sheol; Neither wilt Thou <sup>2b</sup>allow Thy <sup>3</sup>Holy One to <sup>4</sup>undergo decay.

<sup>ESV</sup> Psalm 16:10 For you will not abandon my soul to <sup>a</sup>Sheol, <sup>b</sup>or let your <sup>c</sup>holy one see <sup>d</sup>corruption.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>GWN</sup> Psalm 16:10 because you do not abandon my soul to the grave or allow your holy one to decay.

<sup>KIG</sup> Psalm 16:10 For thou <sup>1</sup> wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

<sup>HCSB</sup> <sup>10</sup> For You will not abandon me to Sheol; You will not allow Your Faithful One to see decay.

<sup>NET</sup> Psalm 16:10 You will not abandon me<sup>17</sup> to Sheol;<sup>18</sup> you will not allow your faithful follower<sup>19</sup> to see<sup>20</sup> the Pit.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>L45</sup> Psalm 16:10 Denn du wirst meine Seele nicht in der Hölle lassen und nicht zugeben, daß dein Heiliger verwese.

## Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

כִּי | לֹא־תֵעָזֵב נַפְשִׁי לְשֹׂאֵל לֹא־תִתֶּן חֲסִידְךָ לְרֵאוֹת שְׁחַת: Psalm 16:10<sup>WTT</sup>

Psalm 16:10 is quoted in the New Testament in Acts 2:27 and Acts 13:35. The first reference is from Peter's Pentecost sermon. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the apostle proclaimed,

Acts 2:22-36 "Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. <sup>23</sup> This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, {23 Or of those not having the law (that is, Gentiles)} put him to death by nailing him to the cross. <sup>24</sup> But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. <sup>25</sup> David said about him: "I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. <sup>26</sup> Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, <sup>27</sup> because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. <sup>28</sup> You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.' {28 Psalm 16:8-11} <sup>29</sup> ¶ "Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. <sup>30</sup> But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. <sup>31</sup> Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, {31 Or Messiah. "The Christ" (Greek) and "the Messiah" (Hebrew) both mean "the Anointed One"; also in verse 36.} that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. <sup>32</sup> God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. <sup>33</sup> Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. <sup>34</sup> For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand <sup>35</sup> until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." {35 Psalm 110:1} <sup>36</sup> "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." (*NIV 84, as contained in Bibleworks 7. This explains why the footnotes are rendered as they show above.*)

Interestingly enough, NIV 2011 renders Acts 2:25-28 as follows.

“I saw the Lord always before me.  
Because he is at my right hand,  
I will not be shaken.  
<sup>26</sup> Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;  
my body also will rest in hope,  
<sup>27</sup> because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,  
you will not let your holy one see decay.  
<sup>28</sup> You have made known to me the paths of life;  
you will fill me with joy in your presence.”<sup>[e]</sup>

Notice how the New Testament translation uses the word “*holy*,” while the Old Testament Psalm now has “*faithful*.”

When it comes to Psalm 16:10, we need to ask ourselves, “*Is the NIV 2011 a weakening from the NIV 84?*”

**Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)**  
**A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke**

At the Translation Symposium, comments about this verse included the following.

- *“Is this an improvement? What prompted the change?”*
- *“This is another example of the NIV’s translation philosophy. The Old Testament is translated in isolation from the New Testament.”*
- *“This verse is cited in the New Testament in Acts 2:27 and Acts 13:35. It is interesting to note that the NIV retains “holy one” in both of the Acts references. However, neither is capitalized.”*
- *“‘Realm of the dead.’ Is that clear? Or is this the land of the zombies?”*
- *“Is sheol any clearer?”*
- *“The NIV seems to keep direct prophecy to the later, post-exilic books. Micah is an exception to this.”*

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I’ve treated the previous two Messianic Psalms first, because those were the ones studied at the Symposium. As I indicated in my Symposium Summary, *“Frankly, there was so much discussion on this topic that we didn’t finish.”*

Had there been more time, we certainly could have considered other Messianic Psalms. Some Messianic Psalms clearly teach that the Savior is true God and King of Kings. (Psalm 2, 45:6, 72, 89, 110.) Other Psalms proclaim Messiah’s suffering and passion, sometimes in uncanny detail. (Psalm 22, 31:5, 41:9, 55:12-14, 69, 118) Another Psalm reminds us that the Messiah was perfect in obedience, all the way to death. (Psalm 40:7-8)

(The preceding synthesis borrows heavily from a section in Prof. John Brug’s book, [A Commentary on Psalms 1-72](#), pgs 20-21, “Christ in the Psalms.”)

Some of us who’s beards are beginning to gray will remember the work of Prof. Wilbert Gawrisch, WLS. Prof. Gawrisch’s “Introduction to the Psalms” notes are still available in the online WLS essay file. In a section entitled, Messianic Psalms, Prof. Gawrisch writes,

***Messianic Psalms***

*Although Christ and His Gospel are to be found in every Psalm, those that treat specifically and in detail of the Messiah’s person, work, and kingdom are called Messianic Psalms. Examples are Pss 2, 8, 16, 22 (the so-called Holy of Holies of the Psalter), 23, 24, 40, 41, 45, 47, 68, 69, 72, 87, 89, 110, and 118. These Messianic Psalms have been of special significance to the people of God in OT as well as in NT times. They were the wellspring of faith and hope for those who looked for redemption in Israel, even as they are the foundation of the believer’s assurance and joy today.*

*Higher critics do not recognize the Messianic Psalms as being prophetic of Christ. Prejudiced by their refusal to admit the fact, or even the possibility, of divine prophecy and by their assumption of the purely human origin of the Scriptures, they regard the Messiah-King of Ps 2 and many other Messianic Psalms strictly as references to a reigning Hebrew king. Scores of NT passages assure us, however, that the Psalms predict in detail the coming of the Savior of the world and the establishment of His kingdom in grace and glory. Jesus Himself expressly said, “All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me” (Lk 24:44). He urges, “Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me” (Jn 5:39).*

# Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

How does the NIV 2011 handle these other Messianic Psalms? We simply don't have the time to consider each instance in depth. Here's a quick overview.

## Psalm 2

NIV 2011 2:2 The kings of the earth rise up  
and the rulers band together  
against the LORD and against his anointed, saying,

Other translations render it as follows.

<sup>NIV</sup> Psalm 2:2 The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One. {2 Or anointed one}

<sup>NAS</sup> Psalm 2:2 The <sup>a</sup>kings of the earth take their stand, And the rulers take counsel together <sup>b</sup>Against the LORD and against His <sup>1c</sup>Anointed:

<sup>ESV</sup> Psalm 2:2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his <sup>a</sup>Anointed, saying,

<sup>GWN</sup> Psalm 2:2 Kings take their stands. Rulers make plans together against the LORD and against his Messiah<sup>1</sup> by saying,

<sup>HCSB</sup> <sup>2</sup> The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers conspire together against the LORD and His Anointed One:<sup>[b]</sup> (The footnote has "anointed one")

<sup>L45</sup> Psalm 2:2 Die Könige im Lande lehnen sich auf, und die Herren ratschlagen miteinander wider den HErrn und seinen Gesalbten:

וַתִּצְבְּרוּ מִלְכֵי-אֶרֶץ וְרוֹזְנִים נִסְדְּרוּ יַחַד עַל-יְהוָה וְעַל-מְשִׁיחוֹ: <sup>WTT</sup> Psalm 2:2

This Psalm is quoted often in the New Testament. (Acts 4:23-26, 13:33, Hebrews 1:5, 5:5, Revelation 2:27, 12:5, 19:15) Permit me to share only the first quotation.

NIV 84 Acts 4:23-26 On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. <sup>24</sup> When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. <sup>25</sup> You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: "'Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? <sup>26</sup> The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One. {26 That is, Christ or Messiah} '{26 Psalm 2:1,2}

When translating the same verses as above, the NIV 2011 clearly sets off the Old Testament quotation, but has "anointed one." The NIV 2011 footnote is slightly different from NIV 84. "That is, Messiah or Christ."

If we follow the principle of "Let Scripture interpret Scripture," there is absolutely no doubt that Psalm 2:2 is a Messianic prophecy. Which leads us to several questions.

**Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011** (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)  
A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

*“Would the Bible reader see that Messianic prophecy clearly in the NIV 2011’s “anointed?”*

*“Was there a compelling reason to move away from the NIV 84’s “Anointed One?”*

*(See back also to page 3 and Prof. Waltke’s comments in the section “Theological Problems.”)*

### **Psalm 22**

If we delve into particulars, there is simply too much to study in this Psalm. No Psalm is quoted more in the New Testament.

If you read Psalm 22 in the NIV 2011 and compare with the NIV 84, you’ll find stylistic changes that reflect their translational philosophy. They sought to improve the fluidity of the translation. At times, this results in a translation that moves further along the spectrum of dynamic equivalence.

### **Psalm 23**

The NIV 2011 now translates, *“Even though I walk through the darkest valley,”* though the Hebrew has *“valley of the shadow of death.”* This reflects the NIV 2011 and its translational philosophy—a bit further toward the dynamic equivalent end of the spectrum. (But is the newer rendering less colorful?)

*(See also the TEC reviewer’s comments which are included at the end of this study.)*

### **Psalm 24**

We make only two observations on this Psalm and the way the NIV 2011 handles it. Gender accuracy concerns cause the translators to shift from the generic masculine singular to the plural in verses 5-6.

<sup>5</sup> They will receive blessing from the LORD  
and vindication from God their Savior.

<sup>6</sup> Such is the generation of those who seek him,  
who seek your face, God of Jacob.<sup>[b]</sup>

At the end of verse 6 and verse 10, you will look in vain for “Selah.” The NIV 2011 has removed this troublesome word and put it in the footnote. (This is done consistently in the NIV 2011 rendering of the Psalms.)

### **Psalm 40**

Psalm 40:6-8 contain the Messianic prophecy. The NIV 2011 keeps these verses in the singular. That’s good. (The translators saw no need to change to third person plurals, because no third person masculine generics were used here.)

The translation is changed slightly from the NIV 84. The NIV 2011 (for verse 6) has “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire— but my ears you have opened<sup>[c]</sup>” The NIV 84 had “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but my ears you have pierced”

## Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

Other translations render this verse as follow.

<sup>NAS</sup> Psalm 40:6 <sup>1a</sup>Sacrifice and meal offering Thou hast not desired; My ears Thou hast <sup>2</sup>opened; Burnt offering and sin offering Thou hast not required.

<sup>ESV</sup> Psalm 40:6 <sup>a</sup>In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted, but you have given me an open <sup>b</sup>ear.<sup>1</sup> Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.

<sup>GWN</sup> Psalm 40:6 You were not pleased with sacrifices and offerings. You have dug out two ears for me.<sup>1</sup> You did not ask for burnt offerings or sacrifices for sin.

<sup>KJV</sup> Psalm 40:6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; <sup>1</sup> mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

<sup>HCSB</sup> <sup>6</sup> You do not delight in sacrifice and offering; You open my ears to listen

<sup>L45</sup> Psalm 40:7 Opfer und Speisopfer gefallen dir nicht; aber die Ohren hast du mir aufgetan. Du willst weder Brandopfer noch Sündopfer.

וּמִנְחָה | לֹא־חִפְצָתָ אֲזָנִים כְּרִיתָ לִי עוֹלָה וְחִטָּאָה לֹא שְׂאֵלָתָ: <sup>WTT</sup> Psalm 40:7

The Hebrew verb in question is כְּרִיתָ Lexicons I consulted rendered this as “dig” or “excavate.” Would a modern dynamic equivalent translation perhaps render this as, “You excavated my bad case of earwax?”

Both NIV versions offer the Septuagint rendering of this verse in the footnote: “some Septuagint manuscripts *but a body you have prepared for me.*”

The Psalm is Messianic because our Lord says so in Hebrews 10:5-10. What may complicate matters a bit is that the New Testament writer quotes from the Septuagint. That, however, doesn’t change the meaning of the Psalm in any way. The point is we have a Savior who is committed to his task. He declares, “I have come to do you will, O God.”

*(Personally, I find New Testament quotations of the Septuagint both compelling and comforting. How so? The Lord himself, by inspiration, authorized the use of translations in His Holy Word. We need not copy Islam and insist that our Christians memorize portions of Scripture in the original Hebrew and Greek.)*

### Psalm 41

The clear Messianic reference here is verse 9. The NIV 2011 renders this as

Even my close friend,  
someone I trusted,  
one who shared my bread,  
has turned<sup>[b]</sup> against me.

**Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)**  
**A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke**

The NIV 84 had

Psalm 41:9 Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.

You might wonder whether the NIV 2011's gender accuracy concerns have blurred the fact that this friend is indeed a male. (When comparing the NIV 2011 with the NIV 84.) In fairness, other translations render this verse in a fashion similar to the NIV 2011.

Other translations handle the verse as follows.

<sup>NAS</sup> Psalm 41:9 Even my <sup>a</sup>close friend, in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.

<sup>ESV</sup> Psalm 41:9 Even my <sup>a</sup>close friend in whom I trusted, who <sup>b</sup>ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.

<sup>GWN</sup> Psalm 41:9 Even my closest friend whom I trusted, the one who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.

<sup>KJG</sup> Psalm 41:9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, <sup>1</sup> hath lifted up his heel against me.

<sup>NET</sup> Psalm 41:9 Even my close friend<sup>23</sup> whom I trusted, he who shared meals with me, has turned against me.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>HCSB</sup> Even my friend<sup>[a]</sup> in whom I trusted, one who ate my bread, has raised his heel against me.

<sup>L45</sup> Psalm 41:10 Auch mein Freund, dem ich mich vertrauete, der mein Brot aß, tritt mich unter die Füße.

:עַקְבִּי אִישׁ-גַּם שְׁלוּמִי | אֲשֶׁר-בָּטַחְתִּי בּוֹ אֹכֵל לְחֶמְי הַגְּדִיל עָלַי עֵקֶב: <sup>WTT</sup> Psalm 41:10

Perhaps it is more important to note that the dynamic equivalent model employed by the NIV 2011 moves the translation further away from the original Hebrew.

The New Testament fulfillment of this verse is recorded in John 13:18.

<sup>NIV</sup> John 13:18 "I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill the Scripture: 'He who shares my bread has lifted up his heel against me.' {18 Psalm 41:9}

To be consistent with the Old Testament rendering, the NIV 2011 now translates John 13:18 in this way.

“He who shared my bread has turned<sup>[a]</sup> against me.<sup>[b]</sup>”

The NIV 2011 footnote for this verse reads, “a. [John 13:18](#) Greek *has lifted up his heel*”

**Psalm 45:6**

**Please look ahead at Prof. Brug's analysis of the NIV 2011 footnote on this verse. It's on page 27.**

# Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

## Psalm 68

Psalm 68:18 is quoted in the New Testament. (Ephesians 4:8-9) Hence we accept it as clearly Messianic.

The NIV 2011 renders this verse as

When you ascended on high,  
you took many captives;  
you received gifts from people,  
even from<sup>[h]</sup> the rebellious—  
that you,<sup>[i]</sup> LORD God, might dwell there.

This translation exemplifies, once again, the way the NIV 2011 employs their dynamic equivalent model. If you study other papers on translation philosophy, you will recall that even Luther (whom some hail as the father of the modern dynamic or functional equivalent model) felt it better to stay “tighter to the original Hebrew” in this case.

Other translations handle this verse in this way.

<sup>NIV</sup> Psalm 68:18 When you ascended on high, you led captives in your train; you received gifts from men, even from { 18 Or gifts for men, even } the rebellious-- that you, { 18 Or they } O LORD God, might dwell there.

<sup>NAS</sup> Psalm 68:18 Thou hast <sup>a</sup>ascended on high, Thou hast <sup>b</sup>led captive Thy captives; Thou hast received gifts among men, Even among the rebellious also, that <sup>1</sup>the LORD God may dwell there.

<sup>ESV</sup> Psalm 68:18 <sup>a</sup>You ascended on high, <sup>b</sup>leading a host of captives in your train and <sup>c</sup>receiving gifts among men, even among <sup>d</sup>the rebellious, <sup>e</sup>that the LORD God may dwell there.

<sup>GWN</sup> Psalm 68:18 You went to the highest place. You took prisoners captive. You received gifts from people, even from rebellious people, so that the LORD God may live there.

<sup>KJG</sup> Psalm 68:18 Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast <sup>1</sup> led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them.

<sup>HCSB 18</sup> You ascended to the heights, taking away captives; You received gifts from<sup>[i]</sup> people, even from the rebellious, so that the LORD God might live there.

<sup>NET</sup> Psalm 68:18 You ascend on high,<sup>43</sup> you have taken many captives.<sup>44</sup> You receive tribute<sup>45</sup> from<sup>46</sup> men, including even sinful rebels. Indeed the LORD God lives there!<sup>47</sup>

<sup>L45</sup> Psalm 68:19 Du bist in die Höhe gefahren und hast das Gefängnis gefangen; du hast Gaben empfangen für die Menschen, auch die Abtrünnigen, daß GOTT der HErr dennoch daselbst bleiben wird.

עָלִיתָ לַמָּרוֹם | שְׁבִיתָ שְׁבִי לְקַחַת מִתְּנוּת בְּאָדָם וְאֶף סוֹרְרִים לְשִׁכֹּן | יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים: <sup>WTT</sup> Psalm 68:19

## Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

The NIV 2011 renders Ephesians 4:8 as follows.

“When he ascended on high,  
he took many captives  
and gave gifts to his people.

Other translations render this verse in the following way.

<sup>NIV</sup> Ephesians 4:8 This is why it {8 Or God} says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men." {8 Psalm 68:18}

<sup>NAS</sup> Ephesians 4:8 Therefore <sup>1</sup>it says, <sup>a</sup>"When He ascended on high, He <sup>b</sup>led captive a host of captives, And He gave gifts to men."

<sup>ESV</sup> Ephesians 4:8 Therefore it says, <sup>ab</sup>"When he ascended on high <sup>b</sup>he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men."

<sup>GWN</sup> Ephesians 4:8 That's why the Scriptures say: "When he went to the highest place, he took captive those who had captured us and gave gifts to people."

<sup>KJG</sup> Ephesians 4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led <sup>1</sup>captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

<sup>NET</sup> Ephesians 4:8 Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he captured<sup>6</sup> captives; he gave gifts to men."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>HCSB</sup> When He ascended on high, He took prisoners into captivity;<sup>[c]</sup> He gave gifts to people.<sup>[d]</sup>

<sup>L45</sup> Ephesians 4:8 Darum spricht er: Er ist aufgefahren in die Höhe und hat das Gefängnis gefangen geführet und hat den Menschen Gaben gegeben.

<sup>BNT</sup> Ephesians 4:8 διὸ λέγει· ἀναβάς εἰς ὕψος ἠχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν, ἔδωκεν δόματα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις.

Taking “captivity captive“ is indeed a Hebraism. Yet the Holy Spirit decided to retain this Hebraism in the New Testament Greek. The phrase is somewhat stronger than “taking many captives.” Jesus has vanquished captivity itself. His ascension is the ultimate triumph.

### **Psalm 69**

Concerning this Psalm, Prof. Brug writes, “*Among the Psalms, only Psalm 22 matches Psalm 69 as a graphic description of Christ’s suffering. Luke Psalm 22, it is quoted frequently in the New Testament.*” (John Brug, A Commentary on Psalms 1-72, page 633, NPH, 2004)

When Prof. Brug says “frequently,” that sounds like an understatement. This Messianic Psalm is quoted in John 15:25 (Psalm 69:4) John 2:17 and Romans 15:3 (Psalm 69:9), Matthew 27:48 (Psalm 69:21) and Acts 1:20 (Psalm 69:25). Beyond that, various verses are clearly alluded to in the New Testament, as for example Psalm 69:2 which is reflected in Christ’s agony in Gethsemane and his cry from the cross.

## Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

(See also Hebrews 5:7 for the holy writer's description of our Savior's suffering. There is so much detail here, I could go on and on. Please consult Prof. Brug's, A Commentary on Psalms 1-72, for a thorough treatment of this beautiful Psalm.)

I only wish to make note of one item in the NIV 2011 and its translation of this Psalm.

Verse 8 in the NIV 2011 now reads

NIV 2011 I am a foreigner to my own family,  
a stranger to my own mother's children;

In the NIV 84 it read "I am a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my own mother's sons."

Other translations I consulted rendered the verse as follows.

<sup>NAS</sup> Psalm 69:8 I have become <sup>a</sup>estranged <sup>1</sup>from my brothers, And an alien to my mother's sons.

<sup>ESV</sup> Psalm 69:8 I have become <sup>a</sup>a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother's sons.

<sup>GWN</sup> Psalm 69:8 I have become a stranger to my own brothers, a foreigner to my mother's sons.

<sup>KJG</sup> Psalm 69:8 I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children.

<sup>NET</sup> Psalm 69:8 My own brothers treat me like a stranger; they act as if I were a foreigner.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>HCSB</sup> <sup>8</sup> I have become a stranger to my brothers and a foreigner to my mother's sons.

<sup>L45</sup> Psalm 69:9 Ich bin fremd worden meinen Brüdern und unbekannt meiner Mutter Kindern.

מִזֶּרְ הַיְיָ לְאָחֵי וְנַכְרֵי לְבְנֵי אִמִּי: <sup>WTT</sup> Psalm 69:9

Prof. Brug comments on this verse as follows. "Since this is the prayer of Jesus the Messiah, it is striking that he refers to his "brothers" as "his mother's sons." The identity of the "brothers of the Lord" in the New Testament has, of course, been a subject of much discussion throughout the history of the church, particularly in light of the unwillingness of the Catholic Church to grant that Mary could have had other children. It is most likely that Jesus' brothers were children of Mary and Joseph." (Brug, A Commentary on Psalms 1-72, page 638)

Will we be concerned that the NIV 2011 has followed its gender accurate principle and replaced "brothers" with "family," and "sons" with "children?" Does this blur the Messianic connection in any way?

If you read the other translation options carefully, you will notice that the King James and Luther also had "children," or "Kindern." (But who's to say they always got it right?)

# Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

## Psalm 72

Concerning this Psalm, Prof. Brug writes, “*Psalm 72 is one of the most important messianic psalms. It is not explicitly quoted in the New Testament, but it is very similar to Isaiah 11 and Isaiah 60, which are quoted in the New Testament. If those passages are messianic, this psalm surely is too. It pictures the eternal and universal nature of Christ’s just rule. The Targum recognizes it as messianic, labeling the king it describes as King Messiah.*” (John Brug, A Commentary on Psalms 1-72, page 659, NPH, 2004)

I’ll ask the reader to carefully study Psalm 72 in the NIV 2011 and then carefully read Psalm 72 in the NIV 84. You will notice that, rather consistently, “*he will*” (NIV 84) is changed to “*May he.*” (NIV 2011)

Concerning this shift, the unedited TEC comments offered this brief comment.

“*Psalm 72 is changed from prophecy to prayer.*”

Are we satisfied with that change?

## Psalm 87

The NIV 2011 has changed the opening of this Psalm from the way it was translated in the NIV 84. The opening verse now reads,

NIV 2011 He has founded his city on the holy mountain.

The NIV 84 read,

Psalm 87:1 He has set his foundation on the holy mountain.

Other translations I consulted rendered this verse as. . . .

<sup>NAS</sup> Psalm 87:1 A Psalm of the sons of Korah. A Song. His <sup>a</sup>foundation is in the holy mountains.

<sup>ESV</sup> Psalm 87:1 A Psalm of <sup>a</sup>the Sons of Korah. A Song. On <sup>b</sup>the holy mount <sup>c</sup>stands the city he founded;

<sup>GWN</sup> Psalm 87:1 By Korah's descendants; a psalm; a song. The city the LORD has founded stands on holy mountains.

<sup>KJG</sup> Psalm 87:1 <A Psalm or Song for the sons of Korah.> His <sup>1</sup> foundation is in the holy mountains.

<sup>NET</sup> Psalm 87:1 Written by the Korahites; a psalm, a song. The LORD's city is in the holy hills.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>HCSB</sup> <sup>1</sup> His foundation is on the holy mountains.

<sup>L45</sup> Psalm 87:1 Ein Psalmlied der Kinder Korah. Sie ist fest gegründet auf den heiligen Bergen.

לְבִנְיָ-קָרַח מְזִמּוֹר שִׁיר יְסוּדָתוֹ בְּהַרְרֵי-קָדְשׁ: <sup>WTT</sup> Psalm 87:1

**Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)**  
**A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke**

In the New Testament, Paul identifies this solid foundation of the perfect Zion when he writes to the Ephesians (2:19-22) . . .

NIV 84, Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household,<sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.<sup>21</sup> In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.<sup>22</sup> And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

In Psalm 87, the NIV 2011 follows its translational model in deciding to change the Hebrew noun יְסוּדָתוֹ into a verb, probably because this was deemed to be more fluent in the target language. You will notice other translations have done the same. The NASB, KJV, and HCSB keep this phrase quite literal with the phrase, "His foundation is in (on) holy mountains."

The reader will have to decide whether this slightly weakens the connection to Ephesians 2 or not.

In Psalm 87, the NIV 2011 also drops the "selah" after verses 3 and 6, and footnotes this omission once after verse 3.

**Psalm 89**

The verse with Messianic connotations is verse 5. The NIV 2011 renders this as

NIV 2011 'I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations.'"

The NIV 84 had

Psalm 89:4 <sup>4</sup> 'I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations.'"  
Selah

With the exception of the missing "selah," the two are identical. Other translations I consulted rendered this verse in this way.

<sup>NAS</sup> Psalm 89:4 I will establish your <sup>a</sup>seed forever, And build up your <sup>b</sup>throne to all generations." <sup>1</sup>Selah.

<sup>ESV</sup> Psalm 89:4 'I will establish your <sup>a</sup>offspring forever, and build your <sup>b</sup>throne for all generations.'" Selah

<sup>GWN</sup> Psalm 89:4 'I will make your dynasty continue forever. I built your throne to last throughout every generation.' " Selah

<sup>KJV</sup> Psalm 89:4 Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.

<sup>NET</sup> Psalm 89:4 'I will give you an eternal dynasty<sup>6</sup> and establish your throne throughout future generations.'"<sup>7</sup>  
(Selah)

<sup>HCSB</sup> <sup>4</sup> 'I will establish your offspring forever and build up your throne for all generations.'" *Selah*

<sup>L45</sup> Psalm 89:5 Ich will dir ewiglich Samen verschaffen und deinen Stuhl bauen für und für. Sela.

## Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

עַד־עוֹלָם אֲכִין זְרַעַךְ וּבְנֵי־יָדְךָ לְדֶרֶךְ־דָּוִד כַּסֵּאֲךָ סֵלָה: <sup>WTT</sup> Psalm 89:5

The Hebrew uses זְרַעַךְ (your seed). Concerning this verse, Prof. Brug writes, “*The word seed in verse 5 connects the promise to David with the promise concerning the seed to Eve in Genesis 3 and to Abraham in Genesis 12.*” (Brug, *A Commentary on Psalms 73-150*, page 133.)

The New Testament makes reference to the “seed” of David in Acts 13:23. However, the NIV 84 already removed this term from its translation. Most others have done the same.

<sup>NIV</sup> Acts 13:23 "From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as he promised.

<sup>NAS</sup> Acts 13:23 <sup>a</sup>From the offspring of this man, <sup>b</sup>according to promise, God has brought to Israel <sup>c</sup>a Savior, Jesus,

<sup>ESV</sup> Acts 13:23 <sup>a</sup>Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel <sup>b</sup>a Savior, Jesus, <sup>c</sup>as he promised.

<sup>GWN</sup> Acts 13:23 "God had the Savior, Jesus, come to Israel from David's descendants, as he had promised.

<sup>KJG</sup> Acts 13:23 <sup>1</sup> Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus:

<sup>NET</sup> Acts 13:23 From the descendants<sup>91</sup> of this man<sup>92</sup> God brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, just as he promised.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>HCSB</sup> <sup>23</sup> “From this man’s descendants, according to the promise, God brought the Savior, Jesus,<sup>[e]</sup> to Israel.

<sup>L45</sup> Acts 13:23 Aus dieses Samen hat GOtt, wie er verheißen hat, gezeugt JEsu dem Volk Israel zum Heiland,

<sup>BGT</sup> Acts 13:23 τούτου ὁ θεὸς ἀπὸ τοῦ σπέρματος κατ’ ἐπαγγελίαν ἤγαγεν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ σωτῆρα Ἰησοῦν,

The translation “seed“ does seem to keep a tighter connection between the references, and keeps more transparent the amazing connection back to Genesis. But it does require some teaching.

The reader will have to decide whether this is an important consideration.

### **Psalm 110**

Psalm 110 is clearly Messianic from start to finish. Prof. John Brug calls it “*one of the most important messianic psalms. It is quoted or alluded to in the New Testament more than 30 times, more than any other psalm. Luther called it the main psalm to deal with our dear Lord Jesus Christ.*” (Brug, *A Commentary on Psalms 73-150*, pg 286). A thorough study of this Psalm, coupled with a careful study of all those New Testament references, goes far beyond the scope of this particular study.

For now, let’s just focus on one point. In verse 1, the NIV 2011 has changed its translation slightly from NIV 84. Is this change significant?

# Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

<sup>1</sup> The LORD says to my lord:<sup>[a]</sup>

“Sit at my right hand  
until I make your enemies  
a footstool for your feet.”

The second “Lord,” of verse one is no longer capitalized. You now need to consult the footnote to find,  
“ a. [Psalm 110:1](#) Or *Lord*”

The NIV 84 had “Of David. A psalm. The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."

Other translations I consulted render this as

<sup>NAS</sup> Psalm 110:1 A Psalm of David. <sup>a</sup>The LORD says to my Lord: <sup>b</sup>"Sit at My right hand, Until I make <sup>c</sup>Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet."

<sup>ESV</sup> Psalm 110:1 A Psalm of David. <sup>a</sup>The LORD says to my Lord: <sup>b</sup>"Sit at my right hand, <sup>c</sup>until I make your enemies your <sup>d</sup>footstool."

<sup>GWN</sup> Psalm 110:1 A psalm by David. The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit in the highest position in heaven until I make your enemies your footstool."

<sup>KJG</sup> Psalm 110:1 <A Psalm of David.> The <sup>1</sup> LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

<sup>KJV</sup> Psalm 110:1 <A Psalm of David.> The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

<sup>NET</sup> Psalm 110:1 A psalm of David. Here is the LORD's proclamation<sup>1</sup> to my lord:<sup>2</sup> "Sit down at my right hand<sup>3</sup> until I make your enemies your footstool!"<sup>4</sup>

<sup>HCSB</sup> <sup>1</sup> This is the declaration of the LORD to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies Your footstool.”

<sup>L45</sup> Psalm 110:1 Ein Psalm Davids. Der HErr sprach zu meinem HErrn: Setze dich zu meiner Rechten, bis ich deine Feinde zum Schemel deiner FüÙe lege.

לְדָוִד מְזֻמָּר נֶאֱמַר יְהוָה | לְאֲדֹנָי שֵׁב לְיְמִינִי עַד-אֲשִׁית אִיכָיֶד הָרַם לְרַגְלֶיךָ: <sup>WTT</sup> Psalm 110:1

Our Savior quoted Psalm 110:1 as proof of his deity. We find these quotations in Matthew 22:43,44, Mark 12:36, and Luke 20:42-43.

# Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

The NIV 2011 renders Matthew 22:44 as

<sup>44</sup> “The Lord said to my Lord:  
“Sit at my right hand  
until I put your enemies  
under your feet.””<sup>e</sup>

The footnote reads, “e. [Matthew 22:44](#) Psalm 110:1”

Notice how the NIV 2011 capitalizes the second “Lord,” in verse 44. (It’s also capitalized in the Luke reference.) Notice also the clear footnote. The puzzle is why the NIV 2011 removed the capitalization in the Psalm? The answer is that this reflects their translational philosophy. The Old Testament is translated in isolation from the New Testament.

Will we accept that philosophy, or will we expect our translations to follow the principle, “*Let Scripture interpret Scripture?*”

The reader may well be thinking, “*But it’s just a capitalization!*” If so, the reader should then ask, “*Is this NIV 2011 change significant, when studied in the greater context of the NIV 2011’s handling of Messianic prophecy?*”

*Then the reader should ask, “Is this change significant? Especially in light of the comments made by Prof. Waltke relative to the original NIV and the use of capitalization for Messianic Psalms?”*

## **Psalm 118**

This Psalm was part of the “Great Hallel” of the Passover. Some feel it was the last psalm that Jesus and his apostles sang before Jesus led them to the Garden of Gethsemane. What could be more fitting? Here is a Psalm that so clearly prophesies those last events of our Savior’s life. “*The stone the builders has become the capstone.*” (NIV 84)

The New Testament often makes use of this Messianic Psalm, as for example in Matthew 21:42, Acts 4:11, and 1 Peter 2.

The only item I’m going to note in this Psalm is the NIV translation of **רַחֲמֵי** “Love” isn’t quite as precise as “mercy” is it? Yet most modern translations opt for “love,” “faithful love” or something like that. Is it because “mercy” is too hard a word for our target language and culture?

<sup>NAS</sup> Psalm 118:1 <sup>a</sup>Give thanks to the LORD, for <sup>b</sup>He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting.

<sup>ESV</sup> Psalm 118:1 <sup>a</sup>Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!

<sup>GWN</sup> Psalm 118:1 Give thanks to the LORD because he is good, because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>KJG</sup> Psalm 118:1 O <sup>1</sup> give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.

<sup>NET</sup> Psalm 118:1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good and his loyal love endures!<sup>1</sup>

# Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

HCSB <sup>1</sup> Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His faithful love endures forever.

L45 Psalm 118:1 Danket dem HErrn; denn er ist freundlich, und seine Güte währet ewiglich.

הַדָּוִד לַיהוָה כִּי-טוֹב פִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ: WTT Psalm 118:1

For those who want to study the Psalms, Messianic or otherwise, in more detail, I most heartily recommend the two volume study authored by Prof. John Brug. **A Commentary on the Psalms 1-72,** and **A Commentary on the Psalms 73-150,** NPH, 2004.

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**This brings us to the conclusion of our study of NIV 2011 and its handling of Messianic Psalms. However, one more Old Testament prophecy demands our attention. Isaiah 7:14. This verse was also studied at the Translation Symposium.**

**Isaiah 7:14** NIV 2011 <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord himself will give you<sup>[a]</sup> a sign: The virgin<sup>[b]</sup> will conceive and give birth to a son, and<sup>[c]</sup> will call him Immanuel.<sup>[d]</sup>

- 1) [Isaiah 7:14](#) The Hebrew is plural.
- 2) [Isaiah 7:14](#) Or *young woman*
- 3) [Isaiah 7:14](#) Masoretic Text; Dead Sea Scrolls *son, and he or son, and they*
- 4) [Isaiah 7:14](#) *Immanuel* means *God with us*.

Other translations render this verse as follows.

<sup>NIV</sup> Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you { 14 The Hebrew is plural. } a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and { 14 Masoretic Text; Dead Sea Scrolls and he or and they } will call him Immanuel. { 14 Immanuel means God with us. }

<sup>NAS</sup> Isaiah 7:14 "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, <sup>a</sup> a <sup>1</sup> virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name <sup>2b</sup> Immanuel.

<sup>ESV</sup> Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the <sup>a</sup>Lord himself will give you a sign. <sup>b</sup>Behold, the <sup>c</sup>virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name <sup>d</sup>Immanuel.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>GNV</sup> Isaiah 7:14 So the Lord himself will give you this sign: A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and she will name him Immanuel God Is With Us.

<sup>KIG</sup> Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord <sup>1</sup> himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

<sup>KJV</sup> Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. { shall call: or, thou, O virgin, shalt call }

<sup>NET</sup> Isaiah 7:14 For this reason the sovereign master himself will give you a confirming sign.<sup>24</sup> Look, this<sup>25</sup> young woman<sup>26</sup> is about to conceive<sup>27</sup> and will give birth to a son. You, young woman, will name him<sup>28</sup> Immanuel.<sup>29</sup>

## Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

HCSB<sup>14</sup> Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you<sup>[a]</sup> a sign: The virgin will conceive,<sup>[b]</sup> have a son, and name him Immanuel

L<sup>45</sup> Isaiah 7:14 Darum so wird euch der HErr selbst ein Zeichen geben: Siehe, eine Jungfrau ist schwanger und wird einen Sohn gebären, den wird sie heißen Immanuel.

לָכֵן יִתֵּן יְהוָה אֶת הַנִּיחָם הַעֲלֵמָה לְכֹן יִתֵּן יְהוָה אֶת הַנִּיחָם הַעֲלֵמָה WTT Isaiah 7:14  
הָרָה וְיִלְדֶת בֵּן וְקָרְאת שְׁמוֹ עִמָּנוּ אֵל:

Obviously the key term here is “*Almah*,” and the NIV 2011 footnote “*young woman*.” For many, the footnote is most troubling. (The NASB also footnotes this verse with “*maiden*.” However, that doesn’t lessen the concern of what the NIV 2011 has done. It is rather a mark against the NASB in this instance.)

This verse is particularly important for our study, because of its history in recent translations. The RSV (as noted below) created a firestorm of controversy with its rendering of “*Almah*” as “*young woman*.” The ESV, which descends from the RSV, has changed back to “*virgin*” and has no footnote.

At the Translation Symposium, this verse and its footnote received a great deal of discussion, and it was some of the “*liveliest*” at the Symposium. Some of the comments made were as follows.

- “*How does the Hebrew word, “Hineh,” “behold,” fit with the translation of “young woman?” What is so unusual about a young woman conceiving and bearing a child?”*
- “*Where in Scripture is *almah* used for a “young woman?” Is there any instance where it is conclusively used of a non-virgin?”*
- “*There is some history to the translation of this verse. We need to remember the RSV and its treatment of Isaiah 7:14. That was a deal-breaker for many.*”

Prior to the Translation Symposium, attendees were urged to purchase and read a book which could help us understand the translation philosophy followed by the CBT in preparing the NIV 2011. That book is [How To Choose a Translation For All Its Worth, A Guide to Understanding and Using Bible Versions](#), Gordon D. Fee and Mark L. Straus, Zondervan, 2007. This book recommends the translational model used in the NIV (84) and TNIV. Having said that, I found it striking that the authors made this comment relative to Isaiah 7:14. “*It is of some historical interest in this regard that when the Revised Standard Version (RSV) was published in 1952, it set off an enormous storm of protest. While this antagonism focused in part on some questionable renditions, such as “young woman” for “virgin” in Isaiah 7:14, the major point of contention had to do with “all the words they left out of the Bible.*” (Kindle edition, location 1792.) Fee and Strauss call the rendering “*young woman*” questionable. Yet the NIV 2011 chose to offer this translation as an option in the footnote? I find this development all the more puzzling, because Gordon Fee and Mark Strauss are both members of the CBT, the group responsible for translating the NIV 2011. (<http://www.niv-cbt.org/translators>)

For more on the discussion of Isaiah 7:14, skip ahead and read the comments offered by Prof. John Brug.

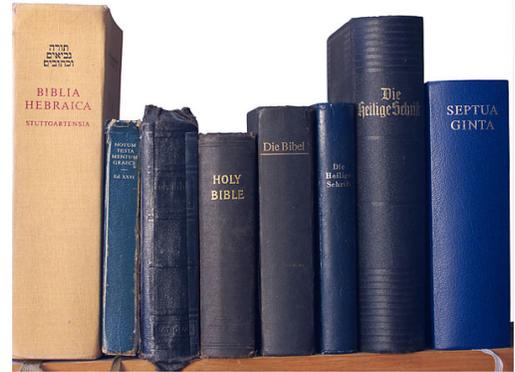
# Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

## A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

When I study this issue of Messianic Prophecy, I find myself agreeing completely with Prof. John Brug in his paper, “Principles and Practices of Bible Translation.” Please read his paper in its entirety! You can download it at [http://www.peacehoughton.org/?page\\_id=19](http://www.peacehoughton.org/?page_id=19)

I offer here a few “snippets” of Prof. Brug’s paper. These pertain to the matter of Messianic Prophecy and how we expect it to be handled in our translations.

Prof. Brug shares 2 principles that pertain especially to the matter of Messianic prophecy.



6. *The translator should adhere to the principle that Scripture interprets Scripture. This is especially true in regard to doctrinal statements. One passage of Scripture cannot be set against another. New Testament interpretations of Old Testament passages should be accepted.*

17. *The translator will recognize and preserve direct prophecy where the immediate context or other testimony of Scripture indicates direct prophecy.*

Later in this same paper, Prof. Brug fleshes out these translational principles. I’ll “copy and paste” certain portions of what he has written concerning point 17.

Here is another issue that needs its own paper, but we will have to limit ourselves to outlining some of the main issues as they pertain to translation.

This became a front burner issue when the RSV and other recent translations rendered “virgin” in Isaiah 7:14 as “young woman.” Another issue in the debate was whether there are Old Testament prophecies that pointed directly to Christ as their fulfillment or whether most “prophecies” originally referred to something else but they became “prophecies” when they were given a new application by the synagogue or church to a Messiah or specifically to Jesus.

We recognize three main types of messianic prophecies:

- 1) Direct prophecies that point directly to Christ, such as Isaiah 7:14 that points to the virgin birth, or Psalm 16 that points to Christ’s resurrection.
- 2) Typical prophecy in which something or someone in the prophet’s experience points to a greater fulfillment in Christ’s life. The traitor Ahithophel in David’s life foreshadows Judas in Jesus’ life.
- 3) Intermediate fulfillment in which an event or person which is still future to the prophet points to a greater fulfillment in Christ. David will have a son who will build God’s house. Solomon is an intermediate fulfillment but the great fulfillment is in Christ.

There was a controversy about this in the Missouri Synod in which one seminary (St. Louis) tended to make everything typical, while the other seminary (Springfield/Fort Wayne) tended to make everything direct. This debate had an effect on translations, commentaries, and study Bibles. The biggest weakness of the *Concordia Self-Study Bible* is that it is poor in the recognition of direct prophecy. The notes of the more recent *Lutheran Study Bible* are somewhat of an improvement

Here we will deal with this issue only as a translation issue.

## Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

### A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

We begin with Isaiah 7:14, which is the most crucial test. If a translator does not see direct prophecy here, he likely sees it nowhere.

NIV 1984 The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son

NIV 2011 The virgin\* will be with child and will give birth to a son \*Or young woman

ESV The virgin shall conceive and bear a son

NASB Behold, a virgin\* will be with child and bear a son \*Or maiden

NKJV Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son

NLT The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son

NRSV Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son

MSG A girl who is presently a virgin will get pregnant. She'll bear a son

Evaluate NIV 2011 and MSG.

Another key test is Psalm 45, in which the king or King is addressed as God.

NIV 1984 Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;

NIV 2011 Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;

*Note: Here the king is addressed as God's representative.*

ESV Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.

NASB Your throne, O God, is forever and ever;

NRSV Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever.

NLT Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever.

RSV Your divine throne endures forever and forever.

MSG Your throne is God's throne, ever and always;

The note in NIV 2011 would allow or even suggest the understanding that originally this psalm was not a prophecy but simply a hyperbole about the king of Israel. Hebrews 1:18-19 \* does not allow this interpretation of the passage. The NRSV backs off from the first RSV interpretation. The Message is a mess.

(\* There is a typo in Prof Brug's paper. The reference should be Hebrews 1:8-9)

A similar conflict arises in connection with Psalm 8:4-6, a psalm recognized in Hebrews and in Lutheran interpretation as a prophecy of Christ.

NIV 1984 what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?

<sup>5</sup>You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.

<sup>6</sup>You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet:

NIV 2011 what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for

them? <sup>5</sup>You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and

honor. <sup>6</sup>You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their

feet:

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This passage deserves an article of its own because there are others issues besides the singular/plural and the gender neutral issues, but here we have to limit ourselves to the observation that the translation of Psalm 8 in the NIV 2011 makes it difficult, perhaps even impossible, for a reader to see the messianic interpretation in Psalm 8 as it stands. A reader might still be able to read the messianic interpretation back

## Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

into the psalm from Hebrews 2, but this translation makes the NIV appear to support the view that the messianic meaning was not there originally but was read into the psalm later. I do not think this removal of the singular forms from Psalm 8 was a conscious attempt to remove prophecy (the singular form critical to the messianic interpretation was retained in Genesis 3:15). It seems more likely that the focus on gender neutral language made the translators oblivious to what they were doing to the messianic import of the passage.

The fact that most of the translators of NIV 1984, TNIV, and 2011 appear to see only typical prophecy in the Old Testament<sup>30</sup> increases the reason for concern, since for some Evangelicals “typical prophecy” increasingly means post-facto prophecy. It also is a cause for concern that more capitalization is retained in later messianic prophecies such as in Zechariah, but not in the early prophecies.

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**I'm also adding the unedited comments of the TEC, as they were made relative to the NIV 2011 and its treatment of the Psalms in general.**

### Psalms

Note that in the online version we were referred to the verse numbers often do not match the Hebrew text and the Hebrew given with the verse is often the wrong Hebrew.

Examples of modest weakening:

- 4:4 “in your anger” Why ignore the NT use (Ep 4:26) when it is not necessary for faithfulness to the Hebrew? NT use seems to be slighted in other cases too.
- 8:1/2/3 why switch above to in? Why translate *Oz* as stronghold? Not a big deal but often idiosyncratic translations.
- ? why does psalm 10 keep the wicked man?? More “men” are restored but reason seems unclear.
- 11:5 et al. often removethe“soul”idioms. “My soul hates” is not equal to “I hate.” Here the intensifying force of the idiom is brought out. Other times it is not.
- 12:6 adds word “gold” adopting a conjectural emendation of the text
- 17:4 why “bribe”? I don’t know what they are translating here.
- 19:7 why limit options of understanding by removing “riving” ie “giving life”?
- 20:3 why drop all the Selahs? They are part of all Hebrew texts.
- 23:4 why eliminate “valley of the shadow of death” since the Hebrew has it?
- 25:22 why change “redeem” to “deliver” here and elsewhere. Why change “salvation” to “victory”? There is a tendency to level passages that may refer to two levels of salvation to one lower level. These might belong to category 5. See also 40:9 and others.
- 29:1 neither does a very good job by eliminating “sons” here
- 40:9 et al. changing “righteousness” to “righteous acts” or “justice” sometimes too limiting.
- 45:headins not is the version online, Is “wedding song” used?
- 45:14 the change of persons removes a Messianic element.

## Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

### A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

- 45: 12 “city of Tyre” wrecks the poetic imagery. A wooden ear for poetry is too often apparent..
- 51:6 is the womb the reference?
- 51:17 why is vocative “O God” kept sometimes?
- 51:19 is “sacrifice of the righteous” too limiting?
- 101:26 is leviathan to be capitalized in 101:26?
- 116:10 weak NIV made worse. Why ignore NT?
- 118:10 wrecks imagery of what “cut off “ means.
- Removes “walk” when it refers to a way of life.
- 147:10 is it necessary to change “strong man” to a “warrior”
- Add interpretive words not in text quite often. Eliminates parallel vavs in many cases in poetry. Replaces pronouns with nouns.

Examples of modest improvement:

Tabernacle> sacred tent (but is it really necessary?)

*Hesed* is translated a bit better than NIV. Ps

40:6 is significantly better

68:12?? Phrase is hard but women is better than men.

80:13?? Et al. “insects” is interesting but is it right for *ziz*?? Feast

> festival??

Tambourine > timbrel?? Tof is not a tambourine but does anyone know what a timbrel is? My dictionary says timbrel is either a drum or a tambourine.

Significant weakening:

2:7 removal of capital could be just a style change but attitude toward direct prophecy ominous..

8:4,5,6 effectively remove Messianic reference.#

9:17 et al. sheol>realm of death—it is difficult to take this in any sense other than the false view of the Old Testament doctrine of the state after death that is held by many Evangelicals. What is wrong with “in the grave or “among the dead”? # 16:10—how was Christ in the realm of the dead? Does death have a realm? 30:3 31:7 45:6 the TNIV note is against Messianic prophecy. Is it in NIV 2011?

Messianic psalms weakened: (2), 8, (16), 45 note. Psalm 72 is changed from prophecy to prayer.

There seems to be a strange inconsistency or carelessness at times.

Some other strange things: “O” kept sometimes with God. “Man” kept with wicked. Some “mankinds” kept.

Does the word “alien” have to be eliminated? Is this pc or fear of space aliens?

Trying to use simpler modern English but strange anomalies. Give>render, the deep> watery depths, birds of the air>. birds of the sky, done > enacted, according to > in accordance with.

Overall I was not very impressed with the depth or quality of the work that seemed sometimes to be smoothing of an English translation rather than a reflection on the text.

## Messianic Prophecy in the NIV 2011 (With special attention to the Psalms and Isaiah 7:14)

A Study, Pastor Glenn Schwanke

**Dear reader: study the NIV 2011 quite carefully.** Focus on the issue of Messianic Prophecy. Do you see translators who follow these two principles as stated by Prof. John Brug?

*1) The translator should adhere to the principle that Scripture interprets Scripture. This is especially true in regard to doctrinal statements. One passage of Scripture cannot be set against another. New Testament interpretations of Old Testament passages should be accepted.*

*2) “The translators recognize and preserve direct prophecy where the immediate context or other testimony of Scripture indicates direct prophecy?”*

As you carefully read the NIV 2011, especially focusing on Old Testament verses that are Messianic, can you see such prophecy clearly? Can you say of the NIV 2011 what Prof. John Jeske once said about the NIV 84?

*Matters of Messianic prophecy deserve special comment, since this area of Scripture will be one of the touchstones by which the new translation will be evaluated in our circles. One of the first criticisms of the Revised Standard Version when it came out 30 years ago was that the Messianicity of half of the Old Testament Messianic prophecies was lost. Given the conservative evangelical orientation of the NIV translators, it will not surprise you that Messianic prophecies come out Messianic in the NIV Old Testament.*

If not, is that acceptable to you, the reader?

In Christ,

Pastor Glenn Schwanke