# *Tracing the Origin of the Word*

# BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT

**By Larry & June Acheson**

# *Tracing the Origin of the Word "God" – Beyond a Reasonable Doubt**

## I dedicate this study to the honor of Yahweh.

**Thanks to Worley Maynard (1943 – 2016) for his encouraging me to pursue this topic with all diligence. I give credit to Yahweh for guiding us both and may the journey continue forever.**

**02/27/2016**

## We invite you to read our full-length study *God's Identity: According to Ancient Hebrew Scholars*.

## BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT

* I am compelled to include the tagline "Beyond a Reasonable Doubt" with the name of this study based on the following comment directed at me back in 2000 during a group e-mail discussion: "I still do not believe the Baal *God* of Isaiah 65:11 has anything to do with the titles used in English of Lord and God. I do not believe you have proven 'Gad' of this passage is the 'gott' of the Teutonic tribes, which influenced the English to use the title 'God.' I don't believe you can make such a connection and successfully prove your point beyond a reasonable doubt."[1]

[1] Taken from an e-mailed commentary (titled "RE: Is Yahweh Your 'God'? Final Installment") submitted by a man using the pseudonym "Dauid ben Yacov" on October 10, 2000.

# Introduction:

One of our biggest gripes with nominative Christianity is their inherent drive to justify infusing noble practices into what was once considered heathen worship. We could cite Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day and even Halloween. We also shake our heads over how they abuse the Messiah's words when He said to not even THINK that He had come to destroy the law (Torah). To them, "fulfill" means "bring to an end," so in their estimation what He *really* meant was, "Do not think I am come to destroy the law, I am come to bring it to an end." If the law is brought to an end, doesn't that mean it's *done, finito, bye-bye, gone* – the same results that would be accomplished by destroying it?

## FULFILLED

I am persuaded that in Matthew 5:17-19 Yeshua employed a linguistic term known as "Reasoning by Contraries." According to the "Glossary of Rhetorical Terms" definition of "Reasoning by Contraries," the first statement of two opposite statements directly proves the second. For example: "I didn't come here to insult you; I came here to *compliment* you." I then proceed to say something nice to you or about you (proving/validating the second clause)! Or, "I didn't walk to the train station today; I *drove* there instead." In the same way, Yeshua would not have said, "I didn't come to do such and such a thing," and then state that what He *did* come to do would produce the same result as what He *didn't* come to do.

If Yeshua *didn't* come to destroy the law, then whatever He *did* come to do must be the opposite. If He had said, "I didn't come to destroy the law; I came to bring it to an end," would this make any sense? It is true that the Greek word used to translate "fulfill" can be used to mean "bring to an end," but does such an understanding of this word truly fit the context? On the other hand, this same Greek word (*plērŏō*, #4137 in Strong's) can *also* mean "confirm" or "establish." In fact, that is precisely the way this Greek word is translated as found in the Septuagint text of I Kings 1:14:

> [11]¶Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bath–sheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our master knoweth it not?
> [12]Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon.
> [13]Go and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my master, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign?
> [14]Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I also will come in after thee, and **confirm** (*plērŏō*) thy words.

Just as the prophet Nathan confirmed Bathsheba's words, which resulted in Solomon becoming Israel's next king instead of Adonijah, in the same way Yeshua confirmed the law and the prophets instead of repudiating them. Of course, if Yeshua came to bring the law to an end, as is commonly taught by Christianity, then we can now justify basically living our lives the way *we* want apart from what we are directed to do in the Torah. After all, He died for our sins and we are saved by grace, so if we focus on obeying the law, then we forfeit the grace extended to us. We become "legalists," or so the reasoning goes.

On the other hand, if Yeshua came to CONFIRM the law and the prophets and He lived a life of obedience as an example of how we should live our lives, then there can be no excuse for deliberately breaking any laws!

If we must not be found deliberately breaking any laws, then this must of necessity include not mixing or infusing pagan practices into our lives. Please notice what we are commanded to do (and not do) in Torah:

> **Deuteronomy 12**
> [29]¶When Yahweh thy Almighty shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land;
> [30]Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their elohim, saying, How did these nations serve their elohim? even so will I do likewise.
> [31]Thou shalt not do so unto Yahweh thy Almighty: for every abomination to Yahweh, which He hateth, have they done unto their elohim; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their elohim.
> [32]What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.

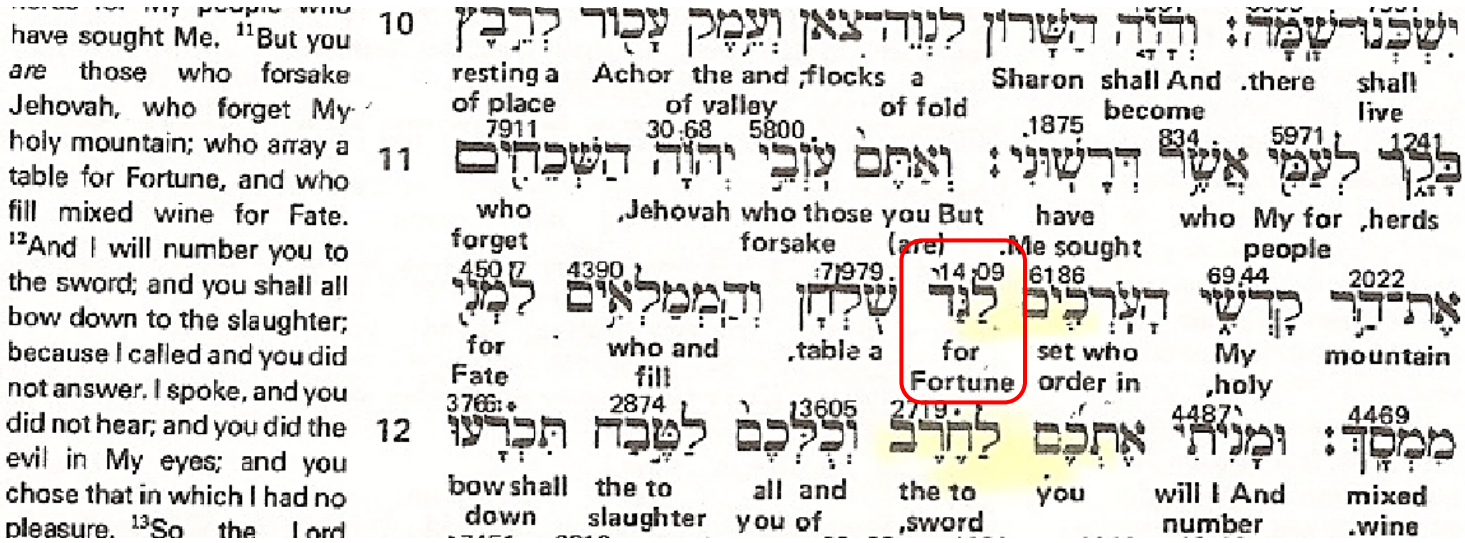
Sadly, normative Christianity spurns the above command. You might wonder, "*How* do they spurn the above command?" Here, in essence, is what normative Christianity says in reference to pagan practices:

* "How did these nations celebrate their holy days? Even so, we will do sort-of likewise! It's a neat way of sharing my personal faith with others while joining in their celebrations!" As an example of this reasoning, one of our neighbors down the street told me she has every full intention of continuing her celebration of Christmas and to validate her point she asked, "Can you think of a *better* time to witness for Jesus?" The Torah command in Deuteronomy 12 means nothing to her because the Messiah she claims to serve and worship "did away" with it. From her perspective, Yeshua did not come to *confirm* the law and the prophets.

* "What names did these nations use for their Elohim? Hey, we can use those same names in reference to Yahweh! After all, HE knows Who I worship!"

# Thou shalt not do so unto Yahweh thy Almighty!

# 1. Yahweh says that those who worship God have forsaken Him (and that should be a red flag):



have sought Me. [11]But you *are* those who forsake Jehovah, who forget My holy mountain; who array a table for Fortune, and who fill mixed wine for Fate. [12]And I will number you to the sword; and you shall all bow down to the slaughter; because I called and you did not answer. I spoke, and you did not hear; and you did the evil in My eyes; and you chose that in which I had no pleasure. [13]So the Lord

10 וְהָיָה הַשָּׁרוֹן לִנְוֵה־צֹאן וְעֵמֶק עָכוֹר לְרֵבֶץ
resting a Achor the and ;flocks a Sharon shall And .there shall
of place of valley of fold become live

11 וְאַתֶּם עֹזְבֵי יְהוָה הַשְּׁכֵחִים
7911 30 68 5800 .1875 834 5971 1241
who ,Jehovah who those you But have who My for ,herds
forget forsake (are) .Me sought people

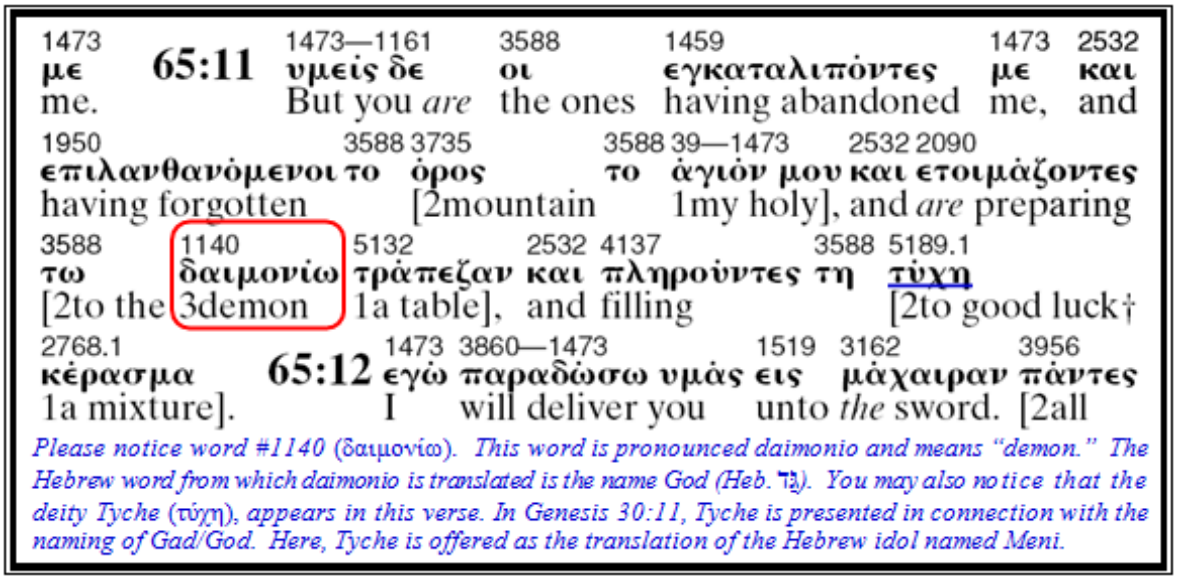
450 7 4390 7979 14 09 6186 69 44 2022
לַמְנִי וְהַמְמַלְאִים שֻׁלְחָן לַגָּד הָעֹרְכִים קְדֻשָׁי אֶת־הַר
for who and ,table a for set who My mountain
Fate fill Fortune order in ,holy

12 וּמָנִיתִי אֶתְכֶם לַחָרֶב וְכֻלְּכֶם לַטֶּבַח תִּכְרָעוּ
3766 2874 13605 2719 4487 4469
bow shall the to all and the to you will I And mixed
down slaughter you of ,sword number .wine

This is an excerpt from page 578 of *The Interlinear Bible*, which displays the Hebrew text of Isaiah 65:11. Please notice the Hebrew word לַגָּד (circled). The prefix of this word (ל) means "for." The Hebrew word to which ל is prefixed is the word גד, which is actually a name … the name of an idol … pronounced *Gawd*. If we can believe the words of verse 12, those who worship this idol will be "numbered to the sword" and they shall "bow down to the slaughter."

# 2. The Hebrew scholars who translated the Septuagint decided to translate גד as "demon."

I'm not saying they should have translated a name, since names are supposed to be *transliterated*, not translated, but what does their translation tell us about *their* perception of whoגד is?



1473 με 65:11 1473—1161 υμεις δε οι 1459 εγκαταλιπόντες 1473 με 2532 και
me. But you *are* the ones having abandoned me, and
1950 επιλανθανόμενοι 3588 το 3735 όρος 3588 το 39—1473 ἁγιόν μου 2532 και 2090 ετοιμάζοντες
having forgotten [2mountain 1my holy], and *are* preparing
3588 τω 1140 δαιμονίω 5132 τράπεζαν 2532 και 4137 πληρούντες 3588 τη 5189.1 τύχη
[2to the 3demon 1a table], and filling [2to good luck†
2768.1 κέρασμα 65:12 1473 εγώ 3860—1473 παραδώσω υμάς 1519 εις 3162 μάχαιραν 3956 πάντες
1a mixture]. I will deliver you unto *the* sword. [2all

*Please notice word #1140 (δαιμονίω). This word is pronounced daimonio and means "demon." The Hebrew word from which daimonio is translated is the name God (Heb. גָּד). You may also notice that the deity Tyche (τύχη), appears in this verse. In Genesis 30:11, Tyche is presented in connection with the naming of Gad/God. Here, Tyche is offered as the translation of the Hebrew idol named Meni.*

As displayed above, the 1st century BCE Hebrew scholars plainly regarded the idol named גד (pronounced *gawd*) as a *demon*. Sir Lancelot C.L. Brenton, in his English translation of the Septuagint, translates Isaiah 65:11 as follows:

> [11]¶ But ye are they that have left Me, and forget My holy mountain, and prepare a table for the devil, and fill up the drink-offering to Fortune.[2]

**Question:** If a word pronounced *gawd* was anciently regarded as identifying the **devil**, what makes us think it honors Yahweh to be used as His name or title in this modern era?

---

[2] From *The Septuagint With Apocrypha: Greek and English*, translated by Sir Lancelot C.L. Brenton, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 1995 (originally published by Samuel Bagster & Sons, Ltd., London, 1851).

# 3. **GOD is the Name of an Idol**

How literally should we apply the command found in Exodus 23:13?

Exodus 23:13:

> [13]¶ And in all *things* that I have said unto you be circumspect: and **make no mention of the name of other mighty ones**, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth.

A literal interpretation of the above verse requires concluding that we are commanded to not mention, *i.e.*, **speak**, the names of heathen idols. Now let's examine Joshua 23:6-7:

> [6]¶ Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside there from *to* the right hand or *to* the left;
> [7]That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; **neither make mention of the name of their mighty ones**, nor cause to swear *by them*, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them.

Once again, a literal understanding of the above passage requires concluding that not only are we commanded not to swear by the names of heathen idols ... not only are we commanded to neither serve their idols nor bow down to them, but we are *also* commanded to **not mention their names**!

Finally, let's examine Psalms 16:4 to see what King David had to say about this topic:

> [4]¶ Their sorrows shall be multiplied *that* hasten *after* another *mighty one*: their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names on my lips.

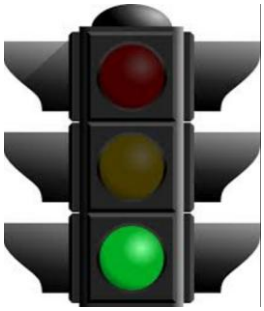
King David seems to follow the same pattern as laid out in the Torah: *Not mentioning the names of heathen idols*. Curiously, there is no evidence that King David ever, ever, ever mentioned the name of a heathen idol.

Evidence bears out that the ancients did, in fact, mention the names of idols, but only in a disparaging way, such as the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal in I Kings chapter 18.

# 4. From Name to Title

**FIRST QUESTION:** ***If a pious believer's birth name is taken from the name of a heathen idol, does Yahweh require such an individual to change his or her name when he or she converts to the faith once delivered to the saints?***

**Answer:** No. No. No. Yahweh doesn't mind using any of us for whatever purposes He has in mind for us, even if our parents name us after a heathen idol. If you don't believe me, just ask Apollos (Acts 18:24-28) or Hermes (Romans 16:14). Or **God** (I Chronicles 21:9-14).



Does the fact that Yahweh can use an individual regardless of his or her birth name give us a green light to take the name of a pious believer and apply that name to Yahweh as a title? And who decides which name to "translate" into a title? A man -- or men?

**Next Question:** In view of Apollos' noble and pious legacy, would it be appropriate to convert his name to a title and use it in reference to Yahweh? Would it honor Yahweh to refer to Him as "our Apollos"?

# 5. Tracing God

At some point in time in the history of the world, someone persuaded a group of people to refer to the creator as "GOD." Who came up with this idea? What prompted him or her to come up with such a title? Can we trace the origin of this word?

From *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*:

> "The etymology of the name 'Gad' is not clear. Although some suggest a derivation from the root *gdd*, 'to cut off,' most scholars follow the pun of Genesis 30: 'Gad' = '(good) fortune.' The name Gad is known as a theophoric element in a number of W Semitic personal names. It is not the real name but an adjective, an appelative, 'the Fortune,' and could be used for a number of gods."[3]

From *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*:

> In Gen. xxx. 11 (belonging to the J narrative) at the birth of Zilpah's first son her mistress is said to have exclaimed 'a troop cometh,' R.V., 'Fortunate!' margin, 'fortune!' or 'Fortune is come' (an attempt to render in the R.V. more closely the Hebrew *begad* or *ba gad*). The Talmudists understood this exclamation to refer to the god Gad in the sense of 'Gad is here, bringing good fortune,' but later commentators are much divided over the sense of the passage.[4]

From the *Encyclopedia International*:

> The word 'God' and its cognates existed in the Germanic family of languages (German *Gott*, Danish *Gud*) in pre-Christian times, and referred to that which is worshipped or invoked in sacrificial offerings. With the conversion of the Teutonic peoples to Christianity, its pre-Christian meanings were largely reshaped and absorbed into the Judeo-Christian tradition.[5]

From *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*:

> *Gad-melek*, 'Gad is king,' is an inscription on a stone found in Jerusalem, possibly due to Canaanitic influence. In Arabic the proper name Abd al-Gadd is found, certainly a deity's name (Wellhausen, *Heidentum*, p. 146). Isaac of Antioch (*Opera*, ed. Bickell, ii. 210, Giessen, 1877) reports that tables were prepared on the roofs by his countrymen for *Gadda* or (pl.) *Gadde*, and he mentions a 'demon' Gadlat as belonging to the city of Beth-hur. Jacob of Sarug speaks of a female goddess of Haran named Gadlat, while by the plural *gadde* he means demons. It is noteworthy that both of these references fall in with what is shown by comparative religion as happening within the Semitic sphere; (1) the development of a

---

[3] From *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Volume 2, David Noel Freedman, Editor-in-Chief, Doubleday, New York, N.Y., 1992, p. 864.

[4] *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Volume IV, Funk and Wagnalls Company, New York, 1908, p. 417.

[5] From the *Encyclopedia International*, Volume 8, 1972, by Grolier, Incorporated, New York, article "God," page 52.

> shadowy consort corresponding in name to the male deity, and (2) in a subsequent stage of development or under another religion the degradation of both deities to the rank of demons. Post-Christian Jews, especially the rabbis, used the name as that of a demon. Temples of Gad were known in Syria, and Buxtorf cites a passage which speaks of an image of Gad. Jacob of Sarug says that 'on the summit of the mountains they now build monasteries instead of *beit-gadde*' (i.e., temples to Jupiter and Venus, who were identified with the deities of good luck). In late times Gad appears to have been so popular that his name acquired the sense of 'genius, godhead.'[6]

From *Encyclopedia of Gods*:

> **Gad**
> God of uncertain status. Western Semitic and Punic (Carthaginian). Probably concerned with chance or fortune and known from Palmyrene inscriptions, and from the *Vetus Testamentum* in place names such as Baal-Gad and Migdal-Gad. Popular across a wide area of Syrio-Palestine and Anatolia in pre-Biblical times. Thought to have been syncretized ultimately with the Greek goddess Tyche.[7]

From *Word Origins and Their Romantic Stories*:

> The central word of all faiths is *God*, and the history of the title *God* is a tangle of guesses. The word *God* itself is related to similar words in Danish, Saxon, Old High German, Scandinavian, and other languages, and may even be related to an ancient Lithuanian word that referred to someone who practiced magic.[8]

Since even the etymologists are uncertain of the validity of their own conclusions, why should we feel more inclined to accept ***their*** "findings" above Yahweh's? Does a "tangle of guesses" have preeminence over the very words of Almighty Yahweh? Yahweh has already *told us* that *God* is the name of a false deity worshipped by those who "forsake Him." Is Yahweh's Word not sufficient?

---

[6] From *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Volume IV, Funk and Wagnalls Company, New York, 1908, p. 418.

[7] From *Encyclopedia of Gods*, by Michael Jordan, item "Gad," Facts on File, Inc., New York, NY, 1993, page 85.

[8] From *Word Origins and Their Romantic Stories*, Wilfred Funk, Litt. D., 1950, Grosset & Dunlap, New York, page 279.

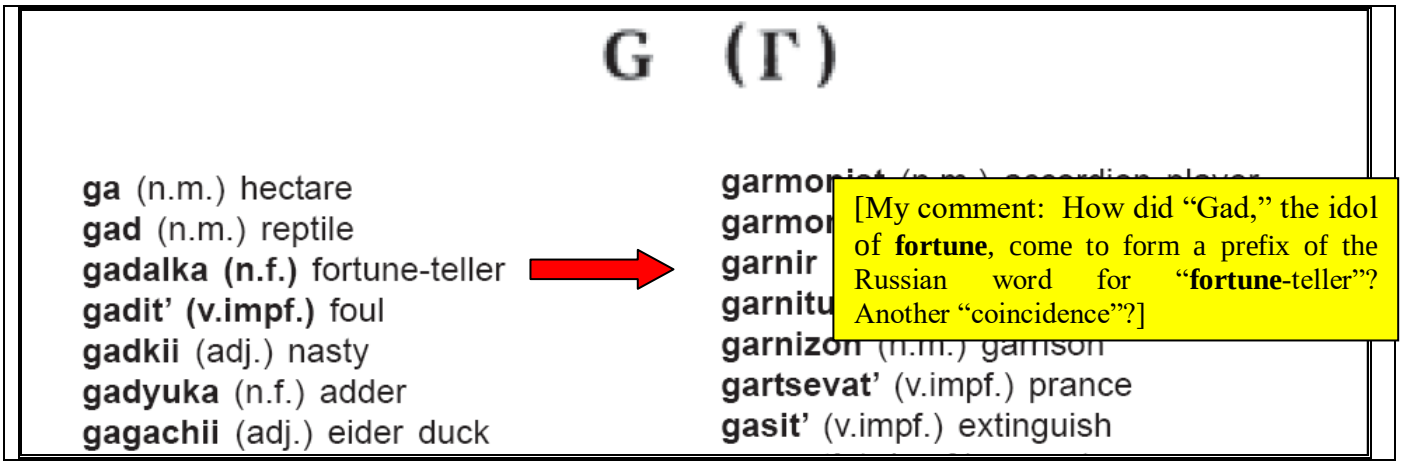
# 6. From Where Did Leah Come Up With God's Name?

A proponent of using "God" as a title for Yahweh once wrote us the following objection: "If the term 'g-d' was equivalent to Ha Satan, i.e., the name given to the arch enemy of Yahweh and of all good, then I have no doubt whatsoever that Yahweh would not let it be used as the name of a tribe of Israel, a prophet of Israel, and, especially as a gate in the Holy City, the New Y'rushalaim." In other words, if the word "God" was originally the name of a heathen idol, and therefore an epithet for Satan, then Yahweh would never have permitted Leah to give that name to one of Jacob's 12 sons. In our full-length study on this topic, we address the various versions of this argument that we have heard over the years. Very briefly summarizing our response, here are a few facts to consider:

**Fact:** Leah and Rachel were raised in a pagan home (Laban worshipped idols, cf., Gen. 31:19, 30).
**Fact:** Leah named Zilpah's son *God* (Genesis 30:11).
**Fact:** An idol named *God* was worshipped in Leah and Rachel's hometown of Haran. *God* was an idol associated with *fortune* or *good luck*.
**Fact:** Leah didn't discontinue her idol-worshipping ways after her marriage to Jacob and it wasn't until well after the move back to Canaan that Jacob put a stop to it (Gen. 35:1-4).
**Fact:** Being given a birth name that matches the name of a heathen idol does not mean that Yahweh will reject such an individual, nor does Yahweh expect him to change his name upon conversion.

# 7. Does the Meaning of "God" in Other Languages Offer Clues?

From the *Transliterated Dictionary of the Russian Language* [9]:



G (Г)

**ga** (n.m.) hectare
**gad** (n.m.) reptile
**gadalka (n.f.)** fortune-teller
**gadit' (v.impf.)** foul
**gadkii** (adj.) nasty
**gadyuka** (n.f.) adder
**gagachii** (adj.) eider duck

**garmon**
**garmon**
**garnir**
**garnitu**
**garnizon** (n.m.) garrison
**gartsevat'** (v.impf.) prance
**gasit'** (v.impf.) extinguish

[My comment: How did "Gad," the idol of **fortune**, come to form a prefix of the Russian word for "**fortune**-teller"? Another "coincidence"?]

The above dictionary listing displays a total of ***five*** words that are either pronounced "*gawd/gahd*" in Russian or have a form of "God" as a prefix. Notice that each of those words has a ***very*** negative connotation:

The word "Gad," pronounced *gawd*, Russian, means "reptile." Occasionally, we run across comments on the internet from Russian/English speakers who either inadvertently of purposely point out this fact. We found an example of this on a web site where someone posted a photo of an animal skeleton. There is an option for readers to post comments, and here is what happened[10]:

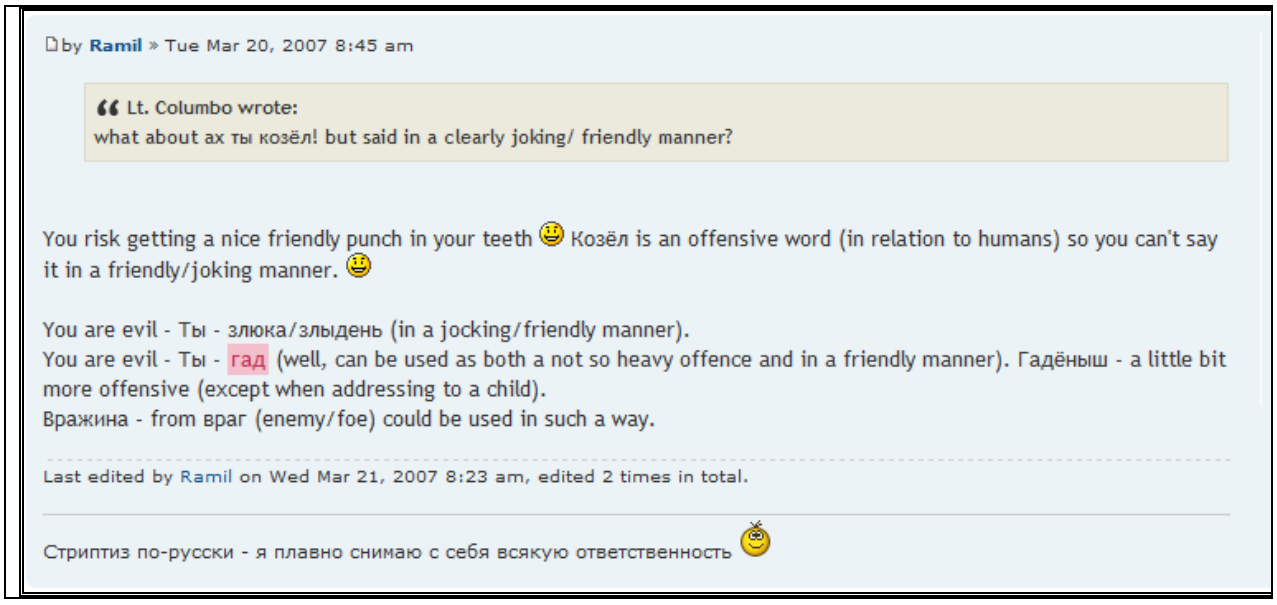
---

[9] From *Transliterated Dictionary of the Russian Language*, online edition, by Eugene Garfield, editor, ISI Press, 1979, p. 23. This reference may be reviewed online by accessing the following URL: http://garfield.library.upenn.edu/rd/rd1.pdf.

[10] This was found at http://www.flickr.com/photos/kielbryant/2786774351/.

The MasterRussian.com web site offers a language study forum for novices to post inquiries about how to say things in Russian. In one forum, an "inquiring mind" asked, "How do you say ... 'You are evil' ... in Russian?" One of the answers provided was: Ты гад (pronounced *vwuë gahd*). Here is a screen shot displaying that option (we highlighted the word "**гад**" for easy identification)[11]:

[11] From MasterRussian.net's Russian Language Study Forums. The name of the forum referenced here is "Learn English - Грамматика, переводы, словарный запас," and the name of the forum topic is "English saying into Russian, if there is an equivalent." This forum topic may be read in its entirety by accessing the following URL:
http://masterrussian.net/mforum/viewtopic.php?f=2&t=12644&hilit=%D0%B3%D0%B0%D0%B4



by **Ramil** » Tue Mar 20, 2007 8:45 am

> Lt. Columbo wrote:
> what about ах ты козёл! but said in a clearly joking/ friendly manner?

You risk getting a nice friendly punch in your teeth Козёл is an offensive word (in relation to humans) so you can't say it in a friendly/joking manner.

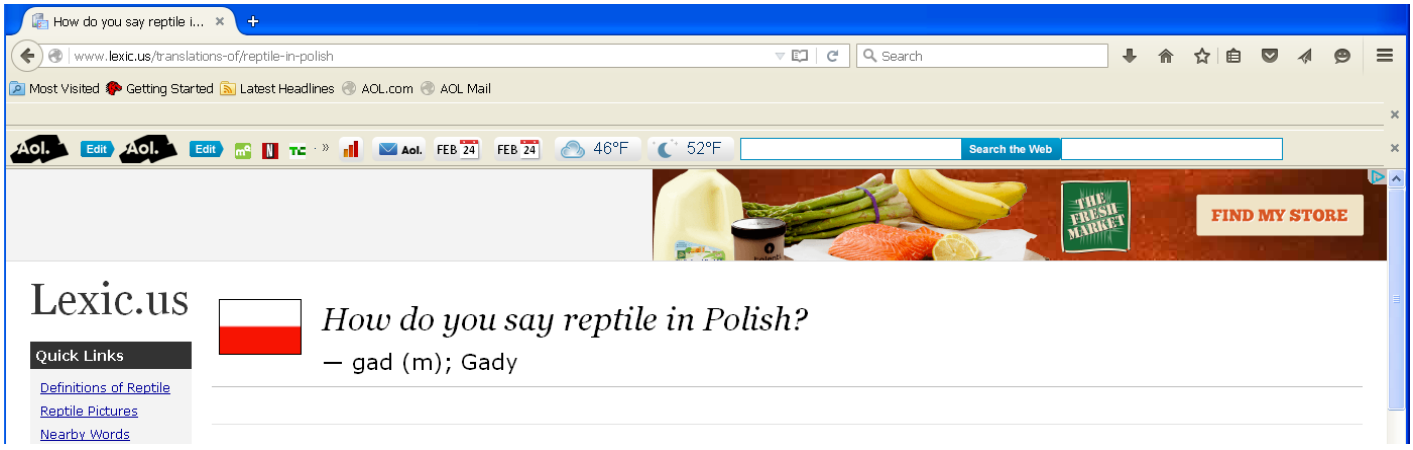
You are evil - Ты - злюка/злыдень (in a jocking/friendly manner).
You are evil - Ты - гад (well, can be used as both a not so heavy offence and in a friendly manner). Гадёныш - a little bit more offensive (except when addressing to a child).
Вражина - from враг (enemy/foe) could be used in such a way.

Last edited by Ramil on Wed Mar 21, 2007 8:23 am, edited 2 times in total.

Стриптиз по-русски - я плавно снимаю с себя всякую ответственность

According to the above Russian expert, if you want to tell someone in Russian – in a not-too-offensive manner – that they are ***evil***, all you need to say is, "Ты гад" – "*You are god*." *If this is not a way to honor a person, how can it honor our Creator to say to Him – prayerfully or otherwise – "You are God"?* The standard response we have occasionally received is, "Our intentions determine whether our use of a word is offensive to Yahweh." According to this reasoning, we are supposed to think something along the line of, "I know that literally saying 'You are God' (Ты гад) in Russian would mean 'You are evil,' but that's not what I am saying in my heart." In other words, regardless of how *Yahweh* defines the word pronounced *gawd/gahd*, our intentions counterbalance His definition.

- **Is Russian the Only Language in Which *God* Means "Reptile"?**

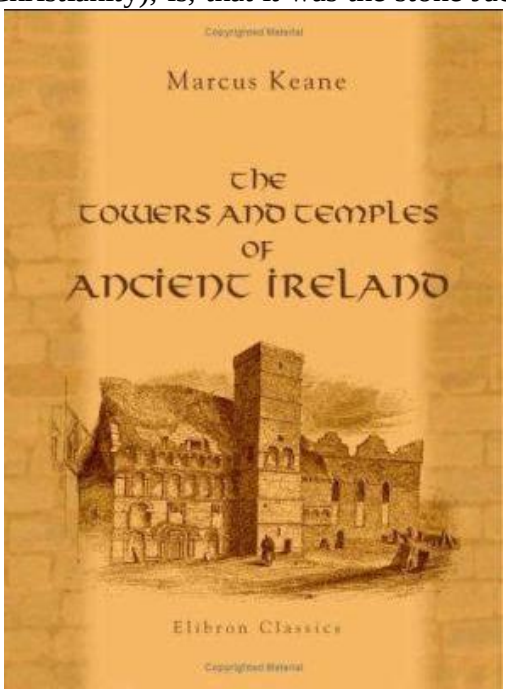


# 8. Serpent Worship in Ireland? What Name was Invoked?

St. Patrick driving the snakes out of Ireland.

From Marcus Keane's 1867 book *The Towers and Temples of Ancient Ireland*:

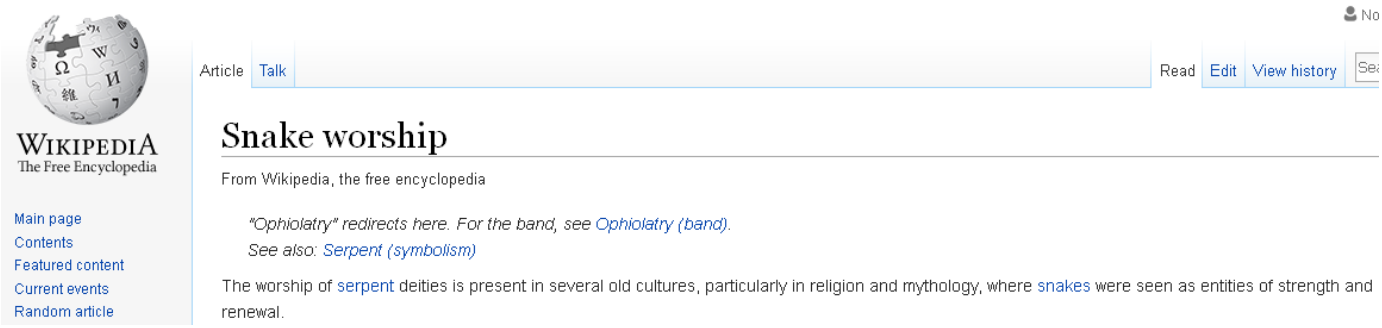
"A fourth account of the 'Laic Feal,' or 'Stone of Destiny' (invented after the introduction of Christianity), is, that it was the stone Jacob used for his pillow at Bethel; that Gad-el-glas, the ancestor of the Celts received it from Moses when in the Wilderness, and that he (Gad-el-glas) having been bitten by a fiery serpent was cured by looking at the Serpent of Brass, for which reason his descendants used the Snake entwined on a pole for centuries as their National Standard. (See *Keating*, vol. I, pp. 208, 213).




"The true solution of these contradictions I believe to be, that Gad-el-glas was not the name of a man, much less of an ancestor of the Celts, but the name of the Serpent, which was worshipped by the Cuthites. Mr. O'Brien interprets the name 'Gad el Glass'—'Green God snake.' It was in fact the Serpent of Paradise, which through primeval traditions found its way into the worship of all the nations of remote antiquity. It is also singular and worthy of notice, that the name 'Cathac,' the Celtic chief who, according to the *Chronicles of Eri*, brought this Stone from Spain to Ireland, should also answer to the name of the Serpent. Cathac is the name of the double-headed Serpent, which, according to yet

extant oral tradition, kept possession of Scattery Island, until overcome by St. Shanaun."[12]

- **You May Wonder: "Did the Ancients Really Worship Snakes???"** According to *Wikipedia*, the answer is a resounding, "Yes!":




# Ancient Near East

See also: Nehushtan

Ancient Mesopotamians and Semites believed that snakes were immortal because they could infinitely shed their skin and appear forever youthful, appearing in a fresh guise every time. [1] The Sumerians worshipped a serpent god or goddess named Ningishzida, an ancestor of Gilgamesh. Before the arrival of the Israelites, snake cults were well established in Canaan in the Bronze Age, for archaeologists have uncovered serpent cult objects in Bronze Age strata at several pre-Israelite cities in Canaan: two at Megiddo,[7] one at Gezer,[8] one in the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Area H temple at Hazor,[9] and two at Shechem.[10]

In the surrounding region, serpent cult objects figured in other cultures. A late Bronze Age Hittite shrine in northern Syria contained a bronze statue of a god holding a serpent in one hand and a staff in the other.[11] In sixth-century Babylon a pair of bronze serpents flanked each of the four doorways of the temple of Esagila.[12] At the Babylonian New Year's festival, the priest was to commission from a woodworker, a metalworker, and a goldsmith two images, one of which "shall hold in its left hand a snake of cedar, raising its right [hand] to the god Nabu".[13] At the tell of Tepe Gawra, at least seventeen Early Bronze Age Assyrian bronze serpents were recovered.[14]

# Ancient Europe

Serpent worship was well known in ancient Europe. The Roman genius loci took the form of a serpent.[*citation needed*]

In Italy, the Marsian goddess Angitia, whose name derives from the word for "serpent," was associated with witches, snakes, and snake-charmers. Angitia is believed to have also been a goddess of healing. Her worship was centered in the Central Apennine region.[15]

A snake was kept and fed with milk during rites dedicated to Potrimpus, a Prussian god. On the Iberian Peninsula there is evidence that before the introduction of Christianity, and perhaps more strongly before

---

[12] From *The Towers and Temples of Ancient Ireland*, by Marcus Keane, Hodges, Smith and Co., Dublin, Ireland, 1867, pp. 38-39.

Roman invasions, serpent worship was a standout feature of local religions To this day there are numerous traces in European popular belief, especially in Germany, of respect for the snake, possibly a survival of ancestor worship: The "house snake" cares for the cows and the children, and its appearance is an omen of death; and the lives of a pair of house snakes are often held to be bound with that of the master and the mistress.[*citation needed*] Tradition states that one of the Gnostic sects known as the Ophites caused a tame serpent to coil around the sacramental bread, and worshipped it as the representative of the Savior.[*citation needed*]

According to *Mythaeum: An Archetypal Encyclopaedia of Myth*, online edition, page 9, (http://www.mythopedia.info/03-pan-semitic.htm), "A serpent was Baal's symbol." NOTE: This link is no longer active.

The fact that *God* is a name identified with serpent worship should, in our opinion, alarm any serious student of the Word. The additional connection of an ancient idol of "***fortune***" to a similar Russian word meaning "***fortune***-teller" (*gadalka*) and the transliteration of the very name *God* into a word meaning "**reptile**" in itself reveals an indelible link that June and I find difficult to deny. However, when combined with the information we have just given you, unveiling yet ***another*** idol named *God* who is literally known as the "Green-god-Snake," the association only seems deniable by those unwilling to see it. Is *God* connected to the worship of the True Mighty One … ***or*** is *God* connected to serpent worship? Based upon all available historical evidence, *God* is most certainly not associated with the worship of our Heavenly Father Yahweh. As for the destiny of any idols identified with serpent worship, we can only remind you of the information offered in Revelation 12:9:

> [9] And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

It is only by man's decision that society has not only accepted *God* as a name for the Creator, but *God* is, in their estimation, also a suitable title for the Creator of the universe. Let's go with Yahweh's definition of *God*. We do not need anything else.

# 9. "If 'Elohim' Can Be Used for Both Yahweh & Idols, then 'God' Can Be Used for Yahweh and Idols!"

**A Common Question:** "If the ancients referred to both Yahweh and idols as 'Elohim,' then doesn't this mean we can call Yahweh any generic title for deity that we come up with, including 'God' or even 'Zeus'? So long as it's a title, that's just how the linguistic cookie crumbles!"

***Is the above reasoning supposed to make sense?***

**I answer:** First and foremost, in the beginning there was only ONE "Elohim" and we all know Who that is. When apostate men began worshipping something else, this same term naturally gravitated to the idols they worshipped. It was, of course, originally an honorable title, but then it began being dragged in the mud by men who applied it to idols of their own choosing. Its luster was tainted, but not by Yahweh – it was corrupted by *man*. In other words, man hijacked Yahweh's title, but now man is essentially saying, "Since we took His original title and applied it to our idols and no lightning bolts struck us, this means we can now apply our idols' names as *titles* to Yahweh with all purity of heart!"

# 10. The Tribes Were Scattered: Did Gad Worship Follow Them?

The map below traces the word "Gad" (pronounced "God") as it made its way from the area surrounding Haran northward into Russia, then westward through Europe. As it made its way to Ireland, it retained its general meaning of "reptile."

The above map is self-explanatory. *God* worship originated in the Middle East and was carried to Israel. As the tribes scattered, they took *God* with them. Did taking *God* worship with them as they spread across Europe have Yahweh's blessing?

In view of the evidence supplied in this brief study, and presupposing that one of the criteria for selecting a title for the Creator of the universe is that it must match the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel, which of the following intrinsic meanings of those names would you choose to best fit His characteristics? The following "ballot" might help with your decision:

# Ballot for Selecting a Title for the Creator

**Yea,** be it known that we here have all agreed that titles such as "Almighty," "Eternal," "Heavenly Father" and "Mighty One," though each having such noble applications, are not in and of themselves quite enough in terms of number of titles and we have unanimously agreed to hereby select one more on this day.

**Yea,** be it known that we have narrowed our options to the following and this day we will select the one that is chosen by the majority of those meeting on this day and in this place. Please choose one from the following options, each of which has its own intrinsic meaning:

- ❑ Judge
- ❑ Happiness
- ❑ Wrestling
- ❑ Good fortune; harrowing fortune
- ❑ Doubly fruitful
- ❑ Behold a son
- ❑ Hear with acceptance
- ❑ Habitation, dwelling
- ❑ Praise
- ❑ Man of Hire
- ❑ Causing to forget
- ❑ Joined
- ❑ Son of the Right Hand