

**What is the Correct Translation of
Titus 2:13?
Does it call Christ “God”?**

by

Dr Trevor R Allin

www.livingwater-spain.com

*The text, the manuscripts, the meaning
and a detailed grammatical analysis*

What is the Correct Translation of Titus 2:13? Does it call Christ “God”?

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Bible translations referred to:

AV Authorised Version of 1611

NIB: This is the Bible Works 10 code for the NIV, Anglicised edition (“British English”)

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NRSV: New Revised Standard Version Bible. Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

NASB: New American Standard Bible 1995: “Scripture quotations taken from the (NASB®) New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. All rights reserved. www.lockman.org”

NWT: “New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures”, Copyright © 1961, 1984, 2013 by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania

KIT: “The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures Produced by New World Bible Translation Committee”, Brooklyn, New York, U.S.A.: WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC., 1969, Copyright by WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA. A revised edition was published in 1985.

Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Alexandrinus The text of these manuscripts is in the Public Domain.

The whole of Codex Alexandrinus and most of Codex Sinaiticus are held by the British Library in London, and images of the New Testament of these manuscripts and some other texts are available for free consultation on-line.

Codex Sinaiticus can be seen on-line here: <https://codexsinaiticus.org/en/>

Codex Alexandrinus can be seen here:

http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Royal_MS_1_d_viii

A photographic facsimile of Codex Sinaiticus was published in 2010 by The British Library, London and Hendrickson Publishers Marketing, LLC, Peabody, Massachusetts, USA.

About the Author

Dr Trevor R Allin graduated from the University of Leeds with a 1st Class Honours degree in Phonetics, French, Spanish and Philosophy and History of Religion. Following studies in linguistics, he undertook original research on a South American indigenous language, for which purpose he lived within the indigenous community and studied the language with native speakers over a period of more than a year. The University of St Andrews subsequently awarded him a Ph.D. for his thesis “A Grammar of Resígaro”.

For many years he taught a range of languages up to “Advanced” level standard in state schools in England and in Germany, and in state-recognised schools in Scotland and Spain. He also worked full time over a period of many years supporting and inspecting qualified Modern Language teachers and giving them professional development training. Teaching and examination materials written by him for French, German and Spanish at a wide range of levels, up to and including “A” Level, have been published by mainstream U.K. educational publishers and examination boards, for whom he has written and marked examination question papers.

He is also the published translator of books from Spanish and German into English and is the author of “Curso de Griego Bíblico: Los elementos del Griego del N.T.”¹, the Spanish edition of the leading textbook on New Testament Greek, Jeremy Duff’s “The Elements of New Testament Greek”.² He has taught New Testament (Koiné) Greek to Spanish-speaking adult students in Spain and has delivered lectures in Spain and England on the important early Greek manuscript of the Bible, Codex Sinaiticus.

¹ CLIE, 2019 See <https://www.clie.es/curso-de-griego-biblico>

² Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005

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Note

Grammatical abbreviations used in this article:

1.	first person	gen	genitive
Acc	accusative	m	masculine
Adj	adjective	nn	noun
Art	article	pl	plural
conj	conjunction	pn	pronoun
coord	coordinating	psnl	personal
Fem	feminine	sg	singular

PART I: THE QUESTION

Introduction

Titus 2:13 speaks of the Second Coming of Christ to the earth, when His glory will be revealed to the entire world. This event will transform the world and it is the fervent desire of Christian believers, the answer to their prayer, “Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as in heaven.” (Matthew. 6:10). This will not be an “invisible presence”, nor a “heavenly” or “spiritual” event imperceptible on earth and impossible to verify. Christ Himself said, “For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.” (Matthew 24:27, NIB)

The Bible says about that moment, “Look! [Christ] is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him.” (Revelation 1:7, NRSV)

The Bible also tells us that when Christ returns, God “will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.” (Revelation 21:4, NRSV)

So Titus 2:13 points to this marvellous promise from God, the beginning of a future when God will cause “that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:10-11, NASB)

1. The Context

But Titus 2:13 does not speak only about the future; it says how believers should live *right now*. To understand it properly, it is necessary to read the context. In Greek, verses 11, 12, 13 and 14 all form one and the same sentence. Here is what they say:

¹¹ “For the grace of God has been manifested, bringing salvation to all humanity,¹² instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live lives that are sensible, upright and godly in the present age,¹³ looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Christ Jesus,¹⁴ who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity, from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, eager to do what is good.” (See Titus 2:11-14, NASB, NIV, NRSV)

Verse 11 tells us, “the grace of God has been manifested, bringing salvation to all humanity.” The grace of God is his merciful and free favour which offers blessings to all humanity. The manifestation of His grace described here was the First Coming to this world of Jesus Christ, who “gave Himself for us” (v. 14) on the cross. The purpose of that coming was “to redeem us from all iniquity, from every lawless deed” (v. 14), that is to say, to save us from the consequences of our sin and give us peace with God (Romans 5:1).

But that salvation is much more than a “spiritual transaction” between us and God; it must also affect our daily lives in this world. When someone puts their faith in Christ, their life must change: they will stop doing bad things and start doing good things. Verse 12 tells us that this Grace of God (v. 11) instructs us “to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and live lives that are sensible, upright and godly *in the present age.*” Verse 14 says that the purpose of the First Coming of Christ was also “to purify for Himself a people for his own possession, eager to do what is good” (See NASB, NIV, NRSV).”

Titus 2:13 also speaks of *the glory of Jesus Christ*, and describes Him as “our great God and Saviour”. This verse is thus one of various passages in the New Testament that speak of *the deity of Christ*. It says that Christ is God.

2. An Objection

But one American religious sect protests, saying that Christ should not be called “God”, so they object to this text and change the verse so that Christ is not called “God”. In order to achieve this change of meaning, they state that this verse does not just talk about one person, Jesus Christ, but about two: God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

So who is right? Does the verse talk about **one** Person or about **two**?
When translating the original Greek text, what are the possibilities?

In this article we will examine in detail the grammar of Titus 2:13, in order to see what it really says, and thus be able to determine what is a possible translation and what is impossible.

3. The Purpose of this Website

As indicated in the introduction to this website (here: <http://livingwater-spain.com/>), its purpose is to “look at the real meaning of the original text”.

Its purpose is not to promote any doctrine, religious group or point of view. It merely looks at the actual meaning of the Biblical text, so in this article we look carefully at the text and the grammatical rules that tell us what it means and therefore what an accurate translation would be. We also consult some of the leading experts in Koiné Greek and in the text of the New Testament.

PART II: THE TEXT AND THE MANUSCRIPTS

1. The Text

In Titus 2:13 the Apostle Paul writes:

προσδεχόμενοι	τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν	τῆς δόξης
[prosdechómenoi	tēn makarían elpida kai epifaneian	tēs dóxēs]
expecting	the blessed hope and visible manifestation	of the glory
τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ		
[tou megáλου theou kai sōtēros hēmōn Iēsou Christou]		
of the great	God and Saviour	our Jesus Christ

Literally translated, this is:

“Waiting expectantly for the blessed hope and visible appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.” ³

The NIV has:

while we wait for the blessed hope – the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ (NIV)
--

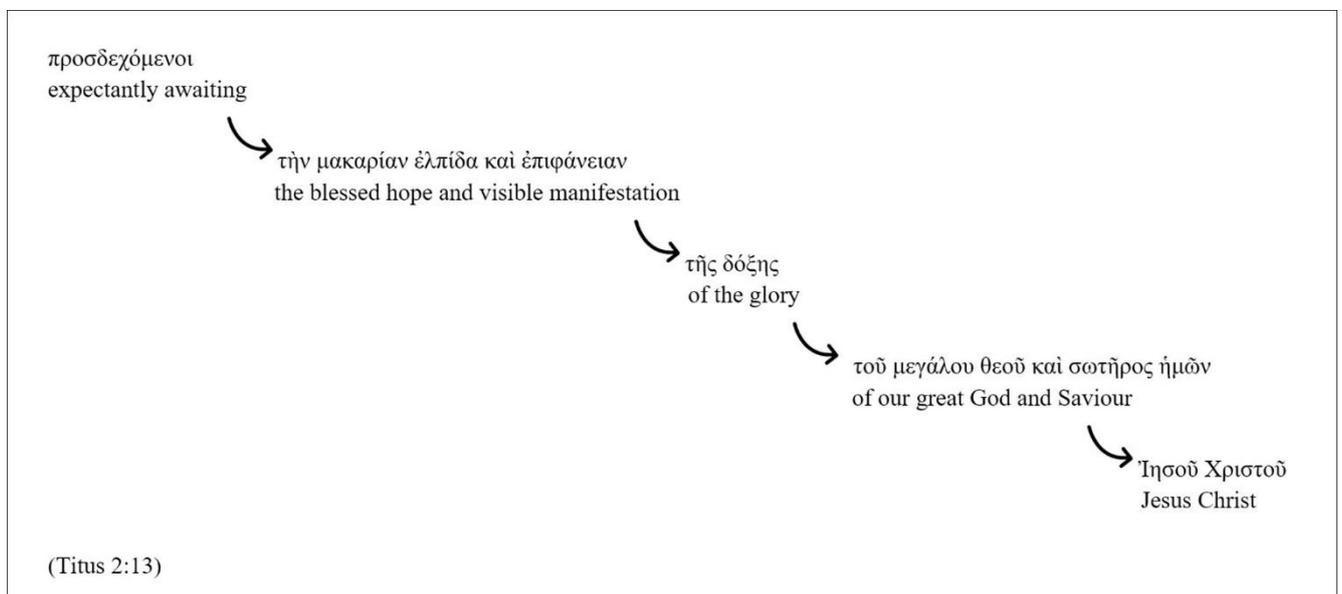
The NRSV has:

while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. (NRSV)
--

The NASB has:

looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus

The following diagram will help us to understand the structure and meaning of this verse:



³ Translation by the author of this article.

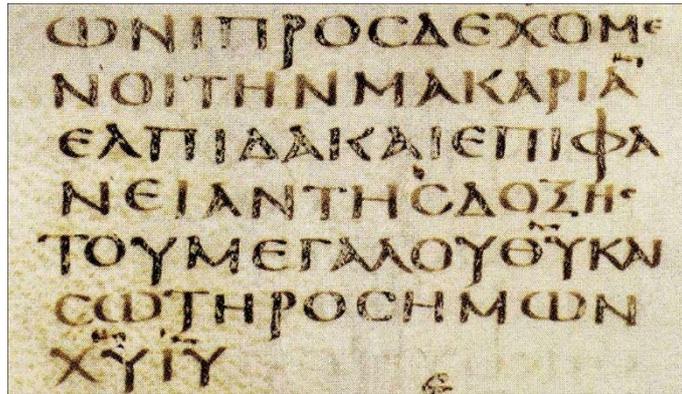
2. Manuscript Evidence

The Greek text is secure. The earliest manuscripts were written entirely in capital letters, which are known as “uncials”. The great uncial manuscripts Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Alexandrinus have the phrases “expectantly awaiting the blessed hope and visible manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour”, as in the text given above.

Codex Sinaiticus

This manuscript is often referred to as “the world’s oldest Bible”. It was produced between approximately 320 and 340 AD and was copied from manuscripts that could have been 200 or more years old at that time, taking us back to mere decades after the New Testament was written. Most of this manuscript is now in the British Library in London.

Here is Titus 2:13 in Codex Sinaiticus:



Photograph taken by the author in September 2021 from the photographic facsimile of Codex Sinaiticus published by the British Library and Hendrickson Publishers Marketing, LLC, page Q86-f.5v [BL-f.297v], in accordance with the “fair use” provisions.

Using modern Greek script and adding the verse number, spaces between the words, accents and breathings, this is:

ὦνι,¹³ προσδεχόμε-
νοι τὴν μακαρίαν
ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφά-
νειαν τῆς δόξης
τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ
σωτῆρος ἡμῶν
Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ

At the beginning of line 1 in this image, we notice the last three letters of the previous word, αἰῶνι ([aiōni], “age”).

In English, breaking the text in approximately the same places as the line breaks in the original, this is:

ge,¹³ waiting expectant-
ly for the blessed
hope and visible appear-
ing of the glory
of our great God and
Saviour Christ Jesus

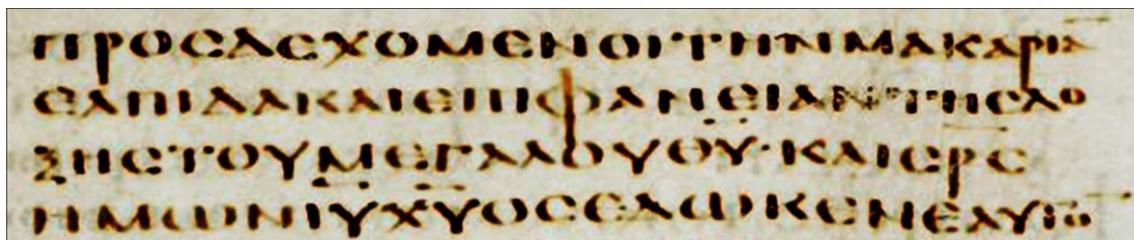
The only textual difference compared with the Greek text that is given above is that the above text has Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ([Iēsou Christou], “Jesus Christ”), whereas Codex Sinaiticus has Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ ([Christou Iēsou], “Christ Jesus”).

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Codex Alexandrinus

Codex Alexandrinus has been dated at approximately 420 AD. Along with Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus, it is one of the oldest and most important manuscripts of the Greek Bible. It is located in the British Library in London.

Here is Titus 2:13 in Codex Alexandrinus:



The British Library has declared that this manuscript is in the Public Domain and that images of it on the British Library website may be freely used. This verse can be seen here:

http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=royal_ms_1_d_viii_fs001r

Contrast has been increased for reproduction here, but no other changes to the image or the text have been made.

Using modern Greek script and adding the verse number for the beginning of the next verse, spaces between the words, accents and breathings, this is:

προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν
ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δό-
ξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος
ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ¹⁴ ὃς ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν

At the end of the last line in this image, we notice three words that form part of the following verse, according to the verse divisions that were added centuries later: ¹⁴ ὃς ἔδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ([hos edōken heauton], “who give himself”).

In English, breaking the text in approximately the same places as the line breaks in the original, this is:

Waiting expectantly for the blessed
hope and visible appearing of the glo-
ry of our great God and Saviour
Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself

The only difference compared with Codex Sinaiticus is that Alexandrinus has Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ([Iēsou Christou], “Jesus Christ”), the same as the text reproduced in Section 1, above, while Sinaiticus has Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ ([Christou Iēsou], “Christ Jesus”).

Other Manuscripts

In Codex Vaticanus the Epistle to Titus is missing (along with some other Epistles and Revelation), but we have the same text in the important manuscript known as “D^P” [Codex Claromontanus] and in numerous other manuscripts.⁴

We thus see that there are no doubts about the accuracy of the phrase that we are focussing on in this article, “the glory of our great God and Saviour”.

⁴ Information on manuscripts, along with photographs of some of them, in BibleWorks 10

A note about the Grammar Section

I request the indulgence of readers in the face of the large amount of grammatical terminology and grammatical analysis in this article. It has been impossible to avoid this when explaining which translation is correct and which is incorrect.

If you find the technical information too detailed, you can skip the next section and go on to Section IV or even to the last section, THE ANSWER.

But if you need the technical justification for the points made, it is here. I do not make claims without giving the evidence.

PART III: THE GRAMMAR

1. The Grammatical Structure

Let us observe carefully the structure of the last part of the verse in the original Greek text:

ἐπιφάνειαν	τῆς	δόξης	τοῦ	μεγάλου	θεοῦ	καὶ	σωτῆρος	ἡμῶν	Ἰησοῦ	Χριστοῦ
noun fem	Art fem	noun fem	Art m.	Adj. m.	Nn.	coord	Nn. m.	psnl. pn.	Proper nn.	Proper nn.
acc. sg.	gen. sg.	sg. gen.	gen. sg.	gen. sg.	gen. sg.	conj.	gen. sg.	gen. 1. pl.	gen. sg.	gen. sg.

The first phrase (three words) means “the appearing of the glory”.

Let us look at the rest of the verse. We note various details of this structure:

1. The word τοῦ [tou, “of the”] is in the genitive singular case.
2. It is only used once and so must refer equally to both nouns that follow it, both θεοῦ [theou, “God”] and σωτῆρος [sōtēros, “Saviour”].
3. The word μεγάλου [megáλου, “great”] must in this structure likewise refer to both nouns that follow it, both θεοῦ [theou, “God”] and σωτῆρος [sōtēros, “Saviour”]. It is **singular** because both θεοῦ [theou, “God”] and σωτῆρος [sōtēros, “Saviour”] refer to the same (singular) person, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [Iēsou Christou, “Jesus Christ”].
4. Both θεοῦ [theou, “God”] and σωτῆρος [sōtēros, “Saviour”] are in the same grammatical case, the genitive singular, governed grammatically by the genitive singular masculine article τοῦ [tou, “of the”] that precedes them.
5. The words θεοῦ [theou, “God”] and σωτῆρος [sōtēros, “Saviour”] are joined by the word καὶ [kai, “and”]. The grammatical name of this word is “coordinating conjunction”, which just means that it is a word that joins two nouns giving them equal grammatical status in the sentence. This means that the second noun is not grammatically subordinate to or dependent on the first noun.
6. The word ἡμῶν [hēmōn, “our”] is in its normal position and must in this structure refer to both of the nouns that precede it, both θεοῦ [theou, “God”] and σωτῆρος [sōtēros, “Saviour”]: “our God and Saviour”.
7. The words Ἰησοῦ [Iēsou, “Jesus”] and Χριστοῦ [Christou, “Christ”] are both proper nouns (i.e., the name of someone), and both are in the masculine singular genitive case, the same as the words θεοῦ [theou, “God”] and σωτῆρος [sōtēros, “Saviour”], as these words are all equally governed by the same genitive singular article τοῦ [tou, “of the”]. This means that the words θεοῦ [theou, “God”] and σωτῆρος [sōtēros, “Saviour”] can only be referring to the same person.

2. A Grammatical Frame

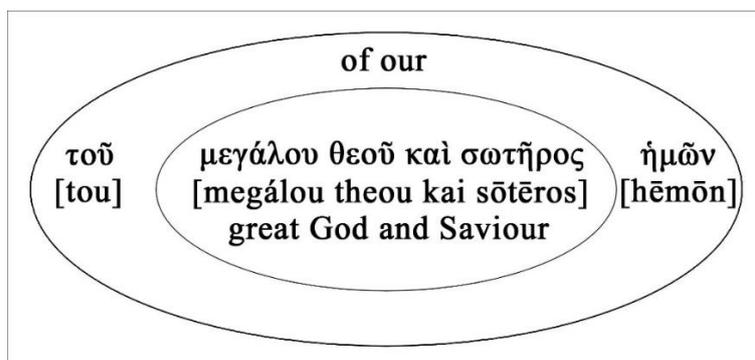
The words τοῦ [tou, “of the”] and ἡμῶν [hēmōn, “our”] form a “frame” (or “bracket”) round the words that are between them, μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος [megáλου theou kai sōtēros, “great God and Saviour”]⁵:

1st part of frame: article	enclosed phrase	2nd part of frame: possessive adjective
τοῦ [tou, “of the”]	μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος [megáλου theou kai sōtēros, “great God and Saviour”]	ἡμῶν [hēmōn, “our”]

The words τοῦ [tou, “of the”] and ἡμῶν [hēmōn, “our”] are translated into English as “our”, normally without translating the word τοῦ [tou, “of the”] into English, as we do not say “the our”. The use of the Greek article (the word “the”) is quite different from the use of the English article. This is simply an example of the nature of differences between languages.

This is illustrated in the following diagram:

⁵ The word ἡμῶν [hēmōn, “our”] can also be positioned after the first of the two nouns, as in 2 Peter 1:1, 3:18 and elsewhere, but using it and the article to frame the nouns is common and the meaning is unambiguous. See comment, below, on Galatians 1:4 in the section “TSKS”.



3. Professor Jeremy Duff

Professor Jeremy Duff is the author of “Elements of New Testament Greek”, the leading textbook on teaching Koiné Greek, published by Cambridge University Press. His posts have included Director of Lifelong Learning, Research Fellow, Senior Lecturer and Theological College tutor and at the time of writing this article he is Principal of St Padarn's Institute, responsible for discipleship and ministry training and ongoing development in the Church in Wales.

In his textbook on New Testament Greek he writes:⁶

‘My words is οἱ λόγοι μου, not λόγοι μου. (Compare ‘his words’: οἱ λόγοι αὐτοῦ.) ἔμος, σος, μου, ἡμῶν, σου and ὑμῶν all need the article.

Examples

John 10:26: οὐκ ἐστε ἐκ τῶν προβατῶν τῶν ἐμῶν. – You are not of my sheep.

John 20:28: Ὁ κυριος μου και ὁ θεος μου. – My Lord and my God!

In the first of these two examples we observe that if the possessive pronoun (which here functions as a possessive adjective) is placed after the noun to which it refers, the article (in this case the genitive plural τῶν [tōn]) is usually repeated: it occurs both before the noun and before the pronoun or adjective. We again see that in this structure, the article is not translated into English.

So the phrase in Titus 2:13 means “of our great God and Saviour”.

4. Who is “our great God and Saviour”?

The sentence in Titus 2:13 is completed by the definition of *who* is “our Great God and Saviour”. It states that he is Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [Iēsou Christou, “Jesus Christ”]. These two words stand in apposition to the phrase that precedes them and are in the same case.

5. What is “Apposition”?

The dictionary says:

Apposition is “a relationship between two or more words or phrases in which the two units are grammatically parallel and have the same referent (e.g. *my friend Sue; the first US president, George Washington*)”⁷

See the following diagram:

τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν	=	Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
[του megáλου theou kai sōtēros hēmōn]	=	[Iēsou Christou]
our great God and Saviour	=	Jesus Christ

So, to state the obvious, Paul here calls Jesus Christ “our great God and Saviour”. He refers to Christ as “God”.

⁶ Duff, Jeremy, “The Elements of New Testament Greek”, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 105, some emphasis added.

⁷ Result of a Google search with the question “What is apposition?” Consulted on 26.8.21.

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This meaning is unavoidable. It is not an “interpretation” by me or by others. There is no other possible meaning of what the Greek says and no other possible translation.

Anyone who has adequate knowledge of Koiné Greek can see this in the text. There is no ambiguity or doubt as to the meaning of the original text.

6. Dr Thomas A Howe

Professor Thomas A Howe, Ph.D., has for more than 25 years been Professor of Bible and Biblical Languages at Southern Evangelical Seminary, where he is also Director of the Veritas Graduate School of Apologetics. He is an expert in Koiné Greek and in Hebrew.

In his book “Bias in New Testament Translations?”⁸, Howe devotes a lengthy chapter to Titus 2:13, analysing the grammatical structure of the verse and comparing it with other verses. Near the beginning of the chapter he states,

“the New World Translation [the Jehovah’s Witness version of the Bible] actually adds the word ‘the’ before ‘Savior’ to make the passage refer to two different Persons”.⁹

At the end of the chapter Howe concludes:

“... Titus 2:13 demonstrates that the words ‘God’ and ‘Savior’ are both referring to Christ Jesus. ...two nouns connected by καὶ [kai, “and”] are modified by a single adjective and are treated as one grammatical unit. So, since “God and Savior” are one grammatical unit modified by the adjective ‘great,’ the name ‘Christ Jesus’ is in apposition to this grammatical unit indicating that the two nouns, “God and Savior”, are referring to the one individual, Christ Jesus.”¹⁰

7. What does the Adjective Refer to?

Howe is of course correct in stating that the adjective μεγάλου [magalou, “great”] can only apply to both the word θεοῦ [theou, “God”] and the word σωτήρος [sōtēros, “Saviour”], which are joined by the word καὶ [kai, “and”]. This and the frame τοῦ – ἡμῶν [tou – hēmōn, “our”], described above, make the whole phrase τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτήρος ἡμῶν [tou megalou theou kai sōtēros hēmōn] into one unit, with the meaning “of our great God and Saviour”.¹¹

The following diagram may make this clearer:



Frame within frame

The oval frame τοῦ – ἡμῶν [tou – hēmōn, “our”] encloses all the words between the two parts of this possessive phrase. Within it, the word μεγάλου [megalou, “great”] encompasses or applies to all the words in the centre oval of the diagram, θεοῦ καὶ σωτήρος [theou kai sōtēros, “God and Saviour”].

⁸ Howe, Thomas A., “Bias in New Testament Translations?”, Charlotte, NC: Solomon’s Razor Publishing, 2010

⁹ Howe op. cit., p. 107, emphasis added.

¹⁰ Howe op. cit., p. 125, emphasis added

¹¹ Howe makes the same point in “The Deity of Christ in Modern Translations”, which was published by him in 2015, p. 98.

8. Professor Larry W Hurtado

Larry W Hurtado “was an American New Testament scholar, historian of early Christianity, and Emeritus Professor of New Testament Language, Literature, and Theology at the University of Edinburgh (1996–2011). He was the head of the School of Divinity from 2007 to 2010, and was until August 2011 Director of the Centre for the Study of Christian Origins at the University of Edinburgh.”¹²

His particular areas of expertise were Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, the Greek text of the New Testament and early Christian beliefs concerning Jesus Christ, in which he is still viewed as one of the leading scholars worldwide.

Hurtado’s comments on Titus 2:13¹³ and its context are particularly relevant and merit quoting unedited: “Two other features of the presentation of Jesus in the Pastoral Epistles are important to mention here. The first is *the striking verbal overlap between Jesus and God*. We might also think of this as a verbal enfranchisement of Jesus *with language that is otherwise used with special reference to God*. As a prime example of a term especially favored in the Pastoral Epistles, “Savior” is a title given to God (1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3; 4:10; Titus 1:3; 2:10; 3:4) and also to Jesus (2 Tim. 1:10; Titus 1:4; 2:13; 3:6), *and to them alone*. In some cases God and Jesus are both referred to as “Savior” in such close proximity that we must infer a deliberate effort to link them through this appellation: e.g., Titus 2:11 (God) and 2:13 (Jesus), 3:4 (God) and 3:6 (Jesus). Both in the biblical/Jewish tradition and in the larger religious environment of the late first century as well, “Savior” was widely used as an epithet for divine beings, including the Roman emperor. Consequently, the restricted application of the term to Jesus and God surely connotes *a deliberate linkage of Jesus with divine attributes* that would have been readily perceived by the intended readers.”

9. The Granville Sharp Rule

For those who are reluctant to be persuaded by my statements and the statements from the experts who have already been quoted, let me refer to the rule of Koiné Greek known as the “Granville Sharp” rule. Granville Sharp was an 18th/19th century anti-slavery campaigner, classicist and Biblical scholar who wrote about Greek grammar.¹⁴ His statement of six principles concerning the use of the Greek article became known as “The Granville Sharp Rule”.

His rule states that:

“When the copulative kai connects two nouns of the same case, if the article ho, or any of its cases, precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle ...”¹⁵

What Granville Sharp calls “the copulative” is what is now normally called “coordinating conjunction” by grammarians. He refers here to “the article ho”, which is the masculine, nominative, singular of the article. He clarifies that the rule also applies to all forms of the article, saying, “or any of its cases”. In Titus 2:13 we have the masculine, singular, genitive case of “ho”, τοῦ [tou, “of the”].

Of course, Granville Sharp’s “rule” *did not invent a new grammatical rule* for Classical and Koiné Greek. At a time when experts in various fields of human knowledge, such as botany, zoology, physics, etc., were identifying basic structures and expressing them in taxonomies, definitions and rules, Granville Sharp did the same for certain areas of Classical and Koiné Greek, stating in precise terms the already-existing nature of the use of the article and the word καί [kai, “and”], as actually observed in Classical and Biblical texts.

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larry_Hurtado Accessed on 21.8.21.

¹³ Hurtado, Larry W, “Lord Jesus Christ Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity”, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA and Cambridge, England: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003, pp. 515-6, emphasis added

¹⁴ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Granville_Sharp Accessed on 16.8.21.

¹⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Granville_Sharp Accessed on 22.8.21.

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As indicated above, this rule merely states in grammatical terminology that which is obvious in the text itself:

τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν
[tou megalou theou kai sōtēros hēmōn]

means “of our great God and Saviour”. Both the word “God” and the word “Saviour” refer to the same person.

10. The “TSKS” Structure

This structure is sometimes referred to as “the “TSKS” structure”, shorthand for “the” + “Substantive” (i.e., noun) + καὶ [kai, “and”] + “Substantive” (noun).

The “TSKS” structure is exemplified in Titus 2:13:

T	+	S	+	K	+	S
τοῦ [tou] “of the”		θεοῦ [theou] “God”		καὶ [kai] “and”		σωτῆρος [sōtēros] “Saviour”

The “TSKS” Structure

Here we have omitted the adjective μεγάλου [megalou], “great”, and the possessive ἡμῶν [hēmōn], “our”, in order to make the structure easier to see.

In the “TSKS” structure, both nouns (here θεοῦ [theou], “God”, and σωτῆρος [sōtēros], “Saviour”) have the same referent, which means that they refer to the same Person.

This structure is common in the New Testament. See, for instance, Galatians 1:4:

κατὰ	τὸ	θέλημα	<u>τοῦ</u>	<u>θεοῦ</u>	<u>καὶ</u>	<u>πατρὸς</u>	<u>ἡμῶν</u>
[kata	to	thélēma	<u>tu</u>	<u>theou</u>	<u>kai</u>	<u>patros</u>	<u>hēmōn]</u>
according to the will		<u>of the</u>	<u>God</u>	<u>and</u>	<u>Father</u>	<u>our</u>	

This verse *has the same “frame” structure* τοῦ ... ἡμῶν [tou ... hēmōn], “our”, *as Titus 2:13.*

It is correctly translated “according to the will of our God and Father” The words θεοῦ [theou, “God”] and πατὸς [patros, “Father”] can only refer to the same Person.¹⁶

Another example is Romans 15:6:

<u>τὸν</u>	<u>θεὸν</u>	<u>καὶ</u>	<u>πατέρα</u>	τοῦ	κυρίου	ἡμῶν	Ἰησοῦ	Χριστοῦ.
[ton	theon	kai	patera	tu	Kuriou	hēmōn	Iēsou	Christou]
<u>the</u>	<u>God</u>	<u>and</u>	<u>Father</u>	of the	Lord	our	Jesus	Christ

The translation into English is “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”. It is clear that the words θεὸν [theon, “God”] and πατέρα [patéra, “Father”] can only refer to the same person.¹⁷

11. Dr Daniel B Wallace

According to Wikipedia, “Daniel Baird Wallace is an American professor of New Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary. He is also the founder and executive director of the Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts, the purpose of which is digitizing all known Greek manuscripts of the New Testament via digital photographs.”¹⁸ He is author of the leading expert reference work “Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics.”¹⁹

Wallace gives a detailed explanation of this rule:

¹⁶ We will look at this verse again later in this article.

¹⁷ We will also come back to this verse again later in this article.

¹⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_B._Wallace Accessed on 22.8.21.

¹⁹ Wallace, Daniel, in “Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics”, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1996

1. **Statement of the Granville Sharp Rule:** both substantives (nouns, participles, adjectives) refer to the same person in the article-substantive-καὶ-substantive (TSKS) construction when:
 - both are personal
 - both are singular
 - both are non-proper (i.e., common terms, not proper names)
- ...
2. **Validity of the Rule Within the New Testament:** always valid; Titus 2:13 & 2 Pet 1:1 impacted.²⁰

12. Discussions about the Validity of Sharp’s Rule

In the 19th century, one German writer, Winer²¹ expressed in a footnote a doubt about the universal application of Sharp’s Rule, and the matter was discussed in the 20th century. Opponents of the rule generally sought to state that the rule did not apply *in those places where the deity of Christ was stated*. In this, they revealed that their motivation was not to understand *what the text actually said* but only *to object to the deity of Christ*.

13. James R White

James R White is the author of a detailed study of the Greek text of the New Testament and its translation into English.²² He is also the author of several Christian books and is the Director of Alpha and Omega Ministries, a Christian apologetics organisation. **He informs us that “Winer himself, being an anti-Trinitarian, admitted it was not grammatical grounds that led him to reject the correct rendering of Titus 2:13 but theological ones.”**²³

Wallace summarises the conclusion of this debate with the following words:

“Even Sharp’s opponents could not find any exceptions; all had to admit that the rule was valid in the NT.”²⁴

Wallace concludes a long section on this structure with the words

“a proper understanding of the rule shows it to have the highest degree of validity within the NT. Consequently, these two passages [Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1] are as secure as any in the canon when it comes to identifying Christ as θεός.”²⁵

14. “The Great God” in the Old Testament

We also note that this description of Christ as “our Great God” echoes similar phrases about God in the Old Testament. Although the Old Testament was written in Hebrew/Aramaic, it had been translated into Greek before the time of the coming of Christ, and it was the Greek translation that the Christians of the first century knew best and generally quoted from, instead of consulting the text in the original languages. This Greek translation is now commonly referred to as “the Septuagint” or with the Roman abbreviation for seventy, “LXX”.

We will therefore here quote from the Septuagint, showing the use of the same words and similar phrases in the Greek Old Testament.

Deuteronomy records Moses saying to the people of Israel:

For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome (Deuteronomy 10:17 NIB)

The Greek phrase that interests us here is:

²⁰ op. cit. p. 735

²¹ G. B. Winer, as quoted by Wallace, op. cit., p. 272

²² White, James R, “The King James Only Controversy”, 2nd edition, Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany House, 2009

²³ op. cit., p. 339, emphasis added

²⁴ Wallace op. cit., p. 273. See also footnote 50 on that page.

²⁵ op. cit., p. 290

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ὁ θεὸς ὁ μέγας [ho theos ho megas] the God the great
--

The translation is “the great God”. This phrase is in the nominative case, so the word for “the” is ὁ [ho]. The word “great” is also in the nominative, μέγας [megas] and it comes after the noun (θεὸς [theos, “God”]), so, just the same as in the phrase from John 10:26 in the quotation from Duff in Section 5, above, the article occurs twice.

In the book of Ezra we read that the governor of Trans-Euphrates and others, none of them Jews, went εἰς οἶκον τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ μεγάλου [eis oikon tou theou tou megalou, “into the house of the great God”] (Ezra 5:8), a phrase used to distinguish the God of the Hebrews from other gods of different nations.

Again, as in the phrase from John 10:26, above, we note that in Ezra 5:8 the adjective (on this occasion in the genitive case, μεγάλου [megalou, “great”]) is here placed after the noun (θεοῦ [theou, “God”]), so the article τοῦ [tou, “of the”] occurs twice.

The Apostle Paul was thoroughly acquainted with the text of the Old Testament and frequently quoted with great accuracy from the Septuagint text. He may have had this phrase in his memory, even unconsciously, when he wrote to Titus about τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ [tou megalou theou, “(the) great God”]. We here put “the” in brackets as it is the first part of the phrase τοῦ – ἡμῶν [tou – hēmōn], which is normally translated into English as “our”, without the article.

Daniel speaks (using the nominative case of the Greek article) of ὁ θεὸς ὁ μέγας [ho theos ho megas] (Daniel 2:45). He is speaking to Nebuchadnezzar II, the second king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire²⁶, who believed in “a ... hierarchy and dynasty of gods and localized gods”.²⁷ Daniel therefore refers to Yahweh as “the great God.”

In Nehemiah we read that ἠϋλόγησεν Ἐσδρας κύριον τὸν θεὸν τὸν μέγαν [ēulogēsen Esdras kurion ton theon ton megan, “Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God”]. (The words that are objects of the verb “to bless” are in the accusative case.)

These and other similar phrases²⁸ are the context in which the Apostle Paul applies the phrase “the great God” to Jesus Christ in Titus 2:13.

The impact of the use of these words cannot be overestimated. It was astounding. No wonder that the Jews were outraged at the application of such phrases to Jesus of Nazareth.

No wonder that even Paul had, as a young man at that time known as Saul, approved of the killing of the first Christian martyr (Acts 8:1), Steven, who had cried out to Christ in prayer (Acts 7:55-60). (For more on this incident, see “Was Jesus Worshipped in the New Testament and the Early Church?”, here: <http://livingwater-spain.com/worship.pdf>, especially pages 15-17 in the version consulted on 16.8.21.)

²⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebuchadnezzar_II Accessed on 17.8.21.

²⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neo-Babylonian_Empire Accessed on 17.8.21.

²⁸ See, for instance, Psalm 95:3 (LXX numbering, Psalm 94:3).

PART IV; THE JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES

1. Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Deity of Christ

There is one “Organization” for which the Apostle Paul’s statement in Titus 2:13 is a problem: the American religion known as the “Jehovah’s Witnesses”. They deny the deity of Christ and so *change the meaning* of all those verses of the Bible that indicate Christ’s deity (apart from a few that they miss!). Their version of the Bible distorts the meaning of the text in so many places that it does not merit to be called a translation. However, they call it “The New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures”. Hereafter I refer to it as “the NWT”.

Both the original edition of their version²⁹ and the major revision of 2013³⁰ have:

“while we wait for the happy hope and glorious manifestation of the great God and of our Savior Christ Jesus”

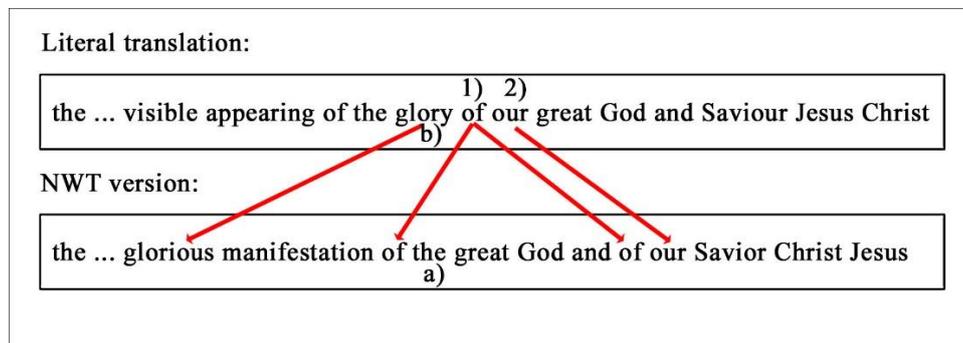
Here *they have created two different referents* in the verse, “the great God” and “our Savior Christ Jesus”, thus denying that the passage calls Christ “God”. (Note the American spelling, even in the copies of the NWT that they distribute in the U.K. – another reminder that this is in fact an *American* sect.)

However, in order to achieve this change in the meaning, they have had to introduce two changes:

- 1) to repeat the word “of”, which does not occur twice in the Greek text.
- 2) They have had to apply the word “our” only to Christ, whereas in the original text it applies both to “God” and to “Saviour”.

They have also introduced other changes, which are described below.

The following diagram shows some (only!) of the changes to this verse introduced by the Jehovah’s Witnesses.



Changes 1) and 2) are described above.

Changes a) and b) are described below.

By adding a word that is not in the Greek text, a second occurrence of the word “of”, they seek to separate the reference to “God” from the reference to “Saviour” and to make the phrase refer to *two separate beings*:

- 1st) “God”, allegedly not referred to here as “Saviour”
- and 2nd) “Saviour”, allegedly not referred to here as “God.”

This clearly changes the meaning, which was their intention, *but it is not a possible translation of the original Greek*.

²⁹ “New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures”, Brooklyn, New York, U.S.A., Copyright © 1961, 1984 by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania

³⁰ “New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures”, Brooklyn, New York, U.S.A., Copyright © 1961, 1981, 1984, 2013 WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA, Publishers WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC.

2. The Jehovah’s Witness version of Titus 2:13 is also unsatisfactory in other places.

a) The Use of the Article with the Possessive Adjective “our”

As explained above, the phrase τοῦ – ἡμῶν [tou – hēmōn] means “our”, not “the our”: in this context, the Greek word [tou, “of the”] is part of the possessive phrase. It is therefore not normal to translate it into English. So the phrase τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν [tou megalou theou kai sōtēros hēmōn] means “of our great God and Saviour”, not “of the great God” and [separately] “of our Saviour”.

For this reason, the use by the Jehovah’s Witnesses of the word “the” here, along with the two uses of “of”, is unusual.

It must be remembered that in Greek the rules governing the use of the article are quite different from in English. For instance, in Greek, it is common to refer to ὁ Ἰησοῦς [ho Iēsus “*the* Jesus”]³¹, ὁ Πέτρος [ho Petros, “*the* Peter”]³², etc.

The NWT use here of the phrase “the great God” implies that there are other “gods” who are not great. This is of course the argument that they use in John 1:1, where they claim the existence of two “gods”. For more on this, see the article on John 1:1, here: http://livingwater-spain.com/John_1_1.pdf While the phrase “the great God” was used by the Jews in polytheistic societies, when the article is part of a possessive phrase, translating it separately is incorrect.

b) The Glory of Jesus Christ

Next, we note that Titus 2:13 refers to the

ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
[epifaneian tēs dóxēs tou megalou theou kai sōtēros hēmōn Iēsou Christou],
the manifestation of *the glory of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ*.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses clearly don’t want to allow(!) the Bible to speak of “the glory of Jesus Christ”, so they change the noun “glory” δόξης [dóxēs] into an adjective, “glorious”, and then the move the word and make it appear to apply to ἐπιφάνειαν [epifaneian] “the manifestation/appearing”. Again, this is not what the text says. It speaks of “the manifestation of the glory of ... Jesus Christ”.

That is what it says. No question. No debate. No doubt. No ambiguity: “the glory of Jesus Christ”.

The importance of this must not be overlooked. In Isaiah 42:8 God says, “I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not yield my glory to another or my praise to idols.” (Isaiah 42:8 NIB)

Yet in John 17 Christ is recorded as saying to the Father:

“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.” (John 17:24 NIB)

The concept of the Glory of God, הַגְּבוּרָה יְהוָה ([k^ebôd Y^ehwâ], “glory of the LORD”), was well developed in the Old Testament³³ and in the Jewish intertestamental literature, as demonstrated by Newman³⁴. In the Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures, the LXX, this is the δόξα κυρίου ([doxa kuriou], “the glory of the Lord”), for instance, in Leviticus 9:6.

In this context, in which the “glory of God” represents his radiant presence which dazzles, overwhelms and even inspires fear, Paul describes Jesus Christ as the “Lord of Glory” (τὸν κύριον τῆς δόξης [ton kurion tēs doxēs],³⁵ “the Lord of Glory”) in 1 Corinthians 2:8.

Obviously, in this verse, too, the Jehovah’s Witnesses seek to eliminate the absolutely clear reference to the use of the word “glory” in the Old Testament, with its meaning “the Glory of God”, and they convert

³¹ For instance, in Matthew 11:1 (and many other verses)

³² For instance, in Matthew 15:15 (and many other verses)

³³ See, for example, Exodus 16:7, 2 Chronicles 5:14, amongst many other places.

³⁴ Newman, Carey C., “Paul’s Glory-Christology”, Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill NV, 1992, Reprinted: Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2017

³⁵ Here with [kurion] in the accusative, and [doxēs] in the genitive, the same as in Titus 2:13.

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the Greek noun δόξα ([doxa], “glory”) into an adjective and put “the glorious Lord”.³⁶ Their English version is then used as the source for their translations into other languages. However, it does not faithfully reflect the Greek text.

Likewise, 2 Corinthians 4:4 speaks of

τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς δόξης τοῦ Χριστοῦ
[tou euangelíou tēs doxēs tou Christou]
“of the gospel of the glory of Christ” (see, for instance, NRSV).

In 2 Thessalonians 2:14 the Apostle Paul writes of

δόξης τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.
[doxēs tou kuriou ḗmōn Iēsou Christou]
“of the glory of the Lord our Jesus Christ”
“of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thessalonians 2:14, AV)

Of course, Jesus Christ had himself spoken also on other occasions about his own glory. For instance, speaking of his Second Coming, he said:

Ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῇ δόξῃ αὐτοῦ καὶ πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι μετ’ αὐτοῦ, τότε καθίσει ἐπὶ θρόνου δόξης αὐτοῦ. (Matthew 25:31)

[hotan de elthē ho huios tou anthrōpou en tē doxē autou kai pantes hoy ángeloi met autou, tote kathísei epi thrōnou doxēs autou]

In English:

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory.” (Matthew 25:31, NRSV)

Titus 2:13 merely repeats the information in these verses and in others³⁷: “the glory of ... Jesus Christ”.

c) “Happy”?

The NWT has “the happy hope” towards the beginning of the verse. For reasons of space, this phrase has not been included in the above diagram. “Happy” is a rather poor rendering of the Greek word μακαρίαν [makarian] in this context. It is an option given in the dictionary but in the context of the believer’s hope and the appearing of “the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ”, it is clearly not the most appropriate choice of word. In contrast with the NWT’s “happy”, the Apostle Peter writes of believers rejoicing “with an indescribable and glorious joy” (1 Peter 1:8, NRSV).

In his “Analytical Greek Lexicon”, Friberg gives the principal definition as follows:

μακάριος, ἰα, ον (1) of persons characterized by transcendent happiness or religious joy *blessed, happy* (MT 5.3); without religious connotation *fortunate, lucky* (LU 23.29)³⁸

Well, the context here is clearly “religious”, to use Friberg’s term, and it refers to the great Christian hope of the Second Coming of Christ, which will surely make believers somewhat more than “happy”!

³⁶ Both in their original edition of 1961 and in their 2013 revision

³⁷ See, for example, Philippians 3:1: “He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory” (NRSV), in Greek, τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ ([tēs doxēs autou], “of his glory”); 1 Peter 4:13: τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ ([tēs doxēs autou], “of his glory”); Romans 11:36; 1 Timothy 3:16; Revelation 5:12; Revelation 5:13, amongst other verses.

³⁸ Electronic version reproduced in Bible Works 10

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3. The “Kingdom Interlinear Translation”³⁹

In 1969 the Jehovah’s Witnesses published an interlinear edition of the Greek text of the New Testament, with English words printed under each Greek word and the NWT text in a column to the right.⁴⁰

For Titus 2 verse 13, the text begins at the bottom of one page and continues at the top of the next page⁴¹. We show the text here:

αἰῶνι, 13	προσδεχόμενοι	τὴν	μακαρίαν	ἐλπίδα	13 while we wait for
age,	awaiting	the	happy	hope	the happy hope and
καὶ	ἐπιφάνειαν	τῆς	δόξης	τοῦ	glorious manis-
and	manifestation	of the	glory	of the	tation of the great
θεοῦ	καὶ	σωτήρος	ἡμῶν	Χριστοῦ	’Ιησοῦ,
God	and	of Savior	of us	of Christ	Jesus,
4	2	1		5	6
					God and of [the] Savior of us, Christ Jesus,* 14 who gave
					(2)

Kingdom Interlinear & NWT texts for Titus 2:13.

The numbers and arrows are explained below.

[KIT_Titus2_13.jpg].

We note that the Westcott & Hort text⁴² of 1881 used by the Jehovah’s Witnesses has in this verse Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ [Christou Iēsou, “Christ Jesus”], as in Codex Sinaiticus, whereas both the Nestle-Aland⁴³ and the Byzantine⁴⁴ texts have Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [Iēsou Christou, “Jesus Christ”], as in Codex Alexandrinus. This difference is not significant for the translation of the rest of this verse.

There are numerous peculiarities in the Jehovah’s Witnesses interlinear text for this verse. The notes below refer to the numbered arrows in the above image.

1) The possessive pronoun/adjective

The word ἡμῶν [hēmōn] (Arrow “1”) means “our”. It is the genitive of the first person plural pronoun, which often functions as a possessive adjective. However, the “K.I.T.” gives the strange gloss “of us”.

2) – 5) Indications of the genitive case

The word σωτήρος [sōtēros, “Saviour”] (Arrow “2”) is in the genitive case because it is governed by the masculine genitive singular article τοῦ [tou] (Arrow “3”), which is the masculine genitive singular form of the article “the”.

The word “Saviour” is in the genitive case because by the rules of Greek grammar, certain preceding words require the use of this case in following words. This does not imply that it is necessary to add the word “of” here in English, but the Jehovah’s Witnesses do add the word “of”, to try to separate the word “Savior” (American spelling) from the word “God”.

³⁹ Often referred to as “K.I.T.”, the initials of the words in the name

⁴⁰ “The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures Produced by New World Bible Translation Committee”, Brooklyn, New York, U.S.A.: WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC., 1969, Copyright by WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA. A revised edition was published in 1985. For Titus 2:13 there is no difference in the text of the two editions, although the footnote has been changed for the revised edition (see below).

⁴¹ Pages 957 & 958 of the 1969 edition, corresponding to pages 941 & 942 in the 1985 edition

⁴² Westcott, B. F. and Hort, F. J. A., “The New Testament in the Original Greek”, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1881

⁴³ Nestle-Aland, Novum Testamentum Graece, 28th Revised Edition, edited by Barbara and Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, and Bruce M. Metzger in cooperation with the Institute for New Testament Textual Research, Münster/Westphalia, © 2012 Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart. Used by permission.

⁴⁴ “The New Testament in the Original Greek, Byzantine Text Form, 2005” Compiled and arranged by Maurice A. Robinson and William G. Pierpont. “This text may be freely distributed.”

What is the Correct Translation of Titus 2:13? Does it call Christ "God"?

But the words θεοῦ [theou, "God"] (Arrow "4") and Ἰησοῦ [Iēsou, "Jesus"] (Arrow "5") are genitive, too, and for the same reason, yet the Jehovah's Witnesses do not add the word "of" with either of them, because here they don't need it in order to change the meaning of the Greek.

If the Jehovah's Witnesses are to add the word "of" before "Savior", to be consistent they must also add it before the words "God" and "Jesus", which of course they do not do.

It is thus clear that their addition of the word "of" before "Savior" is motivated by their determination to hide the fact that this passage calls Christ "God". They try to separate the words "God" and "Savior" and what is more they add a separate preposition in front of "Savior", even though it is not present in the Greek!

6) Addition of an extra article

They also do something similar with their English text. A visitor to this website has written to me:

"In their own Kingdom Interlinear, there is no second definite article just before the noun "saviour". Yet, without any shame, they have provided/added one in brackets!!!! [in the text on the right of the page, Arrow "6"] ***What all circus they have to do to maintain their shaky theology!***"

This is indeed true. They have also repeated in the NWT text the word "of", which they had introduced in the interlinear text (Arrow "(2)").

Simply put, the Jehovah's Witnesses have not treated the text honestly and even in their interlinear version they seek to deceive the reader concerning the meaning of the Greek text. How hard they have worked, in order to hide what the text really says! This is linguistically unjustifiable and ethically indefensible.

4. Jehovah's Witness Commentary on Titus 2:13

In a footnote to Titus 2:13 in the 1969 edition of the "K.I.T." text, the Jehovah's Witnesses state:

"The margin of the Westcott-Hort Greek text renders this: "manifestation of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ." However, see Titus 1:4 and 2 Peter 1:1. Also see Appendix under Titus 2.13."

The appendix note that they refer to is on page 1163 of the 1969 edition. Relevant points stated there are dealt with in this article. Many points that they make are not relevant or in some cases barely intelligible, for instance: "The inspired Word of God is against any suggestion that his consecrated people borrowed or annexed anything from the impious pagans who apotheosized or deified their human rulers."

In the 1985 edition of "K.I.T.", the publishers clearly decided that it was better not to reveal the translation that Westcott and Hort had given to the Greek text that they themselves had prepared. So the publishers of the "K.I.T." suppress the translation by Westcott & Hort. Their footnote merely repeats the Jehovah's Witnesses' own translation, surely unnecessary when it occurs on the same page, but perhaps they needed to fill up the space previously occupied by the Westcott & Hort translation that they had deleted, in order to avoid introducing changes in the page breaks.

They then refer to "App 2E." This is to be found on pages 1143-44. It is a slightly-edited and enlarged version of the claims in the previous edition. It starts by justifying their version by quoting from – their version! ***This is the ultimate in circular arguments. It amounts to saying:***

"our translation is right because our translation says this."

After seeing this, it is significant that they are only able to quote from a very small number of other Bible translations for support, especially when we remember that elsewhere they teach that all Bible translations other than their own "NWT" are wrong.

"App 2E" concludes with the words, "Throughout the Holy Scriptures Jehovah and Jesus are never identified as being the same individual."

No evidence is given to support this claim and indeed it goes against many passages of Scripture. See, for instance the article "What does the text of 1 Timothy 3:16 really say?" on this website (here:

http://livingwater-spain.com/1Tim3_16.pdf), especially chapter 4, pages 20-23 in the edition consulted on 17.8.21. Other articles on this website examine other Biblical passages (see index here: <http://livingwater-spain.com/preface.htm>).

5. Elsewhere the Jehovah’s Witnesses **do** recognise that this structure applies to **one** person only.

We note that, in spite of all these arguments, elsewhere the Jehovah’s Witnesses **do** accept the Granville Sharp Rule and **do** follow the “TSKS” structure (described above) *with other verses*. For instance, the NWT version of Galatians 1:4, a verse that we looked at above, is

“according to the will of our God and Father”⁴⁵

For this verse,

1. They do not claim that the structure indicates that there are **two** people here.
2. Nor do they add the word “of” before “Father”, even though πατρός [patros, “Father”] is in the genitive case.
3. Nor do they add the word “the” before “Father”.
4. And they do not move the word ἡμῶν [hēmōn, “our”] and put it in front of the word “Father”.

If they had done these things, they would have had “according to the will of God and of our Father”, implying that **two** separate people were referred to in this structure. But that is what they do with the same structure in Titus 2:13, thus revealing that their version of the Bible is not based on what the Greek text says but on the Organization’s teachings.

Likewise, in Romans 15:6, another verse that we looked at above that also has the “TSKS” structure, the NWT accepts that this structure indicates that it is referring to one Person, “the God and Father”.

Only in Titus 2:13 do they reject the fact that the structure “TSKS” applies to one person, moving words and adding words in order to make it appear to apply to two different people.
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They thus demonstrate that they accept or reject the rules of Greek grammar and the meaning of the Greek text, depending on what suits them for any given verse, to avoid revealing that their doctrines go against what the Bible actually says. This demonstrates that the NWT text – and even their own K.I.T. interlinear text! – cannot be trusted to give the true meaning of any Bible passage.

⁴⁵ NWT, both in the 1961 edition and unchanged in the 2013 revision

PART V: THE ANSWER

1. A Dangerous Book

It is clear that the Greek New Testament is a dangerous book for the Jehovah’s Witness Organization. The leaders craftily manipulate the text and the true meaning, so that the people whom they target and seek to control, both current and potential future members, cannot see what the text really says.

For centuries, the Roman Catholic church sought to control access to the Bible. They forbade its reading by lay people, prohibited translations and – bizarrely! – only permitted even most clergy to read it in the Vulgate Latin translation, not in the original languages. They even went so far as to burn Bibles that had been translated into the vernacular, and to torture and burn translators alive at the stake, and even people who were simply discovered to have a Bible in their home.⁴⁶ This horrendous abuse of power and denial of fundamental human rights went against all the basic principles of Christianity. (See, for instance, Matthew 5:44, Romans 12:19-21 and many other verses.)

The Roman Catholic church has abandoned these practices, but in the 21st century the Jehovah’s Witness Organization still controls access by its members to the original text of the Bible, it changes that text, it makes misleading translations and prohibits its members from reading other translations of the Bible, branding all other translations as “false translations by apostates and others equally under the control of Satan”.

Ultimately, the Roman Catholic church failed in its attempts to limit access to the Bible. The 21st century is an era when people consider that independent access to knowledge and to unbiased information are basic human rights. For this reason, the abusive control exercised by the Jehovah’s Witness Organization will also fail.

2. Start with the Text

The Jehovah’s Witnesses are not the only sect – nor even the first sect – to deny the deity of Christ, so they are able to find people from whom they can quote in support of their view. However, all these people have one characteristic in common:

they start with their beliefs, and they then try to justify them from the Bible.

As we have said elsewhere (the article “Was Jesus Worshipped in the New Testament and the Early Church?”, here: <http://livingwater-spain.com/worship.pdf>, especially page 21 in the edition of this article consulted on 16.8.21.), the Jehovah’s Witnesses are starting “from the wrong end”: they are starting with their system of beliefs, and trying to make the text conform to their doctrines.

This is the opposite of the true job of the translator. The job of the translator is *to start with the Greek text*, and to render what it actually says into the target language, which for the JW’s is only ever English, as they only ever “translate” the Bible (if what they do can be called “translation”) into English, and all their versions in other languages are then translated from the English version that they have produced.

If the real meaning of the text presents the Organization with problems, that has to be addressed *by the Organization*. In a normal situation, this would result in *modifying their teachings to match what the Bible actually says*.

It is not the job of the translator *to change the meaning of the text so that it matches the Organization’s teachings*, but that is what the Jehovah’s Witnesses do. We discuss this more in an article on the translation of John 8:58, here http://livingwater-spain.com/John8_58.pdf

⁴⁶ For a recent account of this (in Spanish), I refer to Escobar, Mario, “Palabras de fuego: Cómo Casiodoro de Reina entregó su vida por el libro que cambiaría la historia”, Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Grupo Nelson, 2021. Although the genre is creative narrative, the book is written by a historian and based on in-depth research, ensuring the accuracy of the key facts.

3. Look at the Context

Let us remember the context of Titus 2:13. We see the immediate context in verses 11 to 14, in which the Apostle Paul reminds his readers that it is essential that the believer in Christ lives a new life, a life that is very different from the life of an unbeliever, a life in which the bad things that one may have done before coming to faith in Christ are abandoned, a life in which one seeks to live “lives that are sensible, upright and godly” (v 12), “eager to do what is good”. (Titus 2:14, NIB). Verse 13 encourages us and motivates us, reminding us that Christ will return, and so we will always be “looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.” (Titus 2:13 NASB)

4. A response to the Objection

At the beginning of this article we referred to the claim by one American religious sect that Titus 2:13 refers to **two** Persons, God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. However, if we read the whole immediate context, verses 11-14, we see that there is in these verses no reference to God the Father at all.

Some may claim that the phrase “the grace of God” in verse 11 is a reference to God the Father, but when we read the verse we see that it is actually a reference to the First Coming of Christ, who “**has appeared**, bringing salvation to all humanity” (see NRSV). It is **in Christ** that the Grace of God has been manifested.

We need to read the whole passage with an open mind, asking, “What is it about?”, “What is it telling us?” We must not come to this passage – or any Bible passage – with our minds made up, determined to make the passage say what we want it to say.

We then see that Titus 2:11-14 is **all about Jesus Christ** and His impact on our lives.

The response of believers to His First Coming and the redemption that He brought must be to live a new life and to wait expectantly for His Second Coming, “the blessed hope and visible appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ” (v. 13).

Conclusion

One Jehovah’s Witness on my doorstep said (about another NT verse), “It can’t mean that, so it must mean something else!”

What he meant was, “According to the teachings of the Jehovah’s Witness Organization of New York and Pennsylvania, it can’t mean that!”

Unfortunately for him and for the “Organization”, the Biblical text does mean what it says.

To come back to Titus 2:13, the text says:

“Waiting expectantly for the blessed hope and visible appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

The only possible meaning of this is that the text calls Jesus Christ “our great God and Saviour”.