

Evaluation of the New World Translation's Internal Consistency in Translating *Theos* in John 1:1-18

For John 1:1 Jehovah's Witnesses created a rule that they themselves violate in the verses that follow John 1:1 (1:2-18). Various forms of the word for *God/god (theos)* appear eight times in these verses (with and without "the"). The fact that Jehovah's Witnesses do not follow their own rule suggests that it really is not a good rule. We should reject their rendering of John 1:1. I do not recommend their translation, but the fairest way to evaluate it on this issue is to set it forth. I have sought to copy all of the texts accurately, including capitalization and punctuation.

The Jehovah's Witness translation of Scripture is the New World Translation (NWT). The currently used interlinear Greek text produced by Jehovah's Witnesses is called The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures. I have abbreviated the English rendering as KIE and their Greek text as KIG (The KIG resembles the Westcott Hort text, but is not identical to the Westcott Hort text). For ease of reference, I have translated each Greek word and numbered them sequentially in each verse. When more than one English word renders a single Greek word, those words have continuous underlining. When 00 follows an English word, it means that the word paraphrases the Greek.

1. 1:1a. ##11-12 (*ton theon*) has "the." *New World Trans.* capitalizes *God*. This and 1:2 are the only times "the" is present.
2. 1:1b. #14 (*theos*) w/o "the." *New World Trans.* has lower case *god* here and 1:18b, but violate their rule four other times.

NWT 1:1	<u>In</u> ₁ [<u>the</u>] ₂ <u>beginning</u> ₃ <u>the</u> ₄ <u>Word</u> ₅ <u>was</u> ₆ <u>and</u> ₇ <u>the</u> ₈ <u>Word</u> ₉ <u>was</u> ₁₀ <u>with</u> ₁₁ <u>God</u> ₁₂	<u>and</u> ₁₃ <u>the</u> ₁₄ <u>Word</u> ₁₅ <u>was</u> ₁₆ <u>a god</u> ₁₇
KIE 1:1	<u>In</u> ₁ <u>beginning</u> ₂ <u>was</u> ₃ <u>the</u> ₄ <u>Word</u> ₅ <u>and</u> ₆ <u>the</u> ₇ <u>Word</u> ₈ <u>was</u> ₉ <u>toward</u> ₁₀ <u>the</u> ₁₁ <u>God</u> ₁₂	<u>and</u> ₁₃ <u>god</u> ₁₄ <u>was</u> ₁₅ <u>the</u> ₁₆ <u>Word</u> ₁₇
KIG 1:1	<u>En</u> ₁ <u>archē</u> ₂ <u>ēn</u> ₃ <u>ho</u> ₄ <u>logos</u> ₅ <u>kai</u> ₆ <u>ho</u> ₇ <u>logos</u> ₈ <u>ēn</u> ₉ <u>pros</u> ₁₀ <u>ton</u> ₁₁ <u>theon</u> ₁₂	<u>kai</u> ₁₃ <u>theos</u> ₁₄ <u>ēn</u> ₁₅ <u>ho</u> ₁₆ <u>logos</u> ₁₇

3. 1:2. ##6-7 (*ton theon*) has "the." *New World Trans.* capitalizes *God*. This and 1:1a are the only times "the" is present.

NWT 1:2	<u>This one</u> ₁ <u>was</u> ₂ <u>in</u> ₃ [<u>the</u>] ₄ <u>beginning</u> ₅ <u>with</u> ₆ <u>God</u> ₇
KIE 1:2	<u>This (one)</u> ₁ <u>was</u> ₂ <u>in</u> ₃ <u>beginning</u> ₄ <u>toward</u> ₅ <u>the</u> ₆ <u>God</u> ₇
KIG 1:2	<u>Houtos</u> ₁ <u>ēn</u> ₂ <u>en</u> ₃ <u>archē</u> ₄ <u>pros</u> ₅ <u>ton</u> ₆ <u>theon</u> ₇

4. 1:6. #5 (*theou*) w/o "the," but *New World Trans.* capitalizes *God* anyway: the first of four violations!

NWT 1:6	<u>There arose</u> ₁ <u>a man</u> ₂ <u>sent forth</u> ₃ <u>as a representative</u> ₄ <u>of</u> ₅ <u>God</u> ₆ <u>his</u> ₇ <u>name</u> ₈ <u>was</u> ₉ <u>John</u> ₁₀
KIE 1:6	<u>Came to be</u> ₁ <u>man</u> ₂ <u>having been sent forth</u> ₃ <u>beside</u> ₄ <u>God</u> ₅ <u>name</u> ₆ <u>to him</u> ₇ <u>John</u> ₈
KIG 1:6	<u>Egeneto</u> ₁ <u>anthrōpos</u> ₂ <u>apestalmenos</u> ₃ <u>para</u> ₄ <u>theou</u> ₅ <u>onoma</u> ₆ <u>autō</u> ₇ <u>Iōannēs</u> ₈

5. 1:12. #9 (theou) w/o “the,” but New World Trans. capitalizes God anyway: the second of four violations!

NWT 1:12 However,₂ as many as₁ did receive₃ him,₄ to them₆ he gave₅ authority₇ to become₁₀ God’s₉ children,₈ because₀₀ they₀₀ were exercising
faith₁₂ in₁₃ his₁₆ name.₁₄₋₁₅

KIE 1:12 As many as₁ but₂ took₃ him,₄ he gave₅ to them₆ authority₇ children₈ of₉ God₉ to become,₁₀ to the ones believing₁₁₋₁₂ into₁₃ the₁₄ name₁₅ of
him.₁₆

KIG 1:12 *hosoi*₁ *de*₂ *elabon*₃ *auton,*₄ *edōken*₅ *autois*₆ *exousian*₇ *tekna*₈ *theou*₉ *genesthai,*₁₀ *tois*₁₁ *pisteuousin*₁₂ *eis*₁₃ *to*₁₄ *onoma*₁₅ *autou,*₁₆

6. 1:13. #14 (theou) w/o “the,” but New World Trans. capitalizes God anyway: the third of four violations!

NWT 1:13 and₀₀ they were born,₁₆ not₂ from₃ blood,₄ or₅ from₆ a fleshly₈ will₇ or₉ from₁₀ man’s₁₂ will,₁₁ but₁₃ from₁₄ God.₁₅

KIE 1:13 who₁ not₂ out of₃ bloods₄ nor₅ out of₆ will₇ of flesh₈ nor₉ out of₁₀ will₁₁ of male person,₁₂ but₁₃ out of₁₄ God₁₅ were generated.₁₆

KIG 1:13 *hoi*₁ *ouk*₂ *ex*₃ *haimatōn*₄ *oude*₅ *ek*₆ *thelēmatos*₇ *sarkos*₈ *oude*₉ *ek*₁₀ *thelēmatos*₁₁ *andros*₁₂ *all*₁₃ *ek*₁₄ *theou*₁₅ *egennēthēsan.*₁₆

7. 1:18a. #1 (theon) w/o “the,” but New World Trans. capitalizes God anyway: the fourth of four violations!

8. 1:18b. #6 (theos) w/o “the.” New World Trans. has lower case god here and 1:1b, but violate their rule four other times.

My Greek and English texts of John 1:18 read “only begotten Son.” I reject the KIE reading.

NWT 1:18 No man₁ has seen₃ God₁ at any time;₄ the only-begotten₅ god,₆ who₇ is₈ in₉ the₁₀ bosom position₁₁ with the₁₂ Father,₁₃ is₀₀ the one
that₁₄ has explained₁₅ him.₀₀

KIE 1:18 God₁ no one₂ has seen,₃ at any time;₄ only-begotten₅ god₆ the (one)₇ being₈ into₉ the₁₀ bosom₁₁ of the₁₂ Father₁₃ that (one)₁₄
explained.₁₅

KIG 1:18 *theon*₁ *oudeis*₂ *heōraken*₃ *pōpote;*₄ *monogenēs*₅ *theos*₆ *ho*₇ *ōn*₈ *eis*₉ *ton*₁₀ *kolpon*₁₁ *tou*₁₂ *patros*₁₃ *ekeinos*₁₄ *exēgēsato.*₁₅

Jehovah’s Witnesses were uncomfortable with John 1:1, so they created a rule for that verse. The fact that they do not obey their own rule in the immediate context shows that it does not work and is not a real rule. It should not be taken seriously.