

Hid Himself versus Was Hidden

The Passive Voice wrongly Translated

The following two verses are a good example of getting the voice wrong in translation. Quite apart from wrongly portraying what happened, it hides the significance of what really did happen.

The two verses are John 8:59 and 12:36. Here they are in the NASB translation.

John 8:59 *Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.*

John 12:36 *"While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light." These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them.*

These NASB words clearly say that Jesus **hid himself**. In English, we would say this verb, hid, is in the active voice since Jesus, according to the NASB, was the one doing the hiding. Unfortunately this is not what the Greek says.

The Greek verses follow and a very literal translation follows the Greek:

John 8:59 ηραν ουν λιθους ινα βαλωσιν επ' αυτον. Ιησους δε **εκρυβη** και εξηλθεν εκ του ιερου.

John 8:59 *They-lifted-up therefore stones in-order-that they-might-throw upon him. Jesus but **was hidden** and went out-of the temple.*

John 12:36 ως το φως εχετε, πιστευετε εις το φως, ινα υιοι φωτος γενησθε. Ταυτα ελαλησεν Ιησους, και απελθων **εκρυβη** απ' αυτων.

John 12:36 *As the light YOU-are-having be-YOU-believing into the light in-order-that sons-of-light YOU-might-become. These-(things) spoke Jesus and having-gone-off **was hidden** from them.*

The two highlighted Greek words, **εκρυβη**, are the verbs, which basically mean to hid. In the Greek however, they are in the passive voice. What does passive voice mean? Quick lesson. Voice is the characteristic of the verb which tells the reader who is doing the action of the verb, in this case, who is doing the hiding. If a verb is in the active voice, it means the subject (in this case, Jesus) is doing the hiding. That is the impression one gets when reading the NASB verses for it says, Jesus **hid himself**. The problem is that this verb is in the passive voice in the Greek. The passive voice tells the reader that someone else hid Jesus. Therefore correctly translated both verses should be translated, *was hidden*, to convey the proper meaning.

Thus the verses would now read:

John 8:59 *Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus was hidden and went out of the temple.*

John 12:36 *"While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light." These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and was hidden from them.*

The discerning reader should now be prompted to ask this question: Who hid Jesus? The only reasonable candidate for who hid Jesus, is The Spirit of His Father inside Him, called, God's Spirit (in Matthew's gospel), which Jesus received at His baptism. The proof of this comes in the following incidents in scripture.

Two more times in scripture we see things/people being moved mysteriously from

one place to another. Firstly, when Jesus got into the boat in John 6:21, it was immediately at the land to which they were going. Not only was Jesus moved, but the boat and all who were in it. In Acts 8:39-40, Philip was snatched from the sight of the Ethiopian eunuch and found himself at Azotus. In this incident however, we are told who did the snatching, the Spirit of Yehovah. Thus in the same way, Jesus was taken out of the sight of the Jews by the Spirit of the Father inside Him.