

APPENDIX A

DENOMINATIONAL WORSHIP REPORT

A comparative review of official worship language
across one-hundred Christian denominational bodies



Findings

Of 100 reviewed denominations and national church bodies, 17 explicitly connect worship with bodily obeisance in qualifying official teaching. The qualifying gestures include bowing, kneeling, prostration, genuflection, bodily inclination, falling before, and clear equivalents such as metania.

In 83 of 100 bodies, no such explicit connection was found in the official teaching reviewed. NOT FOUND records source silence; it does not mean that a body rejects these gestures or that its congregations never practice them.

The 17 positive findings were concentrated in four broad groupings: Catholic and Orthodox, 7 of 8; Lutheran, 3 of 10; Pentecostal and Charismatic, 3 of 12; and Restorationist, Adventist, and other bodies, 4 of 12. No positive result was found in the sampled Anglican, Reformed and Presbyterian, Methodist and Holiness, Baptist, or Anabaptist, Friends, and Moravian teaching sources.

How the count was made

Official teaching means material the denomination, national church, or named church body issues, adopts, commissions, or presents as its own explanation of belief, theology, or worship. Confessions, catechisms, doctrinal standards, adopted position papers, denominational curricula, and official explanatory teaching pages qualified.

Prayer books, service orders, rites, rubrics, ceremonial directions, worship-planning material, and local or subordinate-church practices did not determine the count. A source qualified as LISTED only when it explicitly connected worship, adoration, reverence, or homage with an obeisance gesture (bowing, prostration, kneeling, etc.). The sample is purposive, not membership-weighted or probabilistic, and should not be read as a census of global Christianity.

Sources were last reviewed August 25, 2026. URLs below are printed as plain text for verification.

The 100 church bodies and sources

Reading key: LISTED = explicit connection found;

NOT FOUND = no explicit connection found in the reviewed qualifying source.

CATHOLIC AND ORTHODOX

Catholic Church - LISTED

Catechism of the Catholic Church, §1378 | https://www.vatican.va/content/catechism/en/part_two/section_two/chapter_one/article_3/v_the_sacramental_sacrifice_thanksgiving_memorial_presence.index.html

Orthodox Church in America - LISTED

Essential Orthodox Christian Beliefs | <https://www.oca.org/cdn/PDFs/2023-0609-EOCB.pdf>

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America - LISTED

Did You Know? Prostrations | <https://www.goarch.org/-/did-you->

know-prostrations-april-10

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America - NOT FOUND

Archdiocesan teaching pages reviewed | <https://www.antiochian.org/>

Coptic Orthodox Church (North American dioceses) - LISTED

Benefits of Prostrating to God | <https://copticorthodox.church/en/2022/03/09/where-are-you-benefits-of-prostrating-to-god-in-the-wednesdays-sermon/>

Armenian Apostolic Church, Eastern Diocese of America - LISTED

Exaltation of the Cross | https://armenianchurch.us/essential_grid/exaltation-of-the-cross/

Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church - LISTED

What is Prayer? | https://mosc.in/the_church/spirituality/what-is-prayer/

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA - LISTED

Ukrainian Orthodox Word: Participating in Worship | <https://www.uocofusa.org/files/publications/UOW/2008/UOW-2008-11.pdf>

ANGLICAN

Church of England - NOT FOUND

Worship texts and resources | <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources>

The Episcopal Church - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/>

Anglican Church in North America - NOT FOUND

Foundational documents | <https://anglicanchurch.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/HolyOrdersTaskForce-printable.pdf>

Anglican Church of Canada - NOT FOUND

Faith, worship, ministry | <https://www.anglican.ca/about/faith/>

Anglican Church of Australia - NOT FOUND

What Anglicans Believe | <https://anglican.org.au/our-work/what-anglicans-believe/>

Church of Ireland - NOT FOUND

Our faith | <https://www.ireland.anglican.org/our-faith>

Church in Wales - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://www.churchinwales.org.uk/en/>

Anglican Church of Southern Africa - NOT FOUND

Our faith | <https://anglicanchurchsa.org/our-faith/>

LUTHERAN

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America - LISTED

Principles for Worship | https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Principles_for_Worship.pdf

Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod - LISTED

The Divine Service guide | <https://files.lcms.org/api/file/preview/the-divine-service-booklet-1>

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod - NOT FOUND

What We Believe | <https://wels.net/about-wels/what-we-believe/>

Evangelical Lutheran Synod - LISTED

Walking Together in Faith and Worship | https://els.org/wp-content/download/worship_committee/Webber-Jay-Walking-Together-in-Faith-and-Worship.pdf

North American Lutheran Church - NOT FOUND

Core Values | <https://thenalc.org/mission-driven-values/>

Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ - NOT FOUND

Statement of Faith | <https://lcmc.net/statement-of-faith/231>

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada - NOT FOUND

Mission and Vision | <https://elcic.ca/mission-and-vision/>

Lutheran Church–Canada - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://lutheranchurch.ca/>

Church of Sweden - NOT FOUND

Worship | <https://www.svenskakyrkan.se/gudstjanst>

Church of Norway - NOT FOUND

Worship | <https://www.kirken.no/nb-NO/church-of-norway/worship/>

REFORMED AND PRESBYTERIAN

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) - NOT FOUND

Book of Confessions | <https://pcusa.org/resource/book-confessions>

Presbyterian Church in America - NOT FOUND

Westminster Standards | <https://www.pcaac.org/bco/westminster-confession/>

Orthodox Presbyterian Church - NOT FOUND

Confessional standards | <https://opc.org/confessions.html>

Evangelical Presbyterian Church - NOT FOUND

What the EPC Believes | <https://epc.org/about-the-epc/beliefs/>

ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians - NOT

FOUND

Essential Tenets | <https://eco-pres.org/constitution/>

Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church - NOT FOUND

Governing Documents | <https://arpchurch.org/governing-documents/>

Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America - NOT FOUND

Beliefs | <https://rpcna.org/beliefs>

Cumberland Presbyterian Church - NOT FOUND

Confession of Faith | <https://www.cumberland.org/gao/confession/>

Christian Reformed Church in North America - NOT FOUND

Our Faith | <https://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs>

Reformed Church in America - NOT FOUND

Our Faith | <https://www.rca.org/about/theology/>

United Reformed Churches in North America - NOT FOUND

What We Believe | <https://www.urcna.org/what-we-believe>

Presbyterian Church in Canada - NOT FOUND

What We Believe | <https://presbyterian.ca/about/what-we-believe/>

Church of Scotland - NOT FOUND

Worship | <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship>

Free Church of Scotland - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://freechurch.org/>

METHODIST AND HOLINESS

United Methodist Church - NOT FOUND

Foundational Documents | <https://www.umc.org/en/content/foundational-documents>

Global Methodist Church - NOT FOUND

What We Believe | <https://www.globalmethodist.org/what-we-believe>

Free Methodist Church USA - NOT FOUND

Articles of Religion | <https://fmcusa.org/resources/articles-of-religion>

The Wesleyan Church - NOT FOUND

Articles of Religion | <https://www.wesleyan.org/communication/articles-of-religion>

Church of the Nazarene - NOT FOUND

What We Believe | <https://nazarene.org/what-we-believe/>

African Methodist Episcopal Church - NOT FOUND

Our Beliefs | <https://www.ame-church.com/our-church/our-beliefs/>

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://amez.org/>

Christian Methodist Episcopal Church - NOT FOUND

What We Believe | <https://thecmechurch.org/what-we-believe/>

The Salvation Army - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://www.salvationarmy.org/>

Evangelical Methodist Church - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://emchurch.org/>

Congregational Methodist Church - NOT FOUND

About Us | <https://cm-church.org/about-us/>

Church of God (Anderson, Indiana) - NOT FOUND

We Believe | <https://www.jesusisthesubject.org/our-beliefs-2/>

Methodist Church in Britain - NOT FOUND

What is distinctive about Methodism | <https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/the-methodist-church/what-is-distinctive-about-methodism/>

Primitive Methodist Church in the USA - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://pmchurch.org/>

BAPTIST

Southern Baptist Convention - NOT FOUND

Baptist Faith and Message 2000 | <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/>

American Baptist Churches USA - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://www.abc-usa.org/>

National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. - NOT FOUND

What We Believe | <https://nbcusa.org/what-we-believe/>

National Baptist Convention of America International, Inc. - NOT FOUND

About Us | <https://nbcainc.com/about-us/>

Progressive National Baptist Convention - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://pnbc.org/>

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship - NOT FOUND

Identity | <https://cbf.net/about>

Converge - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://www.converge.org/>

North American Baptist Conference - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://nabconference.org/>

National Association of Free Will Baptists - NOT FOUND

Treatise | <https://nafwb.org/site/treatise/>

General Association of Regular Baptist Churches - NOT FOUND

Articles of Faith | <https://garbc.org/about-us/articles-of-faith/>

Baptist Bible Fellowship International - NOT FOUND

Articles of Faith | <https://www.bbf.org/articles-of-faith>

Seventh Day Baptist General Conference USA & Canada - NOT FOUND

Statement of Belief | <https://seventhdaybaptist.org/statement-of-belief/>

Baptist Union of Great Britain - NOT FOUND

Declaration of Principle | https://www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/220595/Declaration_of_Principle.aspx

Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec - NOT FOUND

What Do Baptists Believe? | <https://baptist.ca/about-cboq/what-do-baptists-believe/>

PENTECOSTAL AND CHARISMATIC

Assemblies of God USA - LISTED

Worship in the Bible | <https://ag.org/en/Beliefs/Position-Papers/>

Worship-in-the-Bible

Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) - LISTED

Spirit-Filled Worship | <https://churchofgod.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Martin-Spirit-Filled-Worship.pdf>

Church of God of Prophecy - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://cogop.org/>

Church of God in Christ - NOT FOUND

Statement of Faith | <https://www.cogic.org/about-us/statement-of-faith/>

International Pentecostal Holiness Church - LISTED

Discipleship Leader's Guide | <https://iphc.org/discipleship/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/05/Leaders-Guide-Unit-2-1.pdf>

International Church of the Foursquare Gospel - NOT FOUND

Declaration of Faith | <https://www.foursquare.org/about/beliefs/>

United Pentecostal Church International - NOT FOUND

Our Beliefs | <https://upci.org/our-beliefs/>

Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada - NOT FOUND

Statement of Essential Truths | <https://www.paoc.org/ministry-toolbox/leadership/statement-of-essential-truths-%28soet%29>

Open Bible Churches - NOT FOUND

Open Bible Manual | <https://www.openbible.org/resources/open-bible-manual>

Vineyard USA - NOT FOUND

Core Values and Beliefs | <https://vineyardusa.org/about/core-values-beliefs/>

Elim Pentecostal Church - NOT FOUND

Our Beliefs | <https://www.elim.org.uk/beliefs>

The Apostolic Church UK - NOT FOUND

What We Believe | <https://acuk.online/what-we-believe>

ANABAPTIST, FRIENDS, AND MORAVIAN

Mennonite Church USA - NOT FOUND

Confession of Faith: God | <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/who-are-mennonites/what-we-believe/confession-of-faith/god/>

Mennonite Church Canada - NOT FOUND

Confession of Faith | <https://www.mennonitechurch.ca/about/confession-of-faith>

US Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches - NOT FOUND

Confession of Faith | <https://usmb.org/confession-of-faith/>

Brethren in Christ U.S. - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://bicus.org/>

Church of the Brethren - NOT FOUND

What We Believe | <https://www.brethren.org/about/beliefs/>

Moravian Church, Northern Province - NOT FOUND

Official church website | <https://www.moravian.org/>

Friends General Conference - NOT FOUND

Meeting for Worship | <https://www.fgcquaker.org/fgcresources/quaker-practices/meeting-for-worship/>

Evangelical Friends Church International–North America - NOT FOUND

Faith and Practice | <https://evangelicalfriends.org/faith-and-practice/>

RESTORATIONIST, ADVENTIST, AND OTHER

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) - NOT FOUND

Identity Statement and Principles | <https://disciples.org/our-identity/identity-statement-and-principles/>

International Churches of Christ - NOT FOUND

About the ICOC | <https://disciplestoday.org/about-the-icoc/>

Seventh-day Adventist Church - LISTED

Worship | <https://dictionary.adventist.org/worship>

Advent Christian General Conference - NOT FOUND

What We Believe | <https://acgc.us/about-us/what-we-believe/>

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - LISTED

How to Worship | <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/1971/10/how-to-worship?lang=eng>

Community of Christ - NOT FOUND

Our Beliefs | <https://cofchrist.org/our-beliefs/>

Jehovah's Witnesses - LISTED

Render Acceptable Worship to God | <https://www.jw.org/en/library/magazines/w20080915/Imitate-Jesus-Render-Acceptable-Worship-to-God/>

Christadelphians - NOT FOUND

Christadelphian Beliefs | <https://thechristadelphian.com/about-us/christadelphian-beliefs/?v=7885444af42e>

Church of Christ, Scientist - NOT FOUND

Beliefs and Teachings | <https://www.christianscience.com/what-is-christian-science/beliefs-and-teachings>

New Apostolic Church USA - NOT FOUND

Our Order of Worship | <https://nac.today/en/our-order-of-worship-for-reference/>

Grace Communion International - LISTED

Introduction to Theology, vol. 3 | <https://www.gci.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/IntroTheo3.pdf>

United Church of God, an International Association - NOT FOUND

Fundamental Beliefs | <https://www.ucg.org/fundamental-beliefs-of-the-united-church-of-god>

WHAT THE 100 CHURCH BODIES DESCRIBE AS WORSHIP

The review also recorded what each body's official denominational teaching explicitly identifies as worship or includes within worship. Categories overlap because one body may connect worship with several activities or dispositions.

51 of 100 — Gathered service or corporate assembly

32 of 100 — Prayer

31 of 100 — Singing, music, or praise

27 of 100 — Scripture, preaching, or teaching

27 of 100 — Sacraments or ordinances

26 of 100 — Adoration, reverence, devotion, or an inward response to God

18 of 100 — Giving, offerings, or self-offering

17 of 100 — Bowing, kneeling, prostration, or equivalent bodily obeisance

9 of 100 — Whole-life obedience or daily life explicitly described as worship

9 of 100 — Service, mission, mercy, or disciple-making described as worship

What the comparison reveals

The gathered event is the most common modern denominational use of the word worship, appearing in 51 percent of the bodies reviewed. Prayer and singing follow at nearly equal rates, while Scripture and sacrament are each explicitly connected with worship by slightly more than one-quarter.

Only 17 percent explicitly retain bowing, kneeling, prostration, or equivalent obeisance within their denominational understanding of worship. Thus, official teaching is approximately three times as likely to identify worship with the gathered service as it is to connect wor-

APPENDIX B

OBEISANCE TAKES THE STAND

A trial involving literal translators, ancient kings, one bride, and a remarkable number of people on the floor.



The Court Is Now in Session

Please rise. This will be the last instruction of that kind for a while.

We have one question before us. When an English Bible says worship, what did the Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek writer actually put on the page, and what, exactly, was the worshiper doing with his body?

Appendix A documented the breadth of modern English worship. This appendix narrows the lens to three source-language verbs often rendered by that word: Hebrew *shāḥâ*, Aramaic *segid*, and Greek *proskyneō*. In the narrated scenes examined here, the language repeatedly goes down. A head bends. Knees yield. A body falls. Someone performs homage before acknowledged superiority.

The Charge

Where English worship represents *shāḥâ*, *segid*, or *proskyneō* in these scenes, the recurrent center is enacted obeisance: bowing, prostration, or personal homage. Recipient and context determine whether the act is faithful, civil, idolatrous, mocking, or forbidden. The verb names the lowering; the scene supplies the verdict.

1. The carefully worded charge

I am not asking this appendix to define everything Christians have ever meant by worship. That would require several centuries, a committee, and Commissioner Pembroke objecting to the refreshments. The claim is narrower. It is also much stronger.

In these narrated encounters, the bodily lowering is part of the action, not an illustration added afterward.

What the prosecution intends to show

- The principal words examined here name a relational act of lowering before acknowledged superiority.
- Across their respective corpora, these words cross recipient boundaries without asking permission: God, kings, relatives, Jesus, angels, Satan, demons, beasts, and idols.
- Literal, interlinear, and scholarly translations repeatedly recover obeisance, homage, bow down, or prostrate.
- Older translations that use worship for humans do not defeat the case. They preserve an older English meaning broad enough to include bodily deference.
- Service, song, prayer, praise, and sacrifice remain neighboring actions with their own verbs. They may attend the same family reunion. They are not required to wear one name tag.

What no one is being charged with

- Not every English occurrence of worship translates one of these three verbs.
- Not every act requires full face-to-ground prostration. Scripture knows bowed heads, bent knees, lowered bodies, falling at feet, and complete prostration.

- Posture does not manufacture sincerity. A liar can kneel. That is one reason a false bow is so serious.
- One Greek verb does not carry the entire doctrine of Christology in its briefcase. Context, confession, acceptance, authority, resurrection, and the whole witness of Scripture still testify.

2. Meet the witnesses

A hundred English translations are not necessarily a hundred independent witnesses. Many descend from the same English ancestors, share committee traditions, consult one another, or use familiar church vocabulary because readers become nervous when beloved verses suddenly sound as though someone moved the furniture.

The strongest witnesses in this trial explain their method, work directly from the source text, tolerate awkward English when accuracy demands it, and keep the same rendering when the recipient becomes inconvenient. A translator becomes especially useful when his lexical choice works against what we might expect his theology to prefer. Friendly witnesses are welcome. Reluctant witnesses are often better.

THE RECIPIENT-SWITCH TEST Hold the source verb still. Change only the recipient. Watch the English begin changing clothes. God receives worship. A human receives homage. An angel may receive worship when John is forbidden to give it. Jesus may receive either word depending on the translation. The source verb has remained seated. The English has been pacing around the courtroom.

The principal witnesses will be Robert Young, John Nelson Darby, Joseph Bryant Rotherham, Benjamin Wilson, and the scholarly New English Translation of the Septuagint. Then Julia Smith, the American

Standard Version, the Literal Standard Version, Green, the Berean Literal Bible, and the Concordant version will be called to disagree. A thesis that survives only friendly witnesses is not ready.

3. Before English enters the room

Hebrew *shāḥâ*: everyone keeps going down

The source-language audit counted 172 tokens of the Hebrew lemma *shāḥâ* across 166 verses.²⁰ It moves from Abraham before the Hittites, to Jacob before Esau, to subjects before kings, to Israel before Yahweh, and to nations before idols. Earth, ground, face, falling, bending, and kneeling keep appearing nearby as if the verb has a preferred neighborhood.

The human-recipient scenes are not embarrassing exceptions to be escorted out a side door. They are controls. Abraham did not believe the Hittites were gods. Jacob did not mistake Esau for Yahweh. Yet the same verb later describes Israel before the Lord. What remains stable is not the recipient's deity. It is the actor's lowering before acknowledged superiority.

Aramaic *segid*: Babylon funds an orchestra

Daniel 3 distinguishes *segid* (to prostrate oneself or do obeisance) from *pelach* (to serve). Nebuchadnezzar commands the nations to fall and perform *segid* before his image. The music department, apparently enjoying a generous imperial budget that year, tells everyone when to go down. The three Hebrews refuse both rival service and the counterfeit bow.

DANIEL'S TWO PREDICATES The accusation contains two actions. The Hebrews will not serve the king's gods, and they will not do obeisance to his image. NETS keeps both predicates throughout Daniel 3.

Their allegiance is one. The verbs are still two.

Greek *proskyneō*: the bridge was already there

The Septuagint normally carries Hebrew *shāḥâ* into Greek with *proskyneō*. After book labels and Psalm numbers are normalized, 155 of the 166 Hebrew verses containing *shāḥâ* also contain *proskyneō* at the corresponding Greek location, a same-verse co-occurrence of 93.4 percent. This is a strong correspondence signal, though it is not a token-by-token alignment.²⁰ The Septuagint's preference for *proskyneō* as *shāḥâ*'s Greek counterpart predates the New Testament.

The New Testament uses *proskyneō* sixty times in fifty-four verses. Humans, Jesus, God, Satan, demons, the dragon, the beast, its image, and an angel who very firmly declines the honor all appear on the receiving side. Revelation alone contains twenty-four uses, forty percent of the New Testament total. Revelation may not have read the title of this book, but it has certainly got the assignment.

Revelation does not change the action when it changes the throne. It changes the verdict.

4. Robert Young says the quiet part out loud

Robert Young enters first, which seems fair. His translation has Literal right there in the title. More importantly, he understood the problem: English words age. They pick up habits. They join committees. Eventually they begin insisting they have always meant what they mean this Tuesday.

In his appended explanation of Bible terms, Young gives the bluntest judgment in the entire witness set: “worship ... obeisance,

everywhere.”¹ There it is. No fog machine. No forty-five-minute bridge. Obeisance, everywhere.

Young does not carry that judgment into every line with mechanical consistency. Genesis 22:5 still says Abraham and Isaac will “worship.” John 4 retains “worshippers.” Acts 24:11 keeps Paul going to Jerusalem to worship. We will not hide these verses in the church supply closet. They show how sticky inherited religious English can be, even after a translator has diagnosed it.

Then Young lets the body show

MATTHEW 4:9-10 Satan offers Jesus the kingdoms if he will fall down and bow to him. Jesus answers that one must bow to God and serve God alone. Two actions. Two verbs. No need to ask Service to wear Bowing’s name tag.

MATTHEW 18:26 A debtor falls down and is bowing to his human master. The master does not become divine. No emergency deity paperwork is filed.

ACTS 10:25 Cornelius falls at Peter’s feet and bows before him. Peter refuses because he too is human. The action is clear; its destination is wrong.

REVELATION 19:10 John attempts to bow before an angel and is redirected: bow before God. Same action. Different recipient. Entirely different verdict.

Young gives us two kinds of testimony. His note names the underlying sense: obeisance. His translation then makes that sense visible precisely where a deity-only definition of the verb would fall down without even doing it respectfully.

5. Darby files a complaint against modern English

John Nelson Darby was not choosing homage because it looked distinguished in a waistcoat. He explained why he used it. Modern English, he argued, had restricted worship to what is rendered to God, while the English of the Authorized Version had not. To keep using the narrowed word, he said, “falsifies the sense in three-quarters of the passages.”²

His evidence was gloriously inconvenient. The old marriage vow said, “with my body I thee worship,” yet the bride was not canonized at the reception. First Chronicles 29:20 could say Israel worshiped “the LORD, and the king” without appointing David co-deity.

Darby explicitly affirmed worship of Christ. His point was not to make less of Jesus. His point was that *proskyneō* does not arrive wearing a theological sandwich board announcing what every character already understands about its recipient. The action is homage. The story tells us whom it reaches and what that means.

One word crosses the uncomfortable verses

- The Magi fall and do homage to the child (Matthew 2:11).
- Satan requests homage, and Jesus commands homage to God while reserving service for God alone (Matthew 4:9-10).
- A debtor does homage to a human lord (Matthew 18:26).
- Cornelius falls at Peter’s feet and does homage (Acts 10:25).
- The elders fall and do homage before the enthroned One (Revelation 4:10).
- John bows to an angel and is told to bow to God (Revelation 19:10).

This is the point: Darby does not sanitize the word when the recipient changes. God does not need a private verb to remain God. A king

does not become God because someone gives him homage. Matthew 18 does not turn a supervisor into a deity. The action remains stable; Scripture judges its recipient.

Darby still keeps worship in John 4, Acts 24:11, and Hebrews 1:6. Again, the witness is not perfect for our case. That is precisely why it makes excellent evidence. He distinguishes conventional religious English from clearer homage in narratives.

6. Rotherham brings a highlighter to Revelation

Joseph Bryant Rotherham designed his translation to set forth “the exact meaning” and “the proper terminology” of the originals.³ He also developed an emphasis system energetic enough to require its own weather report. We need only his vocabulary.

Rotherham sometimes retains worship, including Matthew 4:9-10. He was not planted here by the Bowing Lobby. But in Revelation, where the same Greek action travels between radically different thrones, he repeatedly chooses homage. Elders do homage to the enthroned One. Nations do homage before God. Earth-dwellers do homage to the beast. Humanity does homage to demons and idols. John bows to an angel and is ordered to bow to God.

REVELATION’S CONTROLLED VOCABULARY Rotherham uses homage for the true throne, the counterfeit throne, the beast’s image, demons, idols, and the angel who wants no part of this misunderstanding. The word tells us what the body does. The recipient tells us whether heaven approves.

His Old Testament is equally unhelpful to a deity-only definition. Mephibosheth falls on his face and does homage to David. The woman of Tekoa falls to the ground and does homage to the king.

Bathsheba bows and does homage to David. Then Psalm 95:6 gives the divine command as bodily sequence: bow down, bend low, kneel before Yahweh.

Rotherham does not replace every worship with homage. He does something more useful: he carries the same relational action across God, humans, idols, beasts, and angels while letting context judge.

7. Two columns walk into a verse

Benjamin Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott prints the Greek, an interlinear word-for-word rendering, and a smoother English version together. Its title promises an "interlineary word for word English translation."⁴ In other words, Wilson allows us to watch the body disappear between columns.

In Matthew 4:9 the interlinear says Satan asks Jesus to fall down and "do homage" to him. In Matthew 2 the Magi come to do homage and, falling down, do homage to the child. Wilson uses prostrated for the leper, ruler, Canaanite woman, demoniac, women at Jesus' feet, and disciples at the ascension. In Matthew 18:26 the human slave prostrates to his master. Still no surprise deities.

The smoother column sometimes keeps worship, especially in John 4 and familiar divine settings. This is not an embarrassment. It is the demonstration. The word-for-word line exposes posture and homage. For a modern reader, the polished religious English can make the body less visible through a small editorial trapdoor.

A TRANSLATION EVENT IN MINIATURE Greek *proskyneō* → interlinear do homage / prostrate → polished English worship. Nothing vanished from the source. Something became less visible in English.

8. Oxford enters the room and accidentally helps

The New English Translation of the Septuagint is the strongest modern independent witness here. NETS was produced for scholarly comparison of the Greek Jewish Scriptures, using the NRSV as its base English text. It was not commissioned by a secret posture society. Nevertheless, it repeatedly renders *proskyneō* as *do obeisance* in sacred, civil, and idolatrous scenes.⁵

The Abraham control

Genesis 22:5 says Abraham and Isaac will go and “do obeisance.” One chapter later Abraham “did obeisance” to the Hittites. Same Greek verb. Different recipients. Abraham did not change religions between chapters. He changed the person before whom he bowed.

The Lord-and-king control

First Chronicles 29:20 is nearly impossible to evade, though English has made a brave effort. The assembly bows and does obeisance “to the Lord and the king.” One grammatical act reaches two recipients without confusing them. Yahweh remains Yahweh. The king remains the king. Everyone remains calm.

The song-and-obeisance control

Psalms 94(95):6 says, “let us do obeisance and prostrate ourselves.” The next psalm commands singing, blessing, proclamation, offering, and obeisance as distinguishable responses. Scripture can invite the whole family without making everyone wear one name tag.

The Daniel control

In Daniel 3 both the Old Greek and Theodotion columns repeatedly distinguish serving the gods from doing obeisance to the image. Music cues the command; it is not the offense. The decisive demand is that bodies fall. The Hebrews will neither transfer service nor counterfeit the bow.

NETS does not make obeisance smaller than worship. It makes worship concrete enough to prosecute.

9. Corroborating witnesses arrive in sensible shoes

David Bentley Hart

Hart's single-scholar New Testament tries to render the Greek without smuggling later doctrinal conclusions into every lexical suitcase. In Matthew 2 he repeatedly writes make obeisance for the Magi's approach to the newborn king, including their falling down before him.⁶ This does not make less of Jesus. It lets Matthew make more of him.

Everett Fox

Everett Fox favors the concrete rhetoric of Hebrew. In Genesis 22:5 Abraham says that he and the lad will "bow down."⁷ The chapter already contains sacrifice, obedience, fear, trust, travel, altar-building, and one profoundly tense family outing. *shāḥâ* does not need to mean all of it. It names the lowering within it.

The NET Bible's own footnote

The NET Bible keeps worship in Genesis 22:5, but its note admits that the Hebrew literally means “to bow oneself close to the ground.”⁸ The main line puts on its Sunday clothes. The footnote tells us where the body went.

James D. G. Dunn

Dunn begins on the same lexical ground: *shāḥâ* basically means bowing down, prostrating oneself, and making obeisance; *proskyneō* regularly carries it into Greek and can describe homage to human superiors as well as God.⁹ His larger Christological conclusions are his. This lexical summary is ordinary scholarship, which is occasionally more dangerous to a modern assumption than an exotic theory.

A contemporary literal project

The Updated American Standard Version likewise argues that obeisance preserves the visible action of *proskyneō* without deciding the recipient's identity in advance.¹⁰ Since this is a project explaining its own method, we count it as corroboration, not chief justice. Still, the translation problem is plainly alive and filling out forms.

10. The resistant witnesses help anyway

Now for the witnesses who keep worship. Good. A case that survives only by dismissing everyone at the door is not a case; it is a very selective potluck. Several literal translations retain worship extensively. They do not overturn the evidence. They show us older English at work.

Julia Evelina Smith

Smith aimed to use “the same English word for the Hebrew or Greek, everywhere.”¹¹ So Abraham and Isaac go to worship. The servant worships his human creditor. Cornelius falls at Peter’s feet and worships. John falls before the angel and is told to worship God.

Her consistency cannot prove that the verb means deity-only adoration, because she applies it to people who are plainly not God. It proves that nineteenth-century worship still had enough room for bodily deference to a human master or apostle. The word was larger then. We are the ones who renovated it into a studio apartment.

The American Standard Version

The ASV likewise has a debtor worship his master, Cornelius worship Peter, and the assembly worship “Jehovah, and the king.”¹² It is not quietly promoting the king. It is preserving an English word before that word completed its retreat into deity-only use.

The Literal Standard Version

The LSV keeps worship in Genesis 22, Matthew 4, Acts 10, John 4, and Revelation 19. Yet it often renders *shāḥâ* as “bow and pay respect,” even before Yahweh, and gives 1 Chronicles 29:20 as respect paid “to YHWH and to the king.” Matthew’s debtor “prostrate[s]” to his lord.¹³ Same family. Several English jackets.

Berean Literal, Green, and Concordant

Berean Literal has homage to Yahweh and the king. Green makes the human slave “bow the knee” while keeping worship elsewhere.

Concordant Literal even uses worship for the human master in Matthew 18:26.¹⁴ Formal translators may preserve older worship, expose the posture, or divide the work among several terms. None discovers a choir hiding inside *proskyneō*.

VERDICT ON THE RESISTANT WITNESSES Their disagreement is about English labels, not the source action. They offer obeisance, homage, bow, prostrate, pay respect, and older broad worship. Not one turns the verb into music, praise, prayer, service, sacrifice, or a general bucket marked RELIGIOUS THINGS.

11. The witness we are leaving in the hallway

The New World Translation often uses obeisance in *proskyneō* scenes directed to Jesus while using worship in many God-directed or explicitly religious contexts. That policy makes the bodily range visible, but it is entangled with a distinctive Christological judgment. It cannot be our neutral foundation.¹⁵

So we do not need it. This is not contempt; it is evidentiary house-keeping. Young, Darby, Rotherham, Wilson, NETS, Hart, Fox, historical English, and the resistant literal witnesses are more than sufficient. The case can walk without the witness everyone expected us to lean on.

12. English requests immunity

The King James Bible

The Authorized Version did not blush to say a servant “worshipped” his human lord, Cornelius “worshipped” Peter, and the assembly “worshipped the LORD, and the king.” It even has hostile synagogue members “worship before” the feet of the faithful in Rev-

elation 3:9.21 If modern deity-only English is forced into those verses, the result is not orthodoxy. It is a theological fender bender.

The 1662 marriage rite

The Church of England's authorized marriage form preserves the groom's promise, "with my body I thee worship."¹⁶ The bride was not declared God, and the reception continued as scheduled. Worship meant embodied honor toward one worthy of covenantal regard. Darby remembered what modern English forgot.

Webster's 1828 dictionary

Webster records divine honor as the chief religious sense and also "honor; respect; civil deference."¹⁷ The dictionary catches the word mid-move, with boxes still in both houses.

The Latin before the English

The Vulgate gives us the same historical warning. Abraham adoravit the people of the land; the assembly adoraverunt God and then the king.¹⁸ Modern English has narrowed adore in a similar direction. Apparently our religious vocabulary enjoys closing doors and then claiming the hallway never existed.

Sometimes the old translation is not wrong. Our dictionary arrived late and sat in someone else's pew.

13. Four exhibits the jury may touch

Exhibit A: Abraham changes recipients, not verbs

Genesis 22:5 names what Abraham and Isaac intend to do at the altar. NETS says “do obeisance.” Fox says “bow down.” The NET note admits the groundward meaning. Familiar Bibles say “worship.” No visible theophany knocks Abraham over; he names the journey’s purpose with *shāḥâ*.

Then Genesis 23:7 removes God as grammatical recipient. Abraham performs the same Hebrew verb toward the Hittites during a land negotiation. He has not wandered into Hittite worship music. The verb names enacted deference, and it survives both chapters intact.

Exhibit B: Lord and king share a sentence, not a throne

First Chronicles 29:20 is one of the clearest recipient-switch verses in the Hebrew Bible. The assembly blesses Yahweh, lowers itself, and directs the act toward Yahweh and the king. Young gives obeisance to both. Darby gives homage to both. NETS gives obeisance to both. LSV and Berean Literal give respect or homage. ASV and KJV retain worship for both.

Nobody needs to call an emergency council. The king has not become Yahweh’s equal. One bodily act can reach God and a human ruler because the verb names relative submission; it does not issue identity papers to the recipient.

Exhibit C: one Greek verb, four recipients

- Satan, Matthew 4: fall down and perform *proskyneō* to me.
- A human master, Matthew 18: the debtor falls and performs *proskyneō* to him.
- Peter, Acts 10: Cornelius falls at his feet and performs

proskyneō; Peter refuses.

- The angel and God, Revelation 19: John attempts the act toward the angel and is commanded to direct it to God.

Young, Darby, Rotherham, Wilson, LSV, Green, Smith, ASV, and Concordant distribute their English differently. The source verb stays put and watches the translators rearrange the furniture. That is the heart of the case.

Exhibit D: Psalm 95-96 refuses the umbrella

Psalm 95 calls the people to sing and shout, then separately tells them to bow, bend low, and kneel. Psalm 96 names singing, blessing, proclaiming, offering, and obeisance. One faithful response; several actual actions. Scripture can call the orchestra an orchestra and the bow a bow. We may safely attempt the same.

14. Everyone keeps ending up at Jesus' feet

The Gospel uses of proskyneō are charged because Jesus is not an ordinary recipient. But the lexical question and the narrative question are not identical twins. The verb tells us that people lower themselves in homage, petition, fear, mockery, or confession. The story reveals who Jesus is and how much each person understands.

Magi approach a newborn king. A leper seeks cleansing. A ruler pleads for a daughter. A Canaanite mother begs for mercy. A demoniac cries before the Son of the Most High. Disciples face the One who commands the sea. Women seize the risen Jesus' feet. Soldiers bend the knee in mock royal homage. The bodies agree that superiority is in view. The minds do not all possess the same theological library card.

CHRISTOLOGICAL CAUTION Calling the action obeisance does not diminish Jesus. It lets the Gospel reveal why this recipient is unlike every human superior: he receives the lowering, answers petitions, commands creation, accepts post-resurrection homage, and occupies the place the story steadily unveils.

Calling the action worship also does not prove that every participant silently recited Nicaea before kneeling. The Greek verb is not the Nicene Creed with an accent mark. The case for Jesus' identity is cumulative: titles, authority, divine prerogatives, resurrection, confession, exaltation, and the devotion of the early church. Proskyneō belongs in that case. It should not be made to carry the whole case.

15. Counsel for the defense has questions

"If a verse says 'fall down and worship,' worship must be something after the fall."

Not necessarily. Serial verbs can describe and interpret one embodied event: fall down and do homage; kneel and petition; bow and acknowledge. The first verb gets the person to the floor. Proskyneō identifies the movement as relational obeisance or homage rather than accidental collapse; the scene supplies the person's motive and the act's fuller significance. Rotherham's "fell down ... to do him homage" and Darby's similar phrasing do not seem alarmed by this arrangement.

This does give us one useful boundary. Proskyneō is not the bare mechanics of falling. Tripping over a sandal is not obeisance. The act is intentional and relational. But removing accidental collapse does not remove the body.

"John 4 says worship is in spirit, not posture."

Jesus contrasts rival sacred locations and describes true worship as “in spirit and truth.” That saying shifts the discussion beyond sacred geography, but it does not by itself redefine *proskyneō* as either bodily or bodiless. John 4 therefore should not be used alone either to require posture or to dismiss it.

A truthful bow can be bodily and spiritual at once. Daniel 3 portrays a bodily bow that would be spiritually treacherous. Across the scenes traced here, the contrast is not simply body versus spirit but truthful embodied allegiance versus embodied lying.

“People bowed to humans, so the act cannot be worship.”

That objection smuggles the modern definition into the evidence and then congratulates it for arriving. Human-recipient scenes establish the verb’s social meaning: I acknowledge your authority, rank, claim, or power over me. Directed to God, that is fitting divine obeisance. Directed to an idol, beast, or rival lord, it is idolatrous submission. Offered within an appropriate human hierarchy, it can be civil homage. Same grammar. Very different report from heaven.

“Obeisance sounds too weak for God.”

Only because modern English hears obeisance and imagines a decorative nod near a velvet rope. Biblically, the act can cost a life. Three Hebrews will burn rather than fake it. Satan thinks one act from Jesus is worth the kingdoms. Peter and angels refuse it. Heaven’s elders repeat it. The word is not weak. It is concrete enough to become dangerous.

“Bowing can be hypocritical.”

Of course. Singing, praying, giving, preaching, confessing, and serving can all lie. This is an uncomfortable amount of job security for discernment. Hypocrisy does not erase an act’s meaning; it exploits

it. A counterfeit signature works because signatures signify. A false bow is dangerous because the body says what the heart denies.

“Does this mean everyone must be face down every time?”

No. This is biblical recovery, not floor marshaling. Bodies differ by age, ability, history, and circumstance. The shared grammar is chosen lowering, not uniform posture.

Scripture commands Godward bowing, guards the act from false recipients, and depicts heaven giving it rightly.

16. The verdict, with legal fine print

Strongly established in the evidence reviewed

- *shāḥâ*, *segid*, and *proskyneō* inhabit the semantic field of bowing, prostration, obeisance, and homage.

- The verbs can take divine, human, angelic, demonic, and idolatrous recipients.

- Recipient and context, not the verb alone, determine the act’s moral classification and narrative significance; the verb by itself does not identify the recipient’s nature.

- In ordinary religious English, worship formerly included civil honor and bodily deference and later narrowed largely toward deity-directed use, although formal remnants survive.

Strongly supported and looking rather comfortable

- Where modern English worship represents these verbs, obeisance or homage often preserves the lexical center more clearly.

- When a human recipient turns worship into bow or homage, English adds a distinction the source verb lacks.

- The three source verbs examined here remain distinguishable

from service, song, praise, prayer, and sacrifice even when those acts occur in the same scene.

True, with the furniture left in place

- Not every occurrence fixes the gesture's depth. Obeisance is embodied, but may range from bending or kneeling to full prostration.

- Not every English worship should be replaced. Versions also use it for other source terms, abstract religious activity, and conventional discourse.

- Proskyneō contributes evidence in scenes involving Jesus but cannot, outside context, carry the whole doctrine of his identity.

Not established, and not needed for this book

- That bowing is the only legitimate response to God.
- That every biblical saint bowed in every encounter.
- That bodily posture creates sincerity or spiritual merit.
- That every modern activity called worship is improperly named in all senses of contemporary English.

17. The court may now rise

Young names obeisance. Darby explains why narrowed modern worship can mislead. Rotherham carries homage across true and counterfeit thrones. Wilson lets the bodily action show in the interlinear. NETS independently carries obeisance across sacred, civil, and idolatrous scenes. The resistant witnesses help too: some retain older broad worship for human recipients; others divide the field among homage, respect, bowing, and prostration.

The translations disagree about the best English label. They still confront the same facts: related acts cross recipient boundaries; faces, feet, knees, ground, falling, and bending recur; and neighboring actions retain separate verbs. The convergence is strongest at the

level of embodied deference, while context supplies the moral and theological verdict.

When English worship renders *shāḥâ*, *segid*, or *proskyneō* in these scenes, the source text depicts chosen bodily deference. In faithful God-directed scenes, that lowering can embody allegiance: the heart tells the truth, and the body agrees. A posture alone does not certify the heart.

Heaven does not outgrow posture.

The court may rise.

Source Key

Source numbers correspond to the manuscript's calls rather than order of appearance.

1. Robert Young, *Young's Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* (1862; rev. 1887, 1898), 'Explanation of 100 Bible Terms,' s.v. 'worship.' Public-domain scan: <https://bibleresearcher.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Youngs-Literal-Translation-1862.pdf>. Publisher's note and preface: <https://www.ccel.org/bible/ylt/ylt.htm>.

2. John Nelson Darby, preface to the New Translation, discussion of 'do homage' and 'worship.' Text available at https://www.bibelkommentare.de/bibel/darby_en_new/vorwort. Darby's public-domain Bible text: <https://ebible.org/pdf/engDBY/>.

3. Joseph Bryant Rotherham, *The Emphasised Bible* (1902); title-page statement of purpose. Bibliographic record and scan: https://openlibrary.org/works/OL16746995W/The_emphasised_Bible. New Testament title page: <https://books.google.com/books?id=sUgBAAAAYAAJ>.

4. Benjamin Wilson, *The Emphatic Diaglott* (1864/1865), title page and interlinear text. Public-domain scan: <https://archive.org/details/emphaticdiaglott00wils>.

5. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright, eds., *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (Oxford University Press, 2007). Official project pages and PDFs: <https://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/>; Genesis, <https://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/01-gen-nets.pdf>; 1 Supplements, <https://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/13-1-suppl-nets.pdf>; Psalms, <https://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/24-ps-nets.pdf>; Daniel, <https://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/40-daniel-nets.pdf>.

6. David Bentley Hart, *The New Testament: A Translation*, 2nd ed. (Yale University Press, 2023), Matthew 2, esp. vv. 2, 8, 11. Publisher's description and translation philosophy: <https://yalebooks.yale.edu/book/9780300271461/the-new-testament/> and <https://yalebooks.yale.edu/2017/11/03/the-spirit-of-the-text/>.

7. Everett Fox, *The Five Books of Moses* (Schocken, 1995), Genesis 22:5. Fox's rendering is also indexed at Sefaria: <https://www.sefaria.org/Genesis.22.5>.

8. NET Bible, Genesis 22:5, translator's note. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%2022%3A5&version=NET>.

9. James D. G. Dunn, *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus? The New Testament Evidence* (Westminster John Knox, 2010), chap. 1, esp. the discussion of *shāḥâ* and *proskyneō*. See the publication record and review at <https://academic.oup.com/jts/article-abstract/61/2/736/1699960>.

10. Updated American Standard Version project, 'Obeisance Versus Worship and the Refusal to Pre-Interpret,' <https://uasvbible.org/2025/12/18/uasv-vs-esv-2025-why-the-updated-american-standard-version-remains-the-most-literal-english-bible/>. Used only as contemporary corroboration of the translation issue.

11. Julia Evelina Smith, *The Holy Bible: Containing the Old and New Testaments; Translated Literally from the Original Tongues* (American Publishing Company, 1876), Preface. Museum transcription: <https://hc.edu/museums/dunham-bible-museum/reprints-from-the-collection/prefaces-to-major-bible-editions/julia-smith-bible-1876/>. Public-domain facsimile: <https://archive.org/details/holybiblecon00smit>.

12. American Standard Version (1901), Genesis 22:5; Genesis 23:7; 1 Chronicles 29:20; Matthew 18:26; Acts 10:25; Revelation 19:10. Public-domain text and preface: <https://ebible.org/eng-asv/>.

13. Literal Standard Version (Covenant Press, 2020; source files current to August 8, 2026), especially Genesis 24:48; 1 Chronicles 29:20; Psalm 95:6; Matthew 18:26; Acts 10:25; Revelation 19:10. Licensed PDF: https://ebible.org/pdf/englsv/englsv_a4.pdf.

14. Berean Literal Bible, draft edition, <https://literalbible.com/blb.pdf>; Jay P. Green, Literal Translation of the Holy Bible (LITV), text at <https://studybible.info/version/LITV>; Concordant Literal New Testament, translation principles and official text at <https://www.concordant.org/version/>.

15. New World Translation, study edition, note and glossary treatment of *proskyneō*. Official source: <https://www.jw.org/open?Book=58&Chapter=1&docid=1001070103>. This appendix expressly does not count the version as an independent control because its recipient policy is theologically contested.

16. The Book of Common Prayer (1662), ‘The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony.’ Official Church of England text: <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/book-common-prayer/form-solemnization-matrimony>.

17. Noah Webster, An American Dictionary of the English Language (1828), s.v. ‘worship.’ <https://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/worship>.

18. Biblia Sacra Vulgata, Genesis 23:7 and 1 Chronicles 29:20. Public-domain Latin text: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%2023%3A7%3B1%20Chronicles%2029%3A20&versio>

n=VULGATE.

19. Lexical controls consulted: Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, s.v. שחח; Walter Bauer, Frederick W. Danker et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed., s.v. προσκυνέω; Liddell-Scott-Jones *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. προσκυνέω, online at <https://atlas.perseus.tufts.edu/dictionaries/entry/urn%3Acite2%3Ascaife-viewer%3Adictionaries.v1%3AIsj-n89676/>.

20. Corpus figures are from the author's internal Bow Down source-language audit: Westminster Leningrad Codex for Hebrew, Rahlfs-Hanhart Septuagint for the Greek bridge, and SBL Greek New Testament for New Testament counts. The 93.4 percent figure is same-verse co-occurrence, not token-level alignment.

21. For the historical English issue, compare the Authorized Version's 1 Chronicles 29:20; Matthew 18:26; Acts 10:25; and Revelation 3:9. These public-domain readings can be checked at <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/>.

22. Translation quotations in the body are deliberately brief. Public-domain witnesses were checked against scans or primary text files; modern copyrighted translations are paraphrased except for short phrases necessary to identify the lexical choice.

Selected bibliography

Bauer, Walter, Frederick W. Danker, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and*

English Lexicon of the Old Testament. Clarendon Press, 1907.

Darby, John Nelson. The Holy Scriptures: A New Translation from the Original Languages. G.

Pietersma, Albert, and Benjamin G. Wright, eds. A New English Translation of the Septuagint.

Rotherham, Joseph Bryant. The Emphasised Bible. H. R. Allenson, 1902.

Wilson, Benjamin. The Emphatic Diaglott. Fowler and Wells, 1864/1865.

Young, Robert. Young's Literal Translation of the Holy Bible. 1862; rev. eds. 1887 and 1898.

Morrish, 1890.

. Oxford University Press, 2007.

APPENDIX C

WHO ACTUALLY BOWED & WORSHIPED?

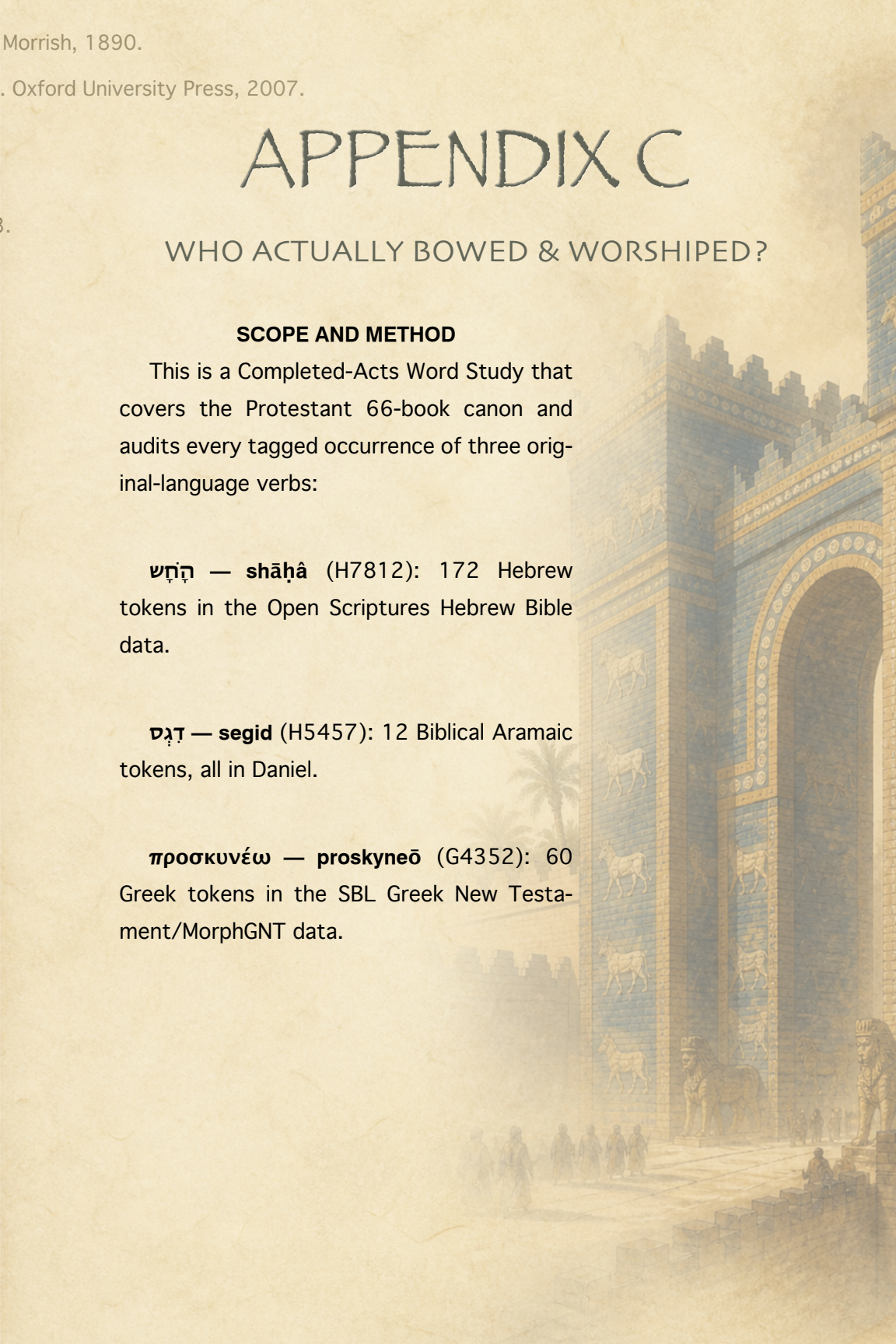
SCOPE AND METHOD

This is a Completed-Acts Word Study that covers the Protestant 66-book canon and audits every tagged occurrence of three original-language verbs:

שָׁחָה — **shāhâ** (H7812): 172 Hebrew tokens in the Open Scriptures Hebrew Bible data.

ܣܓܝܕ — **segid** (H5457): 12 Biblical Aramaic tokens, all in Daniel.

προσκυνέω — **proskyneō** (G4352): 60 Greek tokens in the SBL Greek New Testament/MorphGNT data.



The appendix includes only positive, actual acts: an act narrated as performed, reported as having been performed, performed inside a narrated dream/parable/vision, or directly described as an actor's actual ongoing practice. It excludes commands, prohibitions, intentions, purpose clauses that do not assert completion, hypotheticals, future predictions, attempted-but-interrupted acts, and explicit refusals or negated acts. Thus Mordecai, Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-nego, and John's interrupted attempts before the angel are not listed as completed acts of these verbs.

References use familiar English/KJV versification. This matters because the Westminster Hebrew text follows Masoretic numbering in places where English numbering differs, especially Psalm headings and several chapter boundaries.

WHAT THE THREE VERBS ACTUALLY SHOW

Shāḥâ depicts lowering oneself, bowing down or prostrating oneself, and can express worship, reverence, submission, gratitude, entreaty, or courtly homage. The verb itself does not decide whether the act is religious. In the completed occurrences it is directed toward YHWH, heavenly messengers, human rulers and relatives, the sun and heavenly host, and manufactured idols. Recipient and narrative context determine the force.

The concordance tradition indexes these forms under **החש** (H7812). Many surface forms have the characteristic *hisht-* shape (for example, *vayyishtaḥû*). Grammarians differ over whether this should be described historically as an unusual reflexive stem of **החש** or connected with a rare root **הוה**, but that parsing debate does not change the occurrence set or the contextual meaning. The important exegetical distinction is not “worship word versus non-worship word”;

it is who lowers themselves, before whom, and why.

The surrounding clauses sometimes specify the physical action more exactly: a person bows the head, falls on the face, goes to the ground, or bows repeatedly. In other verses *shāḥâ* supplies the act without a separate posture phrase. Therefore the verb consistently belongs to the semantic field of lowered bodily homage, but it should not be mechanically expanded into “full prostration” in every line when the text itself is less specific.

In Judges 7:15 the form is *וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה* (*vayyishtaḥû*), parsed in the OSHB tagging as a third-person masculine singular *wayyiqtol* in the Hitpael stem. Gideon is the subject, and YHWH is the understood recipient from the dream’s interpretation and Gideon’s immediate announcement. This is a completed act.

Segid is the Biblical Aramaic verb used in Daniel for falling down or doing worshipful homage. Its distribution is especially revealing: of its twelve tokens, only Daniel 2:46 and 3:7 positively narrate completed acts. The other occurrences are decrees, commands, threats, questions, or explicit refusals. In 2:46 Nebuchadnezzar directs the act toward Daniel; in 3:7 the imperial peoples direct it toward the golden image.

Daniel 3 repeatedly joins *segid* with “fall down.” That combination prevents the action from being reduced to an inward attitude: the imperial demand is public, visible, and bodily. Yet Daniel 2:46 shows that the same Aramaic verb can be directed toward a human being. As with *shāḥâ*, the verb identifies homage/prostration; the recipient and setting determine its religious significance.

Proskyneō likewise covers prostration, homage, and worship. Its completed uses are directed toward God, Jesus, a human apostle, a human king within a parable, and evil recipients such as the dragon, beast, and image. That range makes a crucial lexical point: one cannot translate the theology of the whole scene from the verb alone. The identity of the recipient, accompanying confession, narrative response, and larger setting must be read together.

The New Testament frequently reinforces proskyneō with posture verbs: people fall down, take hold of Jesus' feet, or fall at someone's feet. Other occurrences simply report proskyneō without describing the degree of bodily descent. Cornelius' act toward Peter is rejected, while acts toward Jesus are repeatedly accepted; Revelation contrasts worship of God with worship of the dragon, beast, and image. The narrative response is therefore part of the inspired interpretation of the act.

EXHAUSTIVE ALPHABETICAL LIST OF BOWING IN WORSHIP

Abigail

Shāḥâ — 1 Samuel 25:23 — Toward: David (human king)

Shāḥâ — 1 Samuel 25:41 — Toward: David through his messengers (human)

Abraham

Shāḥâ — Genesis 18:2 — Toward: The three visitors, one subsequently identified as YHWH

Shāḥâ — Genesis 23:7 — Toward: The Hittites / sons of Heth (humans)

Shāḥâ — Genesis 23:12 — Toward: The Hittites / sons of Heth (humans)

Abraham's servant

Shāḥâ — Genesis 24:26 — Toward: YHWH (God)

Shāḥâ — Genesis 24:48 — Toward: YHWH, God of Abraham (God)
— Note: The servant retells the completed act first narrated in v. 26.

Shāḥâ — Genesis 24:52 — Toward: YHWH (God)

Absalom

Shāḥâ — 2 Samuel 14:33 — Toward: King David (human)

Adonijah

Shāḥâ — 1 Kings 1:53 — Toward: King Solomon (human)

Ahab

Shāḥâ — 1 Kings 16:31 — Toward: Baal (false god)

Ahaziah

Shāḥâ — 1 Kings 22:53 — Toward: Baal (false god)

Ahimaaz

Shāḥâ — 2 Samuel 18:28 — Toward: King David (human)

All angels

Proskyneō — Revelation 7:11 — Toward: God

All peoples, nations, and languages under Nebuchadnezzar

Segid — Daniel 3:7 — Toward: Nebuchadnezzar's golden image (idol)

Amalekite messenger from Saul's camp

Shāḥâ — 2 Samuel 1:2 — Toward: David (human)

Amaziah

Shāḥâ — 2 Chronicles 25:14 — Toward: The gods of Seir (false gods/idols)

Amon

Shāḥâ — 2 Kings 21:21 — Toward: The idols his father Manasseh served

Araunah (Ornan)

Shāḥâ — 2 Samuel 24:20 — Toward: King David (human)

Shāḥâ — 1 Chronicles 21:21 — Toward: King David (human)

Assembly at Hezekiah's temple service

Shāḥâ — 2 Chronicles 29:28 — Toward: YHWH (God)

Assembly of Israel in David's reign

Shāḥâ — 1 Chronicles 29:20 — Toward: YHWH (God) and King

David (human king)

Balaam

Shāḥâ — Numbers 22:31 — Toward: The angel of YHWH (divine messenger)

Bathsheba

Shāḥâ — 1 Kings 1:16 — Toward: King David (human)

Shāḥâ — 1 Kings 1:31 — Toward: King David (human)

Beast-and-image worshipers

Proskyneō — Revelation 14:11 — Toward: The beast and its image — Note: A positive present-participle description of their actual practice.

Proskyneō — Revelation 16:2 — Toward: The beast's image

Proskyneō — Revelation 19:20 — Toward: The beast's image

Beast's followers / earth-dwellers

Proskyneō — Revelation 13:4 — Toward: The dragon (Satan)

Proskyneō — Revelation 13:4 — Toward: The beast

Bilhah and Zilpah with their children

Shāḥâ — Genesis 33:6 — Toward: Esau (human)

Canaanite woman

Proskyneō — Matthew 15:25 — Toward: Jesus

Children of Israel at Solomon's temple dedication

Shāḥâ — 2 Chronicles 7:3 — Toward: YHWH (God)

Cornelius

Proskyneō — Acts 10:25 — Toward: Peter (human apostle; Peter immediately rejected it)

Cushi, Joab's messenger

Shāḥâ — 2 Samuel 18:21 — Toward: Joab (human commander)

David

Shāḥâ — 1 Samuel 20:41 — Toward: Jonathan (human)

Shāḥâ — 1 Samuel 24:8 — Toward: King Saul (human)

Shāḥâ — 2 Samuel 12:20 — Toward: YHWH (God)

Shāḥâ — 2 Samuel 15:32 — Toward: God

Shāḥâ — 1 Kings 1:47 — Toward: YHWH (implicit from David's

praise in v. 48) — Note: The immediate clause says David bowed on his bed; the recipient is supplied by the following praise of YHWH.

Disciples at the ascension

Proskyneō — Luke 24:52 — Toward: The risen Jesus

Disciples in the boat

Proskyneō — Matthew 14:33 — Toward: Jesus

Eleven disciples

Proskyneō — Matthew 28:17 — Toward: The risen Jesus — Note: Matthew says the eleven saw Jesus and worshiped; he also notes that some doubted.

Elkanah

Shāḥâ — 1 Samuel 1:19 — Toward: YHWH (God)

Shāḥâ — 1 Samuel 1:28 — Toward: YHWH (God) — Note: The Hebrew has an implicit masculine-singular subject. Elkanah is a common interpretation; other interpreters take young Samuel or the household collectively.

Four living creatures

Proskyneō — Revelation 19:4 — Toward: God seated on the throne

Gerasene demoniac / unclean spirit

Proskyneō — Mark 5:6 — Toward: Jesus — Note: The man performs the action, while the following speech is voiced by the possessing spirit.

Gideon

Shāḥâ — Judges 7:15 — Toward: YHWH (God)

Hannah

Shāḥâ — 1 Samuel 1:19 — Toward: YHWH (God)

Healed man born blind

Proskyneō — John 9:38 — Toward: Jesus

Hezekiah

Shāḥâ — 2 Chronicles 29:29 — Toward: YHWH (God)

Host of heaven

Shāḥâ — Nehemiah 9:6 — Toward: YHWH (God) — Note: The phrase can encompass the heavenly/celestial host; the text presents the whole host as bowing to YHWH.

Idol-maker in Isaiah's satire

Shāḥâ — Isaiah 44:15 — Toward: The idol he made

Shāḥâ — Isaiah 44:17 — Toward: The carved idol he made

Inhabitants of Judah in Isaiah's day

Shāḥâ — Isaiah 2:8 — Toward: The idols made by their own hands

Israelites at the exodus announcement

Shāḥâ — Exodus 4:31 — Toward: YHWH (God)

Israelites at the first Passover

Shāḥâ — Exodus 12:27 — Toward: YHWH (God)

Israelites at their tent doors

Shāḥâ — Exodus 33:10 — Toward: YHWH / the divine presence in the pillar

Israelites in the golden-calf episode

Shāḥâ — Exodus 32:8 — Toward: The golden calf (idol)

Shāḥâ — Psalms 106:19 — Toward: The molten calf (idol) —

Note: A later poetic retelling of the same historical apostasy.

Israelites in the judges period

Shāḥâ — Judges 2:12 — Toward: The gods of the surrounding peoples

Shāḥâ — Judges 2:17 — Toward: Other gods

Israelites seduced at Baal-peor

Shāḥâ — Numbers 25:2 — Toward: The gods of Moab

Jacob (Israel)

Shāḥâ — Genesis 33:3 — Toward: Esau (human brother)

Shāḥâ — Genesis 47:31 — Toward: God — Note: The clause says Jacob bowed at the head of the bed; Hebrews 11:21 explicitly characterizes the corresponding act as worship.

Proskyneō — Hebrews 11:21 — Toward: God

Jairus / the synagogue ruler

Proskyneō — Matthew 9:18 — Toward: Jesus — Note: Matthew leaves the ruler unnamed; the parallel accounts identify the synagogue ruler as Jairus.

Jesus and the Jews ('we')

Proskyneō — John 4:22 — Toward: God, known through Jewish revelation — Note: This is a positive present statement of established practice, not a single narrated posture.

Joab

Shāḥâ — 2 Samuel 14:22 — Toward: King David (human)

Job

Shāḥâ — Job 1:20 — Toward: YHWH (God)

Joseph

Shāḥâ — Genesis 33:7 — Toward: Esau (human uncle)

Shāḥâ — Genesis 48:12 — Toward: Jacob (human father)

Joseph's brothers

Shāḥâ — Genesis 42:6 — Toward: Joseph, governor of Egypt (human)

Shāḥâ — Genesis 43:26 — Toward: Joseph (human)

Shāḥâ — Genesis 43:28 — Toward: Joseph (human)

Joseph's dream figures

Shāḥâ — Genesis 37:7 — Toward: Joseph's sheaf — Note: His brothers' sheaves perform the completed action inside the dream, symbolizing his brothers' future homage.

Shāḥâ — Genesis 37:9 — Toward: Joseph — Note: The sun, moon, and eleven stars perform the action in the dream, symbolizing Joseph's family.

Joshua

Shāḥâ — Joshua 5:14 — Toward: The commander of YHWH's army (divine/heavenly figure)

Judahites condemned by Jeremiah

Shāḥâ — Jeremiah 1:16 — Toward: The works of their own hands (idols)

Shāḥâ — Jeremiah 22:9 — Toward: Other gods

Judah's ancestors

Shāḥâ — Jeremiah 16:11 — Toward: Other gods

Judah's kings, officials, priests, prophets, and Jerusalemites

Shāḥâ — Jeremiah 8:2 — Toward: The sun, moon, and host of heaven

King's servants at the gate of Susa

Shāḥâ — Esther 3:2 — Toward: Haman (human official) — Note: The second occurrence in this verse says Mordecai did not bow; that non-act is excluded.

Leah

Shāḥâ — Genesis 33:7 — Toward: Esau (human)

Leah's children

Shāḥâ — Genesis 33:7 — Toward: Esau (human)

