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...what we serve, what we give ourselves to, IS what we worship.
Matthew 4:10, Deuteronomy 11:16

the Prayer series
I Am Prayer

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a citizen of the Commonwealth (Ephesians 2:19)

"Thus they changed their glory Into the image of an ox that eats grass." Psalm 106:20

"Has a nation changed its gods, even though they are no gods? But my people have CHANGED their glory for that which does not profit." Jeremiah 2:11

As illustrated in [previous articles](#) ([click on highlighted words to view content](#)), we have seen how translators have added words of explanation to verses of scripture to make them more readable in English. However, in so doing, many times the meaning of the words used in English alters the original thought the Hebrew authors are trying to convey. Words mean things. We must constantly be reminded that ALL the books of scripture were written by Hebrews out of a Hebrew mindset influenced by a Hebrew culture that produced a uniquely Hebrew perspective being conveyed primarily to a Hebrew audience which understood the nuances of the Hebrew language. In [Hebrew](#) this verse from Psalm 106 above more accurately reads "their glory" - not "the glory of God" as it is portrayed in most English versions. The Hebrew word is [kavod](#) (glory) plus the construct [hem](#) (they). That "they exchanged their glory" is an approach that is strikingly different than the [ESV](#), [NIV](#) and other renditions that read, "the glory of God", "their glorious God", or some such. This alteration to the plain meaning of the Hebrew text actually masks what David intended to say and it does so because what the Hebrew words say flies in the face of the theological teaching of the Christian translators.

David says that when the [children of Israel](#) made the golden bull they altered (exchanged) their glory for the idolatrous image. What is "their glory"? David is acknowledging YaHoVeH's handiwork in fashioning man [in His image](#). The glory of YaHoVeH in the creation is seen in the one thing that bears His image - man. Man is YaHoVeH's glory manifest in flesh and blood. Man is the living representative of YaHoVeH on earth, intended to be a co-participant in the Kingdom, a fellow-heir in YaHoVeH's eternal plan. Man was created [glorified!](#) When man breaks from [YaHoVeH's first Word](#) and chooses to serve an idol, he exchanges the natural glory of his created being for that of a misrepresentation. He makes himself into something YaHoVeH never intended. His glory is lost in his idolatry - and idolatry is more than gold statues. Consider [Sha'ul's](#) (the apostle Paul's) comments in [Colossians 3:5](#) which labels behavior apart from any of YaHoVeH's Words as idolatry. Yeshua upheld what the Father originally said that what we serve, what we give ourselves to behaviorally, IS what we worship ([Matthew 4:10](#), [Deuteronomy 11:16](#)).

Selah (Hebrew for "pause") and think about this. YaHoVeH made you to be the full representation of His [glory](#). YaHoVeH made you the image of Himself. Wonderful! Radiant! Powerful! Capable! A ruler on earth! A messenger of the divine! But men opted to put themselves under the banner and in the service of representations of animals (how many times has evolutionary theorists attempted to convince you that man is a "mammal" - just another animal?). When men abdicate their divine role they fall from glory. Men give up the privilege and position they are given when they step away from glory by deliberate disobedience to YaHoVeH's Words. Why would the modern English translations not want to communicate this amazing insight? Why change the words of the verse so that it is about YaHoVeH rather than man? Could it be that admitting men are glorified undermines the Augustinian/Lutheran theology of [sinful nature](#)? If men are viewed as glorified then sinful nature goes out the window. There have been many institutions and individuals over the centuries who have capitalized on that theology. To let it go would mean serious damage to reputations and income. So, the simple solution to this conflict is to change the text by adding words that make it about "God" - not us. This statement does not suggest that in our disobedient state we are glorious. In fact, David's point is that men have exchanged what YaHoVeH originally intended for something far inferior.

To properly understand scripture we must understand the context in which it is given. That context includes both the passage of the immediate scripture and the context of scripture being quoted (as is often the case in the Messianic Writings, re-named the NT). In the case of **Hebrews 1:6** the context of the preceding verses of 1-5 set the parameters of verse 6 - which is quoting **Deuteronomy 32:43** and **Psalms 97:7**. Because Yeshua was made higher than the angels (as are we - **John 10:34**, quoting **Psalms 82:6**) and has, by inheritance, become the right arm of the Father (as have those who overcome - **Revelation 3:21**, quoting **Daniel 7:18**); He is deserving of more honor than angels **because** "He is the radiance of the glory of YaHoVeH and the exact imprint of his nature..." (verse 3). How did He attain that standing? By keeping the purity of Spirit He was endowed with through obedience to the Father's Words (the same way we maintain the purity of our heart once we have been redeemed to glory through Yeshua's Word - **John 15:3**, **1Peter 1:22-23**). The Greek word translated as the English "worship" is **proskyneo** and means, "used of homage shown to men and beings of superior rank in order to express respect or to make supplication". It was common practice among people of that era to kiss the hand or kneel as an outward display of respect to the rank of the person honored. The worship extended is toward the Nature of YaHoVeH imprinted upon Yeshua and the glory that imprint reveals - **just as** those who behaviorally embrace the Life of Yeshua.

"In return for my love they accuse me, but I give myself to prayer." Psalm 109:4

Reading this verse presents a dilemma. Are we to accept the gloss (the additional words) of the translation because it makes sense to us - or, are we to reject the gloss and end up with a difficult English sentence? A quick review of English Bibles indicates that they all gloss this verse, adding words (and thoughts) that may not be present in the actual text. They do this because of Christian theological conceptions of prayer, as we shall see.

Hebrew grammar often omits the linking pronoun copula when used in the present tense. For example, in Hebrew we would encounter *elohim tov* (God good) but the English translates it as "God is good." This seems fairly straightforward. It means that in the culture paradigm of English, attributes are independent of the object they modify. That is, in the description "red car", "red" is independent of "car" because everybody knows a car can be repainted. But in Hebrew thought, the object is the attribute. If the "red" in "red car" is omitted then, I don't have an uncolored car - I don't have any car at all. This particular car is red. That's what makes it what it is. So, "God is good," does not suggest that goodness exists apart from God and is merely ascribed to Him. In Hebrew, goodness IS YaHoVeH and He cannot be conceived as God without it.

Now let's apply this thought to David's verse above. In **Hebrew** the verse does **not** say, "I give myself to prayer." Nor does it say, "I am in prayer" (as we find in ISR or NASB). In Hebrew it says *wa'ani tefillah*, "but I prayer." By applying the Hebrew grammatical rule, David says, "I am prayer." There are three rungs to the ladder of holding fast to YaHoVeH in worship. The third best is to talk about prayer; the second best is to pray - but the highest rung to reach for is to behaviorally be prayer. The gloss in the English text might make the verse easier to read but it disguises David's powerful statement by reducing it to something that our cultural paradigm comprehends. We think of prayer as an activity that we do or do not engage in. We think of such an activity as independent of who we are instead of inseparably linked to our choices in life. We do not think of our behavior, of who we are, as prayer. The translators of this verse have adopted the view that prayer is one thing and I am another thing and that there can be some nonessential connection between these two things denying the Hebrew perspective these words were written in that what we give ourselves to is what we serve. Christianity has relegated prayer to a tool, a means used to get something from God - even if that something is well-intentioned. But that isn't David's Hebraic view. For David, unless he IS prayer, the evil of **enemies** will prevail.



Just As He Is

What does it mean, then, to **be prayer**? Could it be that David sees the essential connection between YaHoVeH's spoken word, power, creation, covenant, love and transformation in prayer? Could it be that David experiences the personality of YaHoVeH in a conversation that does not know the difference between subject and object? David challenges us to put aside our truncated understanding and become someone with **a higher awareness**.

*"By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because **as He is** so also are we in this world." 1John 4:17*

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???Questions???

Please feel free to email me at harold@hethathasaneer.com. While not claiming to have all the answers, it would be an honor to partake with you of what Spirit is uncovering.

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