

A Different Take On: “None should perish”

The Greek word translated ‘perish’ in John 3:16 is *apollumi* (ἀπόλλυμι). The word has quite a few meanings, but the basis of the word is ‘destroy’. However, it is also used to mean ‘lose’ or ‘lost’.

Apollumi is used in the following verses as ‘lost’ or ‘lose’, instead of ‘perish’ (there are many others):

- Matthew 10:6 – “go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”
- Matthew 16:25 – “For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.”
- John 6:39 – “...all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.”
- John 12:25 – “He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it...”
- John 17:12 – “...Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition...”
- 2 Corinthians 4:3 – “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.”¹

Apollumi is used in the parables of ‘The Lost Coin’, ‘The Lost Sheep’ and ‘The Lost Son’ (AKA ‘The Prodigal Son’). In each case of the word ‘lost’ comes from *apollumi*. That begs the question: “What causes the translator to switch between the two meanings of the Greek word in other passages?”

The answer initially is, it depends on the context. However, there is a case that the choice of ‘destroy’ over ‘lost’ is based on preconceptions, rather than an accurate translation. I would say that it’s impossible to actually prove instances of bias in using ‘destroy’ instead of ‘lost’, due to the imposition of Christian dogma on the translator’s choice.

Let’s have a look at what the difference would be in the two choices for *apollumi* in a very important passage.

When we read John 3:16, the word ‘perish’ immediately causes us to think of perishing in the fires of Hell. That’s because of the church doctrine we’ve been indoctrinated with. What if *apollumi* there means ‘lost’ instead? It means ‘lost’ in the three parables Jesus told about Father wanting his sons back, so why not here? The answer is, we can’t translate John 3:16 as ‘lost’ because that would not fit in with the religious dogma of Eternal Conscious torment (ECT).

Interestingly, *apollumi* is translated as ‘lost’ in what Jesus stated about “the lost sheep of the house of Israel”. What were the Israeli people lost from? And, aren’t they the ones who were “soon” to perish at the hands of the Romans in 70AD? **See the problem?**

If the lost son is lost, who was he lost from? He was lost to his father. “This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found”, the father exclaims as he rejoices. As this parable is about the gentiles being lost from Father’s family, ‘lost’ is definitely the better choice for translating John 3:16.

You see, what we lost in The Fall was our identity as sons – we lost our sonship. Father sent his Son into the world so that we’d no longer be lost to him, but that we would live with him forever, where we were intended to be.

It’s vitally important that we see that we were lost to Father as sons, and that the work of the Cross was to rectify that. That’s why Father has been teaching us that we’re back where Adam originally was.

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(Readers will need to look up for themselves any scriptures alluded to in this document)

1 – KJV, JUB, MEV, ICB, GNV, GNT, ERV, CJB, AMPC, DARBY, etc.)