**The Origin of the English Word for God**

**Part Two**

The Phonetic Etymology of ‘God’

By Craig Bluemel

**I DEDICATE THIS STUDY TO REX,**

**MY FRIEND & BROTHER IN JESUS**

**The Hebrew Language**

In the Hebrew Old Testament, proper names consist of a single word, a phrase, or a sentence.  These proper names function as one word, whether the breakdown of their component parts consists of a single word, a phrase, or a sentence.  Each word has a very specific meaning and its vocalization is subject to the phonetic laws governing Hebrew as a spoken language, including the accents that govern the word.

Some may argue there is no way to determine the exact pronunciation of ancient Hebrew syllables with consonants, since vowel points were not included and these had to be learned by the individual as the language was passed on from one generation to the next.  This line of reasoning makes us remiss to enunciate ANY of the Hebrew proper names in the entire Old Testament!  The best approach is to use common sense and do as much research as possible with no other agenda than to find the truth.  After that, qualify any hypothesis by humbly admitting what is fact and what is speculation; in this manner, you will gain the respect of others because nobody enjoys listening to a ‘know-it-all.’

There is a growing practice among various sects of Christians to heed what they believe is the correct enunciation of YHWH; this task is virtually impossible, but Yahweh is a close transliteration.  Even so, there is less importance in how a person pronounces His name than how he or she lives its characteristic qualities.  The same principle applies to the folks that think it is more spiritual to utter the name, “Yahshua,” than to say, “Jesus.”  This rationale, if for no other reason, is a manifestation of abject legalism.  If on the other hand, they use the Semitic languages because of the beauty of the resonation, and this enhances their worship, I see no harm in it, unless it prevents them from being all things to all men for the sake of the gospel.

Rotherham’s Emphasized Bible is a very helpful tool in studying the verbalization of Hebrew because it accents the phonetics.  Using a simple code, (special bracketed words and phrases) Joseph Bryant Rotherham provides the student with a ‘hands-on’ tool so he or she experiences how the Hebrew people in the Old Testament actually spoke.  As you read the Emphasized Bible, you see exactly which words have greater or lesser weight of importance.

Once the student is familiar with the correct application of these grammar codes, they are able to articulate the accented words, thereby enhancing the intended meanings almost as closely as spoken Hebrew in Old Testament times.  I cannot over-emphasize (bad pun) how rich this makes the language come alive, particularly reading poetic passages and/or the lyrics of the Psalms set to music.  Christian musicians would do well to invest in Rotherham’s Emphasized Bible or its software versions, as it will undoubtedly provide reams of inspired praise and worship songs based in the truth of scripture.

The ancient Hebrew language best explains the origin and derivation of the common English word for deity, which is, “ God,” or, “god.”  The typical path sought to ascertain the radical or primary signification for the English word, “God,” does not work for the student in this case, but against.  Our English word for “god” or “God” develops from repetitious vocalization of a Hebrew word, “Gaad,” (transliterated “Gad” & pronounced “gawd”), even though for centuries was used in pagan deity worship.

The etymology of the word ‘God’ or ‘god’ is a difficult path to follow because the English is a compilation and blending of several different dialects, including but not limited to Latin, German, Greek, Anglo-Saxon, Indo-European and even Hebrew.  It was recently pointed out to me by my friend Rex that the Hebrew proper name of, “Gad,” in the Old Testament is actually pronounced as, “gawd.”  This caught my attention and motivated me to do some serious digging.

In the Old Testament, the Hebrews used proper names in a much different way than we do in western culture.  Our modern names are primarily for personal identification, whereas the Biblical names are also descriptive, often prophetic, and nearly always of spiritual significance.  Hebrew parents related the name of newborn infants to ‘God’ and some did so by openly announcing the child’s consecration to Him.

As you will later see, from Jacob’s twelve sons the tribe of Gad became a warlike nomadic people that fought against the Assyrians, Romans and other fierce and dangerous opponents.  Jacob’s prophetic blessing upon Gad is observable in the tribe’s behavioral characteristics throughout history until many centuries later.  In modern history, the descendants of Gad are among the Gauthie, Gauls, Goths, and Celts speaking Gadhelic and other Teutonic dialects of the Old Norse period.  Note throughout this study there are inconsistencies in the spelling of various dialects and ethnicities and my choice was American style contemporary; this is a moot point as long as the truth is conveyed.  Hence, the word, “God,” is found laced in the dialects of some later peoples that ventured into Breton, Scotland, Brittany, Iceland, etc.

The way Semitic languages associate God’s characteristic qualities with the spelling the of child’s proper name is by joining the Hebrew names for Deity (Yah, Yahweh, El, Elohim, Eloah, etc.) with the spiritual service the child was expected to render in his or her life.  A Semitic woman with a barren womb giving birth considered it an ‘act of Yahweh’ and the name given to the newborn infant reflected the favor of God in the gracious gift of the child, (e.g. Nathaniel = "gift of God"; Samuel ="heard of God"; Adonijah = "Yahweh is my Lord", etc.).

A compound name like Gedaliah, (from ‘Gad’ + ‘Yah’) means, "Yah is great."  A moment's reflection makes clear that these names do not describe the persons who bear them, but in every case speak of Yahweh’s greatness.  They emphasize the important facts that personal names might be, and often were, memorial and doctrinal, and that personal names were a part of the ordinary speech of the people, full of meaning and intelligible to all, subject to the phonetic laws of the Hebrews, and obedient to the rules of grammar.

**The Semitic Languages**

Spoken language is a complex subject of study because of its flexuous nature; among any given mixture of ethnic peoples, verbal communication generates ever-changing dialects.   A common word list usually develops to accommodate modifications that perpetually occur with use and time, first in the spoken language, and then as a result, modifications in its written form eventually take place.  Word meanings also change thru use, adapting to the multifaceted, wide-ranging cultural, societal, commercial and religious axiomatic influences of its users.

Some linguistic background is helpful in the study of the word ‘God’ because it provides a bare bones framework for explaining why language changes, even though it is a woefully adequate portrayal of its complexities.  One simple rule of thumb to follow in studying the languages used to translate scripture is this: All language begins and continues as a means of auditory (oral) verbal communication.  In most (if not all) ancient cultures, oral tradition was primary and written terminology secondary, usually to preserve some historical record of its people.  The written form is always subject to adaptation of the oral or conversational form of speech thru correction, alteration and revision.

Modern grammar as we know it has existed for only a relatively short period of time when viewed in light of earth’s 6000+ years of existence.  Hebrew is a Semitic dialect and as such, it is among the oldest known languages.  God created Adam to speak only one dialect; however, after man’s fiasco at the Tower of Babel the languages were confused and fragmented.  After the flood in Noah’s time, his three sons Ham, Shem, and Japheth became progenitors of three distinct tongues (Genesis 9:18; 10:6).

Shem’s tongue is Shemitic and the Hebrew tongue is a cognate of the word now generally written, "Semitic," a term introduced by Eichhorn (1787).  These Semitic languages were spoken from the Caspian Sea to the South of Arabia and from the Mediterranean to the valley of the Tigris.  Most Christians today do not realize how closely related to Hebrew is to other languages in the south and east parts of the world.  This is extremely relevant in determining the etymological path in the development of the English word for ‘God’ derived from either Hebrew or Aramaic forms of Gad (pronounced ‘Gawd’).

Members of Semitic (middle, north & east dialects as well) family include Arabic (now spoken from the Caucasus to Zanzibar, and from the East Indies to the Atlantic), Sabaean, Ethiopic, Arabic, Canaanitish, including Old and New Hebrew, Phoenician, Moabitish, Aramaic, including  east Aramaic or Syrian (language of Syrian Christians), language of Babylonian Talmud, Mandaean; West or Palestinian Aramaic of the Targums, Palestinian Talmud (Gemara), Biblical Aramaic ("Chaldee"), Samaritan, language of Nabataean inscriptions.  Hebrew Semites migrated into Palestine in the 3rd millennia B.C.; this is not as ancient as its cognate ancestors the Assyrian-Babylonian languages.

Historically, the Hebrew language has two parts (old & new); before the Babylonian Captivity is Old Hebrew and afterward is New Hebrew.  The Babylonian exile sounded the death-knell of the Hebrew language. The educated classes were deported to Babylon or fled to Egypt; those who remained were not slow to adopt the language used by their conquerors.  The old Hebrew became a literary and sacred tongue, the language of everyday life being probably Aramaic.  Whatever may be the exact meaning of Nehemiah 8:8, it proves that the people of that time had extreme difficulty in understanding classical Hebrew when it was read to them.

**Nehemiah 8:7-8**  …the Levites — helped the people to understand the Law, and the people remained in their place.  So they read from the Book of the Law of God distinctly, faithfully amplifying and giving the sense so that the people understood the reading. AMP

For the purpose of religion, the Old Hebrew continued to be employed for several centuries by the Maccabees and Bar Cochba (135 AD) for patriotic reasons.  Historically, even centuries later at the time of Christ, the greater majority of this part of Jewish population (from Judah, Benjamin & Levi) remained in Babylon for commercial trade reasons and only a small percentage returned to Jerusalem and Palestine.  The apostle Peter’s greeting from Babylon, as he spent the majority of his time there to reach the Jews with the gospel of Messiah:

**1 Peter 5:13** She, your sister church here in Babylon, who is elect (chosen) with yourselves, sends you greetings, and so does my son (disciple) Mark. AMP

Afterward, the Hebrew Scriptures remained intact, fastidiously maintained by Levitical scribes, but the spoken form of the old language progressively fell into disuse.  One Hebrew manuscript Document D (Deuteronomic Code) dates to about 621 and Document P about 444 BC.  After the Jews returned from the exile, the Aramaic language was the lingua franca of the Seleucid empire, displacing Assyrian, Old Hebrew and Phoenician. The Phoenician script also had given place to the Aramaic in Mesopotamia, Syria and Egypt.  In Syria, it divided into two branches, a northern, which grew into Syriac, and a southern, or Jewish, from which the New Hebrew character was produced.

An important element to understanding the Hebrew word ‘Gad’ (gawd) as the true source of the English ‘God’ is its paronomasic use in key Old Testament scripture passages.  The tribe of Gad was part of Israel’s northern kingdom with a sorted history that belie its association with false deities.  Gad as a tribe spoke a Semitic dialect, either Hebrew, Aramaic, or both.  Their conquest and captivity by Assyria affected their language and faith in adverse ways.  Gad means, “good fortune,” or, “a troop comes,” but the former does not seem to reflect what happened to them.  As mentioned earlier, Gad was a warlike nation with a nature more befitting, “a troop comes,” than, “good fortune.”

In Genesis 30:10 Leah's handmaid Zilpah bore Jacob a son and in Genesis 30:11 Leah said, “How fortunate!” Therefore, she named him Gad.  Most scholars agree this is poorly translated, as the Hebrew for, “How fortunate,” is transliterated, “Baa' gaad,” is a reference to one of the Syrian false deities, most likely Jupiter, (Jupiter was later embraced & renamed Zeus by the Greeks).  Laban, father of Rachel, for whom Jacob labored seven more years for her hand in marriage, was Syrian and taught his daughter to believe heavenly bodies (occult astrology) influenced things on earth, she said, “By *Gad* (the false deity) I have gotten this son!”  Therefore, since Gag the man was named after Gad the false deity, his beginnings in life made him predisposed to occult astrological worship.

Long before the birth of the Israelite man Gad, another Gad existed.  Gad was a Syrian idol and the first whose name is mentioned in scripture in Isaiah 65:11.  The Gadites, who settled on the east side of the Jordan River, incorporated the worship of the false deity Gad, mingling it with Yahweh worship.

**Isaiah 65:11** “But you who forsake the Lord, who forget and ignore My holy Mount Zion, who prepare a table for Gad the Syrio-Babylonian god of fortune and who furnish mixed drinks for Meni the god of destiny.    AMP

The words of the prophet Isaiah demonstrate the widespread worship of the false deity named Gad, which Judah had apparently embraced, along with another false deity named Meni.  The Syrian idol Gad, considered a very powerful deity that controlled the planet Jupiter, is part of ancient Semitic peoples’ worship and later embraced by successive nations, notably Greece and Rome.  In Roman mythology, Jupiter is the ruler of the gods, the son of the god Saturn, whom he overthrew. Originally, the god of the sky and king of heaven, Jupiter was worshiped as god of rain, thunder, and lightning and this makes him associated with the Old Norse or Icelandic gods (e.g. – Thor, god of thunder) later in history.  As the protector of Rome, he is called Jupiter Optimus Maximus, (“the best and greatest”), and was worshiped in a temple on the Capitoline Hill.

The influences of Egyptian deities during Israel’s captivity there deepened the roots of Gad-Jupiter worship thru Amon or Ammon, ancient Egyptian deity.  Originally a local Theban god of reproductive forces, represented as a ram.  Amon, his wife, Mut (Egyptian, “the mother”), and his son, the moon god Khon (Egyptian, “to traverse the sky”), formed the divine triad of Thebes. Later Amon was identified with the sun god Ra of Heliopolis, and was known as Amon-Ra, “the father of the gods, the fashioner of men, the creator of cattle, the lord of all being.”

As a universal god Amon became the god of the Egyptian nation and the empire. The power of his high priest rivaled that of the pharaoh, provoking political problems similar to modern church-state rivalry. The most massive temple ever built was constructed for Amon-Ra at Al Karnak. Amon was worshiped in the ancient Greek colonies of Cyrene, where he was identified with Zeus, and in Rome, where he was associated with Jupiter.

The Romans identified Jupiter with Zeus, the supreme god of the Greeks, and assigned to the Roman god the attributes and myths of the Greek divinity; the Jupiter of Latin literature, therefore, has many Greek characteristics, but the Jupiter of Roman religious worship remained substantially untouched by the Greek influence. With the goddesses Juno and Minerva, Jupiter formed the triad whose worship was the central cult of the Roman state.

This pagan triad is the basis for the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, which merged Roman polytheism’s principal gods with Neo-Platonic concepts and renaming Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva as God the Father, Goddess Mother, and God the Son.  Goddess Mother was later dropped due to rigorous opposition and replaced with, ‘God the Holy Spirit.’

The tribe of Gad’s descendants continued this tradition into modern history among Old Norse gods, which held it to be the god of thunder (e.g. – Thor) and/or storms and weather.  Semitic language influence survived Hellenistic accents as, “Jupi,” dropped, and ‘ter’ acquired as guttural palatal, “ther,” or, “thor.”

When Jacob (aka Israel) neared the end of his days, he called his twelve sons and gave each one a patriarchal blessing.  To Gad Jacob spoke a prophecy by attaching word cognates to his name in Genesis 49:19; the entire verse in Hebraic literature represents Gad’s name thru a word play known as paronomasia.  Paronomasia is a play upon words, similar in nature to the use of a pun.  By means of ‘Gad’ as the principal rhetorical (or symbolic) figure, Jacob’s prophetic blessing upon his son uses other Hebrew words nearly alike in sound (“guwd, gªduwd”), but of different meanings, to speak with forceful persuasion.

**Genesis 49:19**||Gad||   ||a troop|| shall troop on him; but ||he|| shall troop on the rear.  (Rotherham’s Emphasized Bible)

Rotherham’s Emphasized Bible uses a phonetic code of double bars on each side of ||Gad|| and ||a troop|| to assist the reader and illustrate how it sounds when spoken.  The lengthened gap of space between ||Gad||    ||a troop|| is intentional because the first word is dynamically and vigorously spoken.  In this case, “Gad” pronounced with volume and power emphasizes Jacob’s passionate desire for his son to hear him with more than his ears, but with his heart and feeling.

To mimic the Hebrew phonetic raise your voice and say, “Gawd!” then slight pause, raise your voice again and say, “*gawd-hadh!”*  The Hebrew-English transliteration below is highlighted to illustrate the word cognates of the Hebrew form of Gaad:

**Genesis 49:19** Gaad   gªduwd (troop) yªguwdenuw (troop or press on him) wªhuw' yaagud (shall troop or press) `aaqeeb.

Two cognate roots are employed and follow the proper name Gaad; the first is gªduwd (pronounced, “g**|**wd-head”), which underlies the word rendered, “troop,” (or in some Bible versions as, “marauding band”).  The second and third Hebrew word cognates that follow are constructed as compound words, but the root word, “guwd,” (“gudh”), is the same and means, “to press.”

In the use not only of the root of the name Gad (“G**|**wd”), but of a different root also that is similar in sound, it is evident that the purpose is simply to play upon the name. The brief oracle is uttered almost exclusively by means of variations in the vocalization of the two roots, producing one of the most successful word plays in Hebrew literature.

**The Migration of Gad**

AND

**The Demystification of the Lost Tribes of Israel**

Having made the phonetic connection between the Hebrew name ‘Gad’ (pronounced “Gawd” or “God”) and the modern English verbalization of “God” it is necessary to validate this tie with historical facts.  The only correct way to legitimately accomplish this task is using Old Testament scripture and data available from credible historians to map the movements of Israel and Gad’s descendants from approximately the Assyrian captivity forward.

The play on words described in Genesis 49:19 has more to do with the origins of the English word for ‘God’ than one realizes because Gad’s descendants became a warlike nomadic people, who at first were defeated by a “troop” in that the Assyrians defeated them in war.  However, Gad’s descendants fought back as though it was inherent to their nature.  Below in the text of 2 Kings 18:9-13 is the account of how Israel, including Gad as one of its ten tribes, was defeated and taken captive.

**2 Kings 18:9-13** In the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it.  After three years it was taken; in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken.  The king of Assyria carried Israel away to Assyria and put them in Halah and on the Habor the river of Gozan and in the cities of the Medes, because they did not obey the voice of the Lord their God, but transgressed His covenant; even all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded and would not hear it or do it.  In the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. AMP

Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and took Israel (10 northern tribes) captive  between 732-700 B.C.; the Assyrians called Israelites by their native dialect, “Khumri,” and also, “Beth-Khumri.”  Seven years later (verse 13) the Assyrian army came up against the remainder of the cities of Judah and took them.  In about 596 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came and besieged Jerusalem and took approximately 22,000 of its inhabitants captive.

After the Assyrians had captured most of Israel, they relocated them in the area north of their homeland in the Caucuses mountain region.  After living there for about 100 years these people were identified as the ‘people of the Asian Caucuses’ and this is where the name ‘Caucasian’ is derived (from Caucus + Asian = Caucasian).  As they migrated west over the course of many centuries, the sons of Isaac acquired various names.  The Greeks identified Khumri by a different name, “Cimmerians.”  Largely unaware of their origin and many Greeks believed the Cimmerians to be a mythical people.

Being nomads, some of Cimmerians journeyed further south, settling in and around the borders of Media (e.g. - the area known today as Afghanistan).  Some stayed in Babylon or moved south and east into Persia, while other Cimmerians pushed north thru the Passage of Araxes, between the Caspian and Black Sea, moving parallel to and on the west side of the Caucuses mountain range.

The Persians identified Cimmerians that migrated south and east as, “Sakka,” because Sakka is phonetically derived from, “Isaac,” or House of Isaac.  In the text of in Amos 7:9, 16 these, “Sakka,” Israelites, then steeped in pagan idolatry, identified themselves as, “Isaac,” or, “the house of Isaac.”

**Amos 7:9** And the idolatrous high places of Isaac (Israel) shall be desolate and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste, and I will rise with the sword against the house of King Jeroboam who set up the golden calf shrines.  Now therefore listen to the word of the Lord: You say, “Do not prophesy against Israel and drop no statements not complimentary to the house of Isaac.”  AMP

Ancient historians maintained a written record of the people called, “Scythians,” whomthe Greeks called, “Sacae.”  The Sacae clan is the same as those called Sakka by the Persians.  The name, “Scythian,” comes from the Assyrian word, “Iskuza,” which is derived from the Hebrew name of Abraham’s son, “Isaac.”  From about 650-600 BC, the Israelites living in Media, also Scythians, come to be known as, ‘Sacae,’ although many retained the name, ‘Cimmerian.’  These Cimmerians made an alliance with their former adversary Assyria, in order to establish colonies in Sacasene and Bactria regions.  There were two classes of Scythians, Cimmerian and Sacae for many years.

Bactria is an ancient country in Central Asia and one of the Hellenistic states founded by the successors of Alexander the Great.  It was situated between the Hindu Kush Mountains and the Oxus River (now Amu Darya) in what is now part of Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan.

A branch of the Hindu Kush Mountains separated Bactria from the territories of the Shakas (Sacae), Iranian nomads.  Its capital was Bactra, present-day Wazirabad (formerly Balkh), in north Afghanistan. Before the Greek conquest, Bactria was an eastern province of the Persian Empire.  The present-day Iranian nomads that still live here are now called, “Shakas,” and they are actually descendants of the same Scythians that Assyria identified as, “Sakka.”   Therefore, the Iranian Shakas are blood relatives as descendants of Isaac, (i.e. - “Isaac’s sons”).

Angered by their alliance with the Assyrians, during this same period the Medes drove some of the Scythian ‘Sacae’ and the Cimmerians further north through the Caucasus mountains.  Not all of the Scythians pushed north by the Medes went by way of the Caucuses as the Cimmerians did; instead, they followed a route due east along the south tip of the Caspian Sea, thru Halah Harbor, and then traveled north-northeast parallel to the Caspian Sea on its eastern side.  Later the Cimmerians were pushed further north into Europe and became known as Celts (more on this later).

Evading their pursuers the Medes, who became preoccupied fighting the Persians under Cyrus the Great, this group of Scythians settled throughout parts of ancient Togarmah (now Armenia) and into Russia.   These Scythians eventually renamed themselves and incorporated their ancestral patriarch’s named, “Gad,” into their new name, “Sagetae.”  The Sagetae Gadites were herdsmen and fierce warriors, fulfilling the prophetic words of Jacob in Genesis 49:19.

Ancient Greeks and Romans writers left a record of these southern peoples in Scythia, an indeterminate region south of Russia,  that included the greater part of southeastern Europe and Central Asia.  Portions of this region were occupied by a succession of horse-riding nomadic peoples, including, chronologically, the Cimmerians, Scythians, and Sarmatians.

The Sagetae people are the direct descendants of Gad, but they were not worshippers of Yahweh.  They used astrology to worship pagan deities, primarily thru the ruling planet Jupiter, as this is a continuation of religious heritage passed on from Gad’s inception and from the Babylonian deity named Gad.  The term Sagittarius in the zodiac is classified as a fire sign and its ruling planet is Jupiter.  The astrological name ‘Sagittarius’ is linked to the name of these Gadites called Sagetae and later Sagittarians.  Note also, Sagittarius is in the ninth sign of zodiac: the ninth sign of the zodiac is represented by an archer to depict these warlike people, who were also known as marksmen archers.

Armenia is a historic region of western Asia, which in ancient times was an independent country comprising southern Caucasia and northeastern Asia Minor.  The southwestern part of the region now belongs to Turkey, the southeastern part to Iran, and the northwestern part to Armenia.  The region is a complex of plateaus traversed by mountain ranges; the highest point is Mount Ararat (5,137 m/16,854 ft). It is drained by the headstreams of the Euphrates, Tigris, and Aras rivers; the principal lakes are Van, Urmia, and Sevan.  Many, but not all of Sagetae people, lived on of the plateaus or mesas indigenous to this rugged landscape; these became known as the ‘mesa Sagetae’ people and eventually attained the name Mesagetae, which today is spelled differently, “Massagetae.”

The geographical origins of the Armenians are obscure, but ethnologically they are classified as Caucasoid, and linguistically as Indo-European.  According to some authorities, their ancestors include the aboriginal people of the region; the Chaldeans, who occupied it late in the 2nd millennium BC; and later invaders.  The valley of the Araxes (now Aras) River and the plateau around Van Gölü (Lake Van) was the dominion, from about 1270 to 850 BC, of a kingdom, sometimes called Van, but known in nearby Assyria as Urartu (Hebrew Ararat).

Cyrus the Great (600?-530 BC), king of Persia (550-530 BC) and a member of the Achaemenid dynasty, became ruler of the Persian district of Anshan in about 558 BC.  The Persian Empire was the most powerful state in the world until its conquest two centuries later by Alexander the Great. Cyrus was an able and merciful ruler.  Significant among his deeds was his granting of permission to the Jews to return from their exile in Babylon to their native Israel to rebuild the Temple of Solomon. Cyrus died while leading an expedition against the eastern tribe, the Massagetae, and was succeeded by his son, who became Cambyses II.

The Cimmerians that fought the Medes were eventually driven north through the Caucasus, settling in south Russia and around the regions of the Danube River, moving as far north as southern Russia. From 525-300 B.C. a marauding troop of Gadite Scythians known as Sagetae, drove their fellow blood-relatives the Cimmerians out of south Russia.   The Cimmerians then fled to Oder and Vistula in the Baltic, Angles, and Scandinavia and were later called Celts, Angles, and Saxon (the term ‘Saxon’ is from Isaac’s-sons).  The term ‘Celts’ is a broad brush title and should not be confused with any one specific ethnicity, as there were several classes of Celts in a wide range from Russia and Iceland in the north to the French Bretons, Ireland, Scotland, Brittany, etc.

From 250-100 BC, Samartia from the East invaded south Russia; this forced the Sagetae (Scythians) that lived there further west into the Teutones (Germany), Swithoid, and some went north into Poland.  These warlike descendants of Gad came to be called ‘Getae’ or ‘Gauthie’ and later as ‘Goths.’  Among them also were the Scuths (later called Scots).

From 400-100 BC the Celts (from the Scythian & Cimmeri people) spread out in three basic directions and areas; some attacked Rome in 390 BC, settling in north Italy for 200 years.  Others, known as Galatians (probably descended from Cimmerians) migrated to Asia Minor after invading Greece in 279 BC.  Most of them however moved into the Bretons and France, and later to England.

From 450-1100 AD the Gothic Scythians were renamed by the Romans as, ‘German.’  Some of these moved to Britain and became ‘Anglo-Saxons,’ (450-600 AD).  Others Goths moved north to Jutland and became known as Danes, or as Vikings, or as Norsemen, or Normans.

Later in history, the strength of its phonetic accent inspired descendants of the tribe of Gad that migrated to Brittany and Scotland, such as the Celts, to develop Gadhalic, a dialect of Icelandic (or Old Norse).  These Celts modify the phonetic sound, “Gawd,” as paronomasia, producing a now familiar sound into the universal transliteration, “God,” representative of deity.

The Hebrew alphabet is characterized by the large number of guttural sounds, which it contains, and these are accentuated palatals, (a palatal is a letter pronounced by the aid of the palate, or an articulation of the root of the tongue with the roof of the mouth; as g hard and ‘k’, in e.g. – ‘ek’).  Hence, when the Phoenician alphabet passed over into Greece, these unpronounceable sounds, “**'**” (**`**ayin), and, “ch” (cheth), “h” (he),  '  ('aleph) were changed into vowels, A, E, H, O.  The gutturals and palatals are still pronounced and very recognizable throughout Germany and Scandinavia, France, Poland etc.

**CHRONOLOGICAL OVERVIEW OF CHANGING NAMES FOR ISRAELITES**

Assyrians conquered 10 tribes of Israelites by the name Khumri

Khumri living by Asian Caucuses called Caucasian

Greeks identified Khumri as Cimmerians

Persians called Cimmerians in Media Sakka (from Isaac)

Ancient historians record people called Scythians

The name Scythian derived from Assyrian word for Isaac called Iskuza

Scythians are the same people as the Sakka

The Greeks identify the Sakka people as Sacae

Israelites living in Media are Scythians known as Sacae

For many years, there are two classes of Scythians, Cimmerian and Sacae

Modern day Iranian nomads called Shakas are from ancient Sakka & Sacae

Scythians in Togarmah (Armenia) are called Massagetae & Sagetae

Massagetae & Sagetae in Armenia are Gad’s descendants

Scythians living in the Caucuses called Cimmerians & Scythian

Cimmerians driven into Europe called Celts, Angles, and Saxons

Sagetae (Scythians) that drove Cimmeri out of Russia later called Gauthie (from Gad)

The Gauthie (Scythians) forced out of Russia by Samartia later called Getae & later ‘Goths.’

Celts went 3 directions and became Galatians, Angles, and Saxons

Goths also were the Scuths (later called Scots).

Gothic Scythians renamed by the Romans as, ‘German.’

Gothic Germans that moved to Britain and became ‘Anglo-Saxons,’

Others Goths became known as Danes, Vikings, Norsemen, or Normans.

The lengthy explanation aforementioned details the part Gad plays in the migration of Semitic languages into Europe, particularly thru Germanic Goths that spoke Teutonic and the Anglo-Saxons.  In the early centuries of the Christian era, Germanic Goths displaced the Asian peoples of Scythia and established an Ostrogothic (eastern Goth) kingdom on the Black Sea.  The Goths are the descendants of Gad and continued fulfilling Jacob’s prophetic words to his son Gad in Genesis 49:19.

Gad, a troop shall press upon him; but he shall press upon their heel.  ASV

Gad a raiding troop shall raid him, but he shall raid at their heels & assault them victoriously. AMP

Gad will be plundered by marauding bands, but he will turn and plunder them.  NLT

Gad — troops will rush upon him; but he will rush upon the heel. Darby

Gad! A troop assaulted him, but he assaulted last. YLT

Gad, a troop shall tramp upon him, but he shall triumph at last. NKJV

As for Gad, raiders shall raid him, but he will raid at their heels. NASU

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During the early times of the, the Cimmerians, Scythians, and Sarmatians, Greek traders and colonists established many trading posts and settlements, particularly along the north coast of the Black Sea and in Crimea.  Large stretches of open plain facilitated the immigration of outside peoples.  Such migrations resulted in successive invasions, the establishment of settlements, and the assimilation of people who spoke different languages.  Thus, in the early centuries of the Christian era, Germanic Goths displaced the Asian peoples of Scythia and established an Ostrogothic (eastern Goth) kingdom on the Black Sea.

Gothic influences their language, culture and religion, including ancient Jupiter worship.  As you read, keep on mind the Goths and Ostrogoths are the descendants of Gad.  German-Gothic dialects spread all across Europe, Britain, Scotia and Asia; from the southern Russia regions south to Tarshish and Galatia.  In Celtica were the Visigoths were situated along the Mediterranean Sea, in Scotia the Gaels, the Norsemen in Scandinavia and throughout the Teutones.

Many Cymric Celtic tribes, (Cymric was formerly spelled Cimmeri) that settled in the Bretons of France, (in Brittany and surrounding regions), formed part of Armorica, the center of a confederation of Cymric Celtic tribes.  The Romans under Julius Caesar invaded the country in 56 BC, and it subsequently became the Roman province of Gallia Lugdunensis.  In the 5th and 6th centuries AD, after the withdrawal of the Romans, many Britons (Celtic natives of Britain), in flight from the Teutonic (German Goth) invaders of their homeland took refuge in the northwestern part of Armorica.  They gave the region its present name.  The Britons (later called Bretons) gradually converted the Armorican Celts, then mainly pagans, to Christianity.

The transliterated form of ‘Gad’ enunciated sounds like our English, ‘God’ (gawd) and phonetically like, “Goth.”  This phonetic similarity is not coincidental, as will be seen later when etymology links the Teutonic past with Anglo-Saxon word forms.  Unlike the Armorican Celts that converted to Christianity, the Goths were mostly pagan and remained unaffected by the influences of Christianity for some time.  Astrology integrated into Gothic worship thru false deities by various different names, Jupiter always remaining the primary deity.

These Semitic Goths, like their ancestors, believed that stars and planets represented their deity.  If the god Jupiter was angry with them, they would feel his wrath vicariously thru storms, lightning and thunder, which they believed was the voice of their supreme deity.  It may sound odd to refer to the ‘Goths’ as Semitic, but as documented in this paper, their path of war and religion is not that difficult to follow.  It is one thing to trace the migrations of a nation thru time, but doing the same with languages is tricky, complex, and requires extensive linguistic background.

Jupiter was the Roman name for the Greek god Zeus and Zeus was the primary deity in Antioch and Syria during the journeys of the apostle Paul.

**Acts 14:11-15** And the crowds, when they saw what Paul had done, lifted up their voices, shouting in the Lycaonian language, “The gods have come down to us in human form!”  They called Barnabas Zeus, and they called Paul, because he led in the discourse, Hermes god of speech.  And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance of the town, brought bulls and garlands to the city's gates and wanted to join the people in offering sacrifice.  But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their clothing and dashed out among the crowd, shouting, “Men, why are you doing this? We also are only human beings, of nature like your own, and we bring you the good news that you should turn away from these foolish and vain things to the living God, Who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything that they contain.”    AMP

Zeus was considered the sky god, controller of weather, and the ruler of all gods and men.  In Pergamos; (Pergamum) one of the structures adorning the city is the most renowned, the altar of Zeus, which stood a massive 40 feet in height, and considered one of the wonders of the ancient world.

The reason for mentioning the widespread common worship of Zeus-Jupiter is to document why it was not uncommon for this pagan deity to be viewed in a syncretic way by the Germanic Goths after embracing the gospel of Jesus Christ.  The only common sense approach to determining where our English word, “God,” originates is first locating and identifying those races that with Semitic dialects in Europe.  Nevertheless, the story of the Semitic language begins much earlier in Biblical times during the days of Noah, when Yahweh destroyed the earth and its inhabitants with water, and from Noah’s sons, repopulated the earth.

**Genesis 10:31-32** These are Shem's descendants by their families, their languages, their lands, and their nations. 32 These are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, within their nations; and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood. AMP

The Semitic nations abroad (not to speak of the Hebrews in Palestine) were located along the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris, upon the highlands of Assyria, the plains of Babylonia, in Syria and Arabia, as far as the shores of the Persian Gulf.  The people spoke what are known as the Semitic languages; and although the Cushite wanderers from Africa spread over the whole of Southern Asia, and especially in the north of Arabia, where the Joktanidae were originally settled, they mingled with the Shemites, and adopted a common language.

Of these different families, the two with which we are best acquainted are the Aramaic or Semitic and Indo-European or Aryan.  Semitic is comprised of the languages such as Hebrew, Arabic, ancient Assyrian, Phoenician, Syriac, Chaldee, etc.   Semitic derives its name from the real or supposed descent of the people who spoke these languages from Shem (excepting Elam, Genesis 10:22); and the latter, divided into six branches, two of which belong to Asia, and three to Europe, and through European colonies to other parts of the world, includes:

The Indian branch, of which the Sanskrit is the principal

The Medo-Persic or Aryan, the most important of which is the Zend, the sacred dialect of the Parsees

The Teutonic, embracing the Gothic, and the various German dialects, the Anglo-Saxon,

Swedish, Danish, Icelandic

The classical languages of ancient Greece and Rome

The Slavonic branch, to which belong the Lithuanian, Russian, Polish, Bohemian languages, with those of large tribes in Hungary and Saxony

The Celtic branch, comprehending the Erse, Gaelic, Manx, Welsh, Cornish, and the Bas Breton in France.

Jupiter, later known also as Zeus in the Greco-Roman pantheon became ‘Thor’ to the Norsemen, Goths and Vikings.  Jupiter symbolized the chief deity and was always associated with stormy weather.  The Vikings were excellent seafaring merchants and warriors bringing their belief in the rain-and-thunder-god as far south as India, where Indra was worshipped as one and the same as Thor.  Our word “*god”*goes back via Germanic to Indo-European, in which a corresponding ancestor form meant, “the invoked one.”  The word’s only surviving non-Germanic relative is the Sanskrit *hu*, meaning ‘invoke the gods,’ a form, which appears in the Rig Veda, the most, ancient of Hindu scriptures: puru-hut**<**s, which means, “much invoked,” an epithet of the rain-and-thunder-god Indra.

**1.       gaddr**– Icelandic; 2) a goad for driving cattle

**Gadhelic**– (ga-del-ik) Irish = Gaehead; Gaelic = Gaidhead; English = Gael

**1.**Of or pertaining to the branch of the Celtic race comprising the Irish, Gaels of Scotland, and the Manx of the Isle of Man; distinguished from the Cymric

**2.**The group of languages or dialects spoken by the Gadhelic Celts

The dictionary definitions above provide yet another building blocks to frame the etymological tree of our English word for “god” down to the roots of the ancient Israelite tribe of Gad and the pagan deity Gad, whom they carried with them from the days of the Old Testament.  Gadhelic is a well-known tongue used in assorted dialects across Scotland and England, and is found throughout parts of Scandinavia.  The word is a compound form of, “Gad,” plus, “Gaelic,” proving the ties to its ancient Semitic roots.

Laban the Syrian, whose daughter he promised to Jacob, was a worshipper of this ancient deity.  His daughter Rachel hid the idol of Gad under her skirts, just as the Gadites have hidden the pagan idolatry under a plethora of forms until the present form spoken throughout the English speaking world.

Gadhelic is a present day dialect, notably distinguished from that dialect of the Cymric, which are the descendants of the Cimmerians.  Cymri are Welsh Celts, Cornish people, and the Bretons.  The Breton is a native of Brittany in Northwest France, a dialect of Celt (aka the language of Brittany).  The Breton are one and the same as the Armoricans mentioned earlier. The Britons (later called Bretons) gradually converted the Armorican Celts, then mainly pagans, to Christianity.  The Armoricans and Bretons alike referred to their chief deity (Jupiter via Thor) as Gad, pronounced, “Gawd,” and once converted to Christianity, used the same title for the Supreme God of the Bible.  The Anglo-Saxon Celts and German Goths who also had Gad in their dialect, are mainly responsible for changing its form from Gad to god, or God.  This can be seen directly thru the Danes and Dutch spelling of Gad as God.

**GOD**

**Gothic    =   guth**

**German =   gott**

**Dutch    =    god**

**Anglo-Saxon = god**

**Icelandic (Old Norse) = goth**

One can easily observe the transition from the Gothic *guth*to the Old Norse *goth*, then the declension to German *gott* and Dutch *god*.  The same word is Godded as a transitive verb; means, “to make into a god.”  The Aramaic gedad (to cut down) is the same word as its Hebrew counterpart gadad (to gash).   The Aramaic *gedad* is phonetically identical to the transitive verb form of the English, “Godded,” (a guttural pronounced ghed-ad'). The English word is later modified to identify three primary deities in the polytheistic Gothic triad Jupiter, Sun, and Moon.

The word Godded in its modern form, “Godhead,” was introduced in 1611 and used in the translation of the King James Authorized Version (See Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9).  It was during this same time frame throughout Europe and particularly in Britain, the ecclesiastic use of ‘gad’ as a noun became widespread as a minced form of “God.”   That the clerical community was no doubt aware of Gad’s notoriety and association with pagan Jupiter worship.  Nevertheless, the vast majority of Europe’s populations converted to Christianity continued using “Gad” interjectionally as a mild oath.

The interjection of Gad as a word in speaking or writing throughout the 1600’s continued and the gradual change in the spelling from Gad to God occurred over a lengthy period of time.  Gad was thrown in between words connected in construction, to express passion about one’s faith in the Almighty.  Thus Gad went from a word spoken in hushed tones as the truth of its pagan origins was suppressed, then gradually used by clergy to extenuate in representation.  That’s a technical way of saying, “Yeah, we know Gad is a poor choice for ‘God’ in our religious vocabulary, but so many people use it, that it’s just easier to compromise the truth and appease the people than to step on toes.”

Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary Copyright© by Random House Publishing Inc. 1996 traces the etymology of Gad between 1600-1610 AD and defines it as, “a euphemism for God as a mild oath.”That Gad was used as a euphemism for ‘God’ in 1600 is not at all surprising, but it is amazing how woefully silent our ignorance has made us as Christians that we do not even question the frequent use of this word.  It appears the Pre-Reformation influence was emerging from centuries of Roman Catholic Church oppression and darkness and people wanted to say God’s name.  It seems ‘Godded’ (to make into a god) was more acceptable than ‘Gadsbodikin,’ an Old Norse word from Middle English used as a euphemism for “God’s body, or God’s form.”

The Middle English for ‘Godhead’ was ‘godhede’ and believed to have first developed between 1200-1250 AD.  This is from ‘godhood’ the Old English first used as, ‘godhad’ first used between 1175-125 AD.  In all of its forms, we see that Gad has effectively established itself in the culture and language of “God, god.”

Even in everyday vernacular we continue feeling the effects of this nomadic tribe.  When someone is said to, “gad,” or to, “gad about,” little do they realize this adage for wandering aimlessly about has at its core ther many wanderings of the tribe of Israel that started off somewhere in Mesopotamia on the east banks of the Jordan River. Webster’s 1828 Dictionary defines the word, “Gad,” in the same sense as its Hebrew counterpart:

**GAD, verb**

**1.**To walk about; to rove or ramble idly or without any fixed purpose.

**2.**To ramble in growth; as the gadding vine.

The Hebrew Semitic word, “gadhadh,” is transliterated to an English sound, “gawd-hehd,” and almost identical in sound to, “godhead.”  Though the word is translated as, “troop,” in most Bible versions, a synonym for ‘troop’ using a modern thesaurus means the word could be rendered, “a multitude,” or even stricter, “a group.”  The underlying meaning of a “troop” implies more than one individual ‘united’ for one purpose.

Two cognates of Gad spelled in the Hebrew transliteration *gudh* and *gadhadh;**gadhadh* is rendered as, “troop,” or as, “marauding band,” in most Bible versions and *gudh*, literally means, "to press."  Most scholars agree that ‘troop’ is not a valid translation for Gad.  Below is the etymological path for both Hebrew and Aramaic versions of the word Gad.

**HEBREW & ARAMAIC**

“**Gad**” = OT: 1410 **Gad** (“**gawd”**); from OT: 1464; Gad, a son of Jacob, including his tribe and its territory; also a prophet;

OT: 1464 **guwd** (**goode**); a primitive root [akin to OT: 1413]; **to crowd** **upon**, i.e. **attack**;

OT: 1413 **gadad** (**gaw-dad**'); a primitive root [compare OT: 1464]; **to crowd**; also **to gash** (as if by pressing into)

OT: 1414 **gedad** (**Aramaic**) (**ghed-ad'**); corresponding to OT: 1413; **to cut down**: -hew down.

OT: 1415 **gadah** (**gaw-daw'**); from an unused root (meaning **to cut off**); **a border of a river** (as cut into by the stream)

OT: 1416 **geduwd** (**ghed-ood'**); from OT: 1413; **a crowd** (**especially of soldiers**): -army, band (of men), company, troop (of robbers).

OT: 1417 **geduwd** (**ghed-ood'**); or (feminine) **gedudah** (**ghed-oo-daw'**); from OT: 1413; **a furrow** (as cut)

OT: 1418 **geduwdah** (**ghed-oo-daw'**); feminine participle passive of OT: 1413; **an incision**

OT:1419 **gadowl** (**gaw-dole'**); or (shortened) **gadol** (**gaw-dole'**); from OT:1431; **great** (in any sense); hence, older; also insolent

OT: 1431 **gadal** (**gaw-dal'**); a primitive root; properly, **to twist** [compare OT: 1434],i.e.**to be** (causatively **make**) **large** (**in various senses, as in body, mind, estate or honor, also in pride**)

OT: 1433 **godel** (**go'-del**); from OT: 1431; **magnitude** (**literally or figuratively**): -greatness, stout (-ness).

OT: 1434 **gedil**(**ghed-eel'**); from OT: 1431 (**in the sense of twisting**); **thread**, i.e. **a tassel or festoon**

OT: 1436 **Gedalyah** (**ghed-al-yaw'**); or (prolonged) **Gedalyahuw** (**ghed-al-yaw'-hoo**); from OT: 1431 and OT:3050; **Jah has become great**; **Gedaljah**, the name of five Israelites: KJV - Gedaliah

OT: 3050 **Yahh** (**yaw**); contraction for OT: 3068, and meaning the same; **Jah, the sacred name**:

KJV - Jah, the Lord, most vehement. Compare names in "-iah," "-jah."

OT: 3068 **Yehovah** (**yeh-ho-vaw'**); from OT: 1961; (the) **self-Existent or Eternal**; Jehovah, Jewish national name of God: KJV - Jehovah, the Lord. Compare OT: 3050, OT: 3069.

OT: 1961 **hayah** (**haw-yaw**); a primitive root [compare OT: 1933]; **to exist**, i.e. **be or become**, **come to pass** (always emphatic, and not a mere copula or auxiliary)

OT: 1933 **hava'** (**haw-vaw'**); or **havah** (**haw-vaw'**); a primitive root [compare OT: 183, OT:1961] supposed to mean properly, **to breathe**; **to be** (**in the sense of existence**)

OT: 183 **'avah**(**aw-vaw'**); a primitive root; **to wish for**

OT: 1934 **hava'** (Aramaic) (**hav-aw'**); or **havah**(Aramaic) (**hav-aw'**); corresponding to

OT: 1933; **to exist**; used in a great variety of applications (especially in connection with other words)

Christendom in Europe thru various Bible translators inadvertently expanded the phonetic vocalization of Gad-Gawd-God connection by substituting, “God,” for the Old Testament Hebrew words Elohim (Literally means, “mightiest of the mighty”), and “GOD” (all capitals) for YHWH (Tetragrammaton, aka Yahweh).  In the New Testament the Greek words for deity Theós (Strength) was uniformly replaced by, “God,” and, “Godhead.”  Whether by design or be default “God” and “god” as words for “deity” became the universal transliteration, transcending the intended meaning portrayed by the inspired Hebrew and Greek text in scripture.

This universal transliteration of gudh-gawd, which means, “to press,” may have even been another paronomasia, unintentionally playing on the meaning of the Hebrew word for Gad by, “pressing together,” carte blanche every word and word-meaning that describes Yahweh.  The one universal transliteration of gudh may have gotten reinforcement thru the Swiss and German Reformers, since this Hebrew cognate closely resembles the Germanic, “G**g**t,” later spelled, “g**@**d,” and later still as, “God,” in England and other English speaking nations.

While we do not know what happened historically, we do know that word names meant something and that spurious transliterations were occurring all the time throughout history.  Again, I suspect the idea of being, “compressed together,” is the European intended meaning for, “gudh,” which means, "to press."  Over the course of time the intrinsic meaning of gudh (i.e. - to press together) diminished.  All variations of the word, “God,” in Europe amalgamated into one central phonetic usage, usurping other less-used words for deity.

Subsequent to the invention of the printing press, the frequent use of the word ‘God’ in Christian literature, notably the King James Version of the Bible, became so widespread it became a substitute term for Hebrew and Greek words, whose pronunciation in transliterated form was too difficult for the general populace.  Spain’s explorers may have brought this word to India and beyond, accounting for its Indo-European origin.

Remember, ecclesiastical powers held strong sway and perhaps this was yet one more ploy by Reformationists to validate their support of the bastard doctrine known as the “trinity,” with its triune “godhead.”  This is not that far of a stretch either, because many of them were German or Swiss or Belgian (e.g. – Zwingli).   All we can be certain of is that much of Yahweh intrinsic characteristic qualities, which hold so much value in meaning and in application to the life of the true believer can never be squelched by the bastard renderings of some pagan ‘Gad’-god’ substitution on the part of lazy Bible translators.  True seekers today in 2005 have the tools at their disposal to find the truth, thru individual search in Hebrew and Greek lexicon dictionary definitions.

Jesus said to those who had believed in Him, “If you abide in my word hold fast to my teachings and live in accordance with them, you are truly my disciples.  And you will know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free!”   On the other hand, Yahweh’s warnings to those who continue following in the footsteps who offer sacrifice to the “god” of “Gad” he has this warning:

**Isaiah 65:11-12** But you who forsake the Lord, who forget and ignore My holy Mount Zion, who prepare a table for **Gad the Babylonian god of fortune** and who furnish mixed drinks for Meni the god of destiny.  I will destine you says the Lord] for the sword, and you shall all bow down to the slaughter, because when I called, you did not answer; when I spoke, you did not listen or obey.  But you did what was evil in my eyes, and you chose that in, which I did not delight. “  AMP

Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and the rabbis generally suppose that by Gad the planet Jupiter was intended, which they say was worshipped throughout the East as the god of fortune, and this is now the prevalent opinion.  “The word Gad,” says Gesenius, “means fortune, especially the god Fortune, which was worshipped in Babylon.”  He supposes that it was the same idol, which was also called Baal or Bel (compare the notes at Isaiah 46:1), and that by this name the planet Jupiter.

The Vulgate renders this in Isaiah 65:11, “Fortunae” meaning, “to Fortune.”  The Septuagint uses even stronger language still as, “to daimonioo,” meaning, “to a demon.”  The Chaldee renders it simply, “lªTa`waan,” which translated means, “To idols.”  It is agreed on all hands that some idol is here referred to that was extensively worshipped in the East; and the general impression is, that it was an idol representing Fortune.

 The same deity was worshipped by the Syrians and Philistines by the name of Astarte, or Ashtaroth, the queen of heaven; and if the name Gad be supposed to represent the sun, the name Meni will doubtless represent the moon.  The goddess Ashtaroth or Astarte, was a goddess of the Sidonians, and was much worshipped in Syria and Phoenicia. Solomon introduced her worship in Jerusalem (1 Kings 11:33). Three hundred priests were constantly employed in her service at Hierapolis in Syria. She was called 'the queen of heaven;' and is usually mentioned in connection with Baal.

Gesenius supposes that the planet Venus is intended, regarded as the source of good fortune, and worshipped extensively in connection with the planet Jupiter, especially in the regions of Babylonia. It seems to be agreed that the word refers to the worship of either the moon or the planet Venus, regarded as the goddess of good fortune. The leading idea of the prophet is, that they were deeply sunken and debased in thus forsaking Yahweh, and endeavoring to propitiate the favor of idol-gods.

The King James Version of Isaiah 65:11 is the only Bible that uses, “…for that troop,” and perhaps there is nowhere a more unhappy translation than this. Barnes notes read, “It has been made evidently because our translators were not aware of the true meaning of the word, and did not seem to understand that it referred to idolatry. The translation seems to have been adopted with some reference to the paronomasia occurring in Genesis 49:19; ‘Gad,’ a troop shall overcome him' - Gaad gªduwd yªguwdenuw - where the word Gad has some resemblance to the word rendered troop. The word Gad itself, however, never means troop, and evidently should not be so rendered here.”

To say the KJV translators were, “not aware of the true meaning,” shows how culpable even scholars can be.  That Gad was a euphemism for “God” and a minced form of the word appear in popular use between 1600-1611 AD, the exact same time the KJV translators were preparing their text from the manuscripts, shows woeful ignorance.  No doubt at the time serious compromises and suppression of the truth occurred.  Had the same awareness occurred today there would be an outcry against this pollution of the scriptures.

**Ba`al Gad** - **Baal-gad** (OT: 1171) = "**lord of fortune**" **a city noted for Baal-worship**, located at the most northern or northwestern point to which Joshua's victories extended.

How wide-spread the cult of**Gad**, or Fortune, was in the old Canaanitish times may be inferred from the names, “Baalgad,” a city at the foot of Mount Hermon, and “Migdal-gad,” in the territory of Judah.  Compare also the proper names Gaddi and Gaddiel in the tribes of Manasseh and Zebulun (Numbers 13:10-11).  At the same time it must not be supposed thatGad was always regarded as an independent deity. The name was doubtless originally an appellative, meaning, “the power that allots.”  Today, when a person says concerning putting fate in God’s hands, they often say, “I gave it over to the ‘Powers that be,’” without any consciousness this originated literally millennia earlier.

Hence any of the greater gods supposed to favor men might be thought of as the giver of good fortune and be worshiped under that appellative.  It is possible that Jupiter may have been the, “Gad,” thus honored.  Among the Arabs the planet Jupiter was called, “the greater Fortune,” while Venus was styled, “the lesser Fortune.”

**Final Thoughts Concerning “God”**

What do we now do with the knowledge that our word for God is rooted in pagan, astrological worship?  Do we cease using a term that has long since been regarding as legitimately applied to address the Supreme Deity?  If so, what are the consequences?  If what a word meant 2500-4000 years ago has gone thru so much change for so long its common use has transformed entirely in meaning, can it really be equated with the pagan concept?

These questions rest in the heart, mind and conscience of the individual.  The over-riding principle that should be seriously factored into one’s decision is how does the Father and His son Jesus feel about the issue?  What criteria pleases Him most?  Is it more important to Him that we be ‘technically accurate” or that we serve Him with a clear conscience from a pure heart?

If you stopped using the word, “God,” to describe and address Deity, what would you replace it with?  Even if you used the original Greek, “Theos,” which means, “strength,” the word itself predates Christianity and was used in the polytheism of the Greco-Roman pantheon.  Our English word, “theo-logy” comes from theos; should we stop using ‘theology?’

It isn’t whether a word once had association with pagan use at one time or not. What matters is the word’s use and association in contemporary social dialogue.  God’s looks upon the heart and He weighs the motives.  The apostle Paul encountered this very dilemma in Athens, where amongst the pantheon of Greek deities he found an idol to the unknown god.

**Acts 17:22-31** So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD .' Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.  The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'  Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man. Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”  NASU

Paul did not spend time rebuking the Greeks for their unknown god or other pagan deities.  In fact, he did not even explain to them the Old Testament Hebrew covenant name of Yahweh to them.  Had this been a group of Jewish rabbis, things may have been handled differently.  Instead, paul capitalizes on an opportunity to describe what God’s NATURE is like, and then what His plan of salvation thru the man Jesus.

No matter what circumstances you find yourself, plug into God, find His heart, and relate to others His intrinsic character qualities and attributes.  In closing, one last poignant scripture suffices:

**1 Corinthians 9:19-23** Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.  To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law.  To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law.  To the weak I became weak, to win the weak.  I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.  I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.  NIV