

FAQ

FROM THE MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS ARCHIVES (2000-2018)

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MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS
messianicapologetics.net

Frequently Asked Questions

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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)
NJSB: *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)

Revelation 22:14

Which is the correct reading of Revelation 22:14, “Blessed are they who keep His commandments,” or “Blessed are they who wash their robes”?

Revelation 22:14 reads differently in the Greek Textus Receptus of the Apostolic Scriptures, than it does in the critical Greek texts used today for most English Bible versions. In the KJV, Revelation 22:14 reads as follows:

“Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Revelation 22:14, KJV).

In modern English Bibles, using critical Greek texts, the verse reads slightly differently:

“Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city” (Revelation 22:14, NASU).

The difference is obviously that the Textus Receptus includes the phrase, “Blessed *are* they that do his commandments,” versus “Blessed are those who wash their robes.” Some may claim foul play with the Scriptures, and that texts have been deliberately altered to support a particular doctrinal bias. However, the reading “Blessed are those who wash their robes” **is older**. Bruce Metzger notes in his work *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* how the change happened rather innocently, because in ancient times the Greek Scriptures were copied with one person reading the text out loud, and multiple scribes copying it. This inevitably led to some textual deviations occurring. He comments,

“Instead of [*plunontes tas stolas autōn*], supported by {A} A about 15 minuscules (including 1006 2020 2053) it^{sr} vg cop^{sa} al, the Textus Receptus, following 046 most minuscules it^{sig} syr^{ph, h} cop^{bo} al, reads the somewhat similar sounding words [*poiountes tas entolas autou*]. The latter reading appears to be a scribal emendation, for elsewhere the author uses the expression [*tērein tas entolas*] (12.17; 14.12).”¹

Hearing the audible phrase *plunontes tas stolas autōn*, some Greek copyists wrote *poiountes tas entolas autou*. This latter phrase means “Happy are those doing His commands” (YLT). There was no foul play here, but innocent human error. Metzger is keen to note that both Revelation 12:17 and 14:12 previously emphasize God’s people keeping His commandments, and how a copyist would have had this idea in mind when audibly hearing what text to write down. However, the correct reading is *plunontes tas stolas autōn*, “Blessed are those who wash their robes.”

Within today’s Messianic sphere of influence, where Believers can be strongly encouraged to follow the Torah or Law of Moses—determining the correct reading of this verse can be a problem. When one determines what the correct reading of this verse should be, each of us has to ask the question of what is more important: keeping God’s commandments **or** having our robes washed clean of sin in the Messiah’s blood?

Many in the Hebrew Roots movement are guilty of the sin of Torah-olatry, and will most unfortunately, conclude that observing the Torah is superior to having their robes washed clean of sin via the sacrifice of Yeshua. Keeping God’s commandments is a legitimate theme of the Book of Revelation, yet no man or woman can ever hope to enter into His Kingdom without being washed by Yeshua’s blood. One’s obedience to God’s commandments is

¹ Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, Second Edition (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1998), 690.

to come as a result of being transformed by the Holy Spirit via the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:25-27), as we are saved by grace through faith, but for the keeping of good works (Ephesians 2:8-10).