

FAQ VOL II

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J.K. McKee

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Frequently Asked Questions

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P.O. Box 516
McKinney, Texas 75070
(407) 933-2002

outreachisrael.net / outreachisrael.blog
messianicapologetics.net / messianicapologetics.blog

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Abbreviations and Special Terms

The following is a list of abbreviations for reference works and special terms which are used in publications by Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics. Please familiarize yourself with them as the text may reference a Bible version, i.e., RSV for the Revised Standard Version, or a source such as TWOT for the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, solely by its abbreviation. Detailed listings of these sources are provided in the Bibliography.

- ABD: *Anchor Bible Dictionary*
AMG: *Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament*
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament
Ara: Aramaic
ASV: American Standard Version (1901)
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)
b. Babylonian Talmud (*Talmud Bavli*)
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.
BDAG: *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)
BDB: *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.
CGEDNT: *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Barclay M. Newman)
CGL: *Cambridge Greek Lexicon* (2021)
CHALOT: *Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Holladay)
CJB: *Complete Jewish Bible* (1998)
CJSB: *Complete Jewish Study Bible* (2016)
DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition
DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls
EDB: *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*
EJ: *Encyclopaedia Judaica*
ESV: English Standard Version (2001)
Ger: German
GNT: Greek New Testament
Grk: Greek
HALOT: *Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Koehler and Baumgartner)
HCSB: Holman Christian Standard Bible (2004)
Heb: Hebrew
HNV: Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible
IDB: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*
IDBSup: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement*
ISBE: *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*
IVPBBC: *IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old & New Testament)*
Jastrow: *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature* (Marcus Jastrow)
JBK: *New Jerusalem Bible-Koren* (2000)
JETS: *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
KJV: King James Version
Lattimore: *The New Testament* by Richmond Lattimore (1996)
LITV: *Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* by Jay P. Green (1986)
LES: *Lexham English Septuagint* (2019)
LS: *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott)
LSJM: *Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott-Jones-McKenzie)
LXE: *Septuagint with Apocrypha* by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851)
LXX: Septuagint
m. Mishnah
MT: Masoretic Text
NASB: *New American Standard Bible* (1977)
NASU: *New American Standard Update* (1995)
NBCR: *New Bible Commentary: Revised*
NEB: *New English Bible* (1970)
Nelson: *Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*
NETS: *New English Translation of the Septuagint* (2007)
NIB: *New Interpreter's Bible*
NIDB: *New International Dictionary of the Bible*
NIV: *New International Version* (1984)
NJB: *New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic* (1985)
NJPS: *Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures* (1999)
NKJV: *New King James Version* (1982)
NRSV: *New Revised Standard Version* (1989)
NLT: *New Living Translation* (1996)
NT: *New Testament*

OT: Old Testament
REB: Revised English Bible (1989)
RSV: Revised Standard Version (1952)
t. Tosefta
Tanach (Tanakh): the Old Testament
Thayer: *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*
TDNT: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
TLV: Messianic Jewish Family Bible—Tree of Life Version (2014)
TNIV: Today's New International Version (2005)

TWOT: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*
UBSHNT: United Bible Societies' 1991 Hebrew New Testament revised edition
v(s). verse(s)
Vine: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*
Vul: Latin Vulgate
YLT: Young's Literal Translation (1862/1898)
WMB: World Messianic Bible (2020)

Genesis 9:2-3 Septuagint, Every Reptile

How am I supposed to approach Genesis 9:2-3 from the Greek Septuagint, which actually gave Noah permission to eat “every reptile”?

Genesis 9:2-3 has been customarily interpreted, by both Jewish and Christian examiners over the centuries, as God granting humans general permission after the Flood to eat all kinds of meat. This would have included meats, later classified for Ancient Israel, as being “unclean”:

“Fear and dread of you shall fall upon all beasts of the earth, upon all winged creatures of the heavens, upon all that creeps upon the land and all fish of the sea. Into your hand they are given. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; I allow them all to you, like green plants. But flesh with its lifeblood still in it you may not eat” (Genesis 9:2-3, The Koren Tanakh).

An alternative, dissenting opinion to *kol-remes* or “every moving thing,” being all manner of animal life, is offered by John H. Walton, in his Genesis commentary appearing in the *NIV Application Commentary* series. Looking at various cognates in Akkadian (*nammašu/nammaštu*), and making comparisons to the Epic of Gilgamesh, he concludes that the *kol-remes* were various types of wild animals or game, not usually found in herds, but among those which would have had to be hunted and/or hoarded. These would have mainly been various types of wild cattle, antelope, fallow deer, and ibex.¹ *Kol-remes* cannot just apply to all types of animals, but was a restricted category. This provides kosher-friendly Messianic people a possible option, that the animals Noah and company were permitted to eat, were actually clean animals, but those which needed to be hunted and/or hoarded to be eaten. Walton’s proposal certainly should cause many readers of Genesis 9:2-3 to slow down, and not rush off to some of the conclusions which they commonly make.²

¹ John H. Walton, *NIV Application Commentary: Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), pp 341-342.

² For a further review, consult the exegesis paper on Genesis 9:3-7, “Why Meat?” by J.K. McKee (appearing in the *Messianic Kosher Helper*).

Genesis 9:2-3 Septuagint, Every Reptile

The proposal that *kol-remes* may be restricted to various forms of wild game, and clean animals at that, can be very helpful for many Messianic people—especially when noting that Noah was commanded by God to carry seven pairs of clean animals onto the Ark (Genesis 7:2-3), presumably for sacrificing and for food. Some severe challenges can arise, though, when encountering the Greek Septuagint rendering of Genesis 9:2-3:

“And the dread and the fear of you shall be upon all the wild beasts of the earth, on all the birds of the sky, and on all things moving upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea, I have placed them under you power. And **every reptile** [*pan herpeton*] which is living shall be to you for meat, I have given all things to you as the green herbs” (Genesis 9:2-3, LXE).

Here, the LXX translators took *kol-remes* to be *pan herpeton*, which an older English Septuagint version, such as that of L.C.L. Brenton, took to be “every reptile.” What was actually intended by this? A conclusion which can be quickly drawn by some, can be that Noah was actually permitted by God to eat snakes and lizards. The *LS* lexicon, chiefly interested in classical usages, defines *herpeton* with the seemingly straightforward, “a walking animal, quadruped” and “a creeping thing, reptile.”³ The lexicon provided by William D. Mounce and Robert H. Mounce, in *The Zondervan Greek and English Interlinear New Testament (NASB/NIV)*, while focused on usage in the Apostolic Scriptures, similarly has, “a creeping animal, a reptile, Acts 10:12; 11:6; Rom. 1:23; Jas. 3:7.”⁴

Did God actually permit, or even tell, Noah to eat reptiles: snakes and lizards? Was the rendering of *kol-remes* as *pan herpeton* just an (incorrect) opinion of the Septuagint translators and/or various sectors of Second Temple Judaism, which we do not have to take too seriously? Or, does one need to possibly be reserved in approaching the term *herpeton*? It can actually be seen how there is a spectrum of opinions, regarding the term *herpeton*, ranging from: all animals, various avians, marine life, to reptiles. One factor, which should not escape anyone’s notice, is how newer English Septuagint versions do not actually render Genesis 9:2-3 with “every reptile” for *pan herpeton*:

“And the trembling and fear of you shall be on all the animals of the earth and on all the birds of the sky and on all the things that move on the earth and on all the fish of the sea; I have given them under authority to you. And **every creeping thing** [*pan herpeton*] that is alive you shall have for food; like the pasture land herbs, I have given you all things” (Genesis 9:2-3, NETS).

“And the trembling and fear of you will be upon all the wild animals of the earth and on all the birds of the heavens and on all the moving things on the earth and all the fish of the sea.

³ H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 315.

⁴ William D. Mounce and Robert H. Mounce, eds., *The Zondervan Greek and English Interlinear New Testament (NASB/NIV)* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008, 2011), 1071.

I have put them under your hands. And **every moving thing** [*pan herpeton*] that is living will be yours for food; like grassy vegetables, I give you all things” (Genesis 9:2-3, LES).

“For the dread and fear of you shall be upon all the wild animals of the earth, all the birds of the heaven, all that move upon the earth, and all the fish of the sea. I have put them under your authority. **Every moving thing** [*pan herpeton*] that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as I did the green herbs” (Genesis 9:2-3, SAAS-St. Athanasius Academy Septuagint).

Also to be considered, could be how *The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear Septuagint* renders *pan herpeton* as

“all; every [every] creeping thing; quadruped [moving thing].”⁵

The *Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* does offer some definitions, for the term *herpeton*, to be weighed. Referencing Genesis 1:24, it notes the presence of “*creeping thing, reptile*”⁶:

“And God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to kind: quadrupeds and **creeping things** [*herpeta*] and wild animals of the earth according to kind” (Genesis 1:24, NETS).

Referencing Genesis 1:21, it also notes the presence of “*animal of the reptile kind, reptiloid*”⁷:

“And God made the great sea monsters and **every creature among creeping animals** [every life of living creeping things, LES; *pasan psuchēn [zōōn herpe]tōn*], which the waters brought forth according to their kinds, and every wing bird according to kind. And God saw that they were good” (Genesis 1:21, NETS).

The *Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* also raises the issue of Isaiah 16:1,⁸ where one sees a rather perplexing rendering seen of the Hebrew into Greek:

“**Send a sheep, ruler of the land** [*shilchu-kar moshel-eretz*], from Sela into the desert, to the mount of daughter Zion” (Isaiah 16:1, The Koren Tanakh).

⁵ Logos 42.1.0: Logos 10 Library - *The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear Septuagint*. MS Windows 10/Mac OS 14 Release. Bellingham, WA: FaithLife, 2025.

⁶ Johan Lust, Erik Eynikel, and Katrin Hauspie, *Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, Third Corrected Edition (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2015), 243.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

Genesis 9:2-3 Septuagint, Every Reptile

“**I will send as it were creeping animals on the land** [Apostelō hōs herpeta epi tēn gēn]: is Mount Sion a desolate rock” (Isaiah 16:1, NETS).

A conundrum for Bible readers is surely present, when encountering how “Send the tribute lamb” (NASU), *kar*, “(young) **ram**” or “**battering ram**” (*CHALOT*),⁹ was rendered with *herpeton*, the LXE actually having “I will send as it were reptiles on the land.” The Hebrew of Isaiah 16:1, with lamb/ram (*kar*), was seemingly translated as reptile (*herpeton*). *The Lexham Analytical Lexicon to the Septuagint* defines *herpeton* as “quadruped, creeping thing,” and actually classifies Isaiah 16:1 and *kar* under “Unique Hebrew Alignment,” itself defined with “(young) ram (for slaughter); battering ram.”¹⁰ This probably raises more questions than not, as to why an obviously clean animal such as a lamb/ram (*kar*), would, or at least could, be translated by a term often representing something unclean (*herpeton*).

Some advice is offered by the *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (Louw-Nida), indicating how *herpeton* can have a wider range of application beyond snakes, particularly in places where it is affected by underlying Hebrew terminology:

“Though [*herpeton*] is often interpreted as referring only to snakes, it also includes in biblical contexts (as the result of the influence of classifications based on Hebrew terminology, as in Gn. 1.25, 26, and 30) a number of small four-footed animals as well as snakes, for example, rats, mice, frogs, toads, salamanders, and lizards. However, in the various NT contexts (for example Act 10.12, 11.6; Ro 1.23; and Jas 3.7 where ‘creeping things’ are contrasted with birds, animals, and fish) it is probably more satisfactory to use a term which designates primarily snakes. In a number of languages a very important distinction is made between four-footed reptiles (such as lizards) and snakes. If such a distinction is made, it is then probably better to use a term which designates only snakes, since a term for ‘animals’ will probably also include lizards” (*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*).¹¹

This may be considered helpful, in noting how the Greek *herpeton* can at least appear in contexts beyond that of reptiles proper, snakes and/or lizards.

There is, unfortunately, not a huge amount of lexical information available about the term *herpeton*, especially regarding why a term primarily representing unclean reptiles, can in some cases represent a clean animal. Some further discussion is accessible via the *Kata Biblon Wiki Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*, which first notes how the term *herpeton* is

⁹ William L. Holladay, ed., *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden, the Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1988), 164.

¹⁰ [Logos 42.1.0: Logos 10 Library - The Lexham Analytical Lexicon to the Septuagint](#). MS Windows 10/Mac OS 14 Release. Bellingham, WA: FaithLife, 2025.

¹¹ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, eds., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*, 2 vols. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1988), 1:46.

“not exclusively herps and reptiles; incl. anything that is not a bird, bat, large herbivore, or large carnivore; incl. all small non-flying vertebrates, all invertebrates, and aquatic life incl. perhaps even whales (per Gen 1:21)”¹²

Its entry for *herpeton* goes on, to further detail:

“[*Herpeton*], from which we get the word *herpetology*, and which means a ‘creeping’ or ‘crawling’ creature, is not limited to reptiles and amphibians, but effectively is a catch-all for any animal that is not a [*ktēnos*] (large, land-dwelling herbivore), [*thērion*] (large, land-dwelling carnivore), or non-insect [*peteina*] (flying creature).

“‘Creeping’ describes small, low-to-the-ground, land-dwelling vertebrates (excluding bats per Lv. 11:20):

“Lv. 11:29: [*tōn herpetōn tōn herpetōn epi tēs gēs*], *the creeping creatures creeping upon the earth*, which includes by example weasels, rats, desert monitors, shrews, chameleons, geckos, lizards, and blind mole-rats (Lv. 11:29-30), but not hares and hyraxes which are counted as [*ktēnos*] (Lv. 11:5, 6).

“‘Creeping’ describes all invertebrates, incl. both flying and non-flying insects:

“Lv. 11:20: [*ta herpeta tōn peteinōn*], *the creeping creatures among the flying creatures*, which includes locusts (Lv. 11:22), but not bats which are separately listed among flying creatures alongside birds (Lv. 11:19.)

“Lv. 11:42: [*ho poreuonomes...ho poluplēthei posin en pasin tois herpetois tois herpousin epi tēs gēs*], *the (creatures) moving about...that abound with many feet [more than four] in all the creeping creatures that creep upon the earth*.

“‘Creeping’ describes all aquatic creatures, whether swimming or non-swimming, of every size up to and incl. whales:

“Gn. 1:20: [*exagagetō ta hudata herpeta psuchōn zōsōn*], *let the waters bring forth creeping things among living beings*.

“Gn. 1:21: [*kai epoiēsen ho Theos ta kētē ta megala kai pasan psuchēn zōōn herpetōn ha exēgagen ta hudata*], *and God made the great sea creatures and every being among creeping life forms which the waters brought forth.*”¹³

The above summary is seen to widen the window of *herpeton* from reptiles, snakes and lizards, to include a variety of small land animals, flying insects, and aquatic creatures. So,

¹² *herpeton*, -ou, to. *Kata Biblon*. Retrieved 12 June, 2025, from <<https://lexicon.katabiblon.com/>>.

¹³ *Ibid*.

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to simply say that *herpeton* in Genesis 9:2-3 meant that Noah was given permission to eat snakes and lizards—when *herpeton* is seen, in other places, to represent a diversity of animal and marine life—would not be too responsible. This is especially true when recalling how in Isaiah 16:1 *kar* was rendered as *herpeton*. This indicates how reserve is needed, when dealing with some Septuagint uses of *herpeton*.

Interpretationally speaking, what should Messianic readers take away from Genesis 9:2-3 in the Greek Septuagint (LXX)?

1. The Greek Septuagint (LXX) does bear consultative authority, as it was used and quoted by the Apostles. It is a highly useful resource where the Hebrew of the Tanakh (OT) is uncertain or unclear. But, does this mean that an interpretation or opinion, reflected in the LXX, is to always be accepted? How might some matters in the LXX need to be viewed on a case-by-case basis?
2. Septuagintal terms are affected by Hebrew meanings (i.e., *eirēnē* rendering *shalom*, “peace”).
3. What is one to make of where a term like *herpeton* appears in early Genesis narratives, with the canonical Hebrew itself doubtlessly affected by Ancient Near Eastern factors? Have there possibly been some issues when more modern zoological approaches, to the classification of various animal species, have been read back into ancient Biblical texts? The original authors lacked such categories.

Genesis 9:2-3 and its reference to Noah being given permission to eat *pan herpeton*, has been used by some to conclude that the Septuagint translators believed that Noah and company were allowed to eat every reptile: snakes and lizards. It is clear enough, though, that *herpeton*, in a Septuagintal sense, can be used for a wider array of animal life forms, and so limiting it to what Twentieth and Twenty-First Century moderns consider to be “reptiles,” may not be entirely accurate. Also to be seriously considered, is while older English Septuagint translations may be seen to render *pan herpeton* as “every reptile” (LXE-Brenton), newer editions render *pan herpeton* as “every creeping thing” (NETS) or “every moving thing” (LES, SAAS). It is unavoidable that this has been done to connect what is seen to the original Hebrew, *kol-remes*.

Some useful discussion on the Hebrew term *remes*, and whether it should be limited to reptiles, or not, is provided in the entry for “Creeping Things” in *ISBE*:

“*Remes* is a collective noun embracing a large class of animals, so designated because they appear to move close to the ground. The noun is derived from the verb *rāmaś*, meaning ‘move or glide about with light, smooth motions.’ The term frequently refers to terrestrial creatures (‘every creeping thing that creeps upon the ground’) and is distinguished from cattle (Gen. 1:24f.; 7:14; Ps. 148:10), animals in general (Gen. 6:20; 7:8; 8:17, 19), man (Gen. 6:7; 7:23), birds (Gen. 6:7; 7:8; etc.; Dt. 4:17f.; Ezk. 38:20; Psa 148:10), and fish (Dt. 4:18; Ezk. 38:20).

“Although commentators limit *remeś* to the reptiles, the term seems to be used more comprehensively. For instance, it apparently designates all living terrestrial forms (cf. the Hebrew of Gen. 1:28; 7:21; 9:3), fish (Ps. 69:34; 104:25; Hab. 1:14), the beasts of the forest (Ps. 104:20; and even the swarming creatures (*šereš*) are called *hārōmēš* (Lev. 11:44, 46). In the final instance, *šereš* refers to weasels, mice, lizards, and crocodiles (cf. Lev. 11:29f.)...

“Consequently, restriction of the term *remeś* to reptiles alone is too narrow. It is a general term signifying the smaller animals which, to the eye of the observer, appear to creep or crawl along the ground” (*ISBE*).¹⁴

Indeed, seeing how the Hebrew *remes* may mainly involve (small) animals creeping along the ground to the human observer, actually takes us back to Walton’s interjection that *remes* should be understood with various Ancient Near Eastern cognates in mind.¹⁵ So, there may be a basis to conclude that *remes* is more restricted than all creatures generally, just as we have seen how the Greek *herpeton* is wider than just reptiles proper. Ultimately, the issue for kosher-friendly Messianics and *herpeton* in Genesis 9:2-3, appears to be affected by those uses where *herpeton* is seen to represent clean animals (i.e., Isaiah 16:1).

Is what is seen in the Septuagint of Genesis 9:2-3 a “finer details” issue, or a major, pending debate involving the relevance and applicability of kosher? One’s overall view of the ongoing validity or relevance of the kosher dietary laws, does not rise or fall on this passage. Some can theologially conclude that Noah may have been permitted to eat all kinds of meat, but that following the Torah formally given to Ancient Israel, that dietary restrictions are now in place for the people of God—dietary restrictions still in place for the post-resurrection era. Others could theologially conclude that *kol-remes* was a restricted category of animals Noah was permitted to eat, and that *pan herpeton* was the only vocabulary readily accessible to the Septuagint translators to convey the concept of “every creeping/moving thing.” And, we should all remember how a wide number of Messianic Jews, for example, who may conclude that Noah could actually eat all kinds of unclean meat, do at all think that their Jewish identity is threatened or infringed upon when non-Jewish Believers choose to have a kosher-style diet.

The matter of *pan herpeton* in the Septuagint of Genesis 9:2-3, is actually a **minor curiosity**, in view of the larger issues in early Genesis. Some of the much bigger issues, meriting the attention of today’s Messianic people, include: the actual length of the six *yamim* (“days”) of Creation and true age of the universe, the extent of the Flood as all-encompassing global or regional to the Ancient Near East, the lifespans of the figures in Genesis 5 & 11 and whether all of the relationships are direct or telescoped, and most especially the content of the curse involving the Fall of man and woman. Unfortunately, such weightier matters of Genesis, are not too frequently probed by enough people in today’s Messianic movement

¹⁴ J.T. Dennison, Jr., “Creeping Things,” in Geoffrey Bromiley, ed., *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 1:812.

¹⁵ Walton, *Genesis*, pp 341-342.

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(much less the various non-Jewish Torah movements), and fundamentalism too often prevails.