

Research work for Art Rupprecht.....

In the King James Version, Isaiah 65:1 reads, "I am sought of them that asked not for me, I am found of them that sought me not..." This verse is quoted by Paul in Romans as a prediction of the calling of the Gentiles.

The Revised Standard Version translates this "I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me, I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me", thus making it clearly have nothing to do with the calling of the Gentiles, and making Paul completely wrong in his interpretation of the Old Testament.

When the supporters of the Revised Standard Version are criticized for this mistranslation of the Old Testament, their reply is that the Hebrew forms are niphal and that consequently they may have "a meaning like the Greek middle", and as a result that the translation of the Revised Standard Version is an equally possible translation. I am interested to know whether the Greek middle would properly be translated in such a way as this: "I was ready to be sought", instead of "I was sought", or instead of "I sought"; "I was ready to be found" instead of either "I was found" or "I found". I would like to know just what the situation is in this regard in the Greek, and whether there is good evidence that this is a correct interpretation of the Greek middle.

Of course that does not solve the problem. The problem is the matter of whether the Hebrew niphal can be translated this way. It seems to me that ordinarily the niphal is translated either as a reflexive or as a passive. The reflexive would be, "I sought myself", and "I found myself". The passive would be, "I was sought" and "I was found". If "ready" can be inserted, I should think it would mean "I was ready to seek" or "I was ready to find", rather than "I was ready to be sought" or "I was ready to be found". It is a matter on which I am quite sure that modernistic commentaries dogmatically take a position contrary to what Paul says. It would be interesting to look into some modernistic commentaries to see their discussion, either at this point or in connection with Paul's interpretation. It would be also interesting to know something of the exact interpretation of the words used by the Septuagint both here and in the quotation in Romans.