

Now there's a more important question, I think, than that, when we look at the text of this. That is as you've noticed in both the NIV and in the KJV it spoke of the "whole family." NIV says "his whole family". KJV says "the whole family." Then it goes on "in heaven and earth." You will look at a number of commentaries and you'll find this statement made: The word here translated "whole" unless it has an ~~article~~ article, cannot mean whole it must mean every." So it's every family in heaven and earth is named. I don't get any sense out of that at all. Every family in heaven and earth is certainly not named after the father. It is certainly the whole family as both of these versions take it. Some others insist it must be every family.

Calvin faced the problem. He had heard this law which some people laid down about the Greek language that wherever you have this word it can't mean whole unless it has the article with it either before or after. Therefore Calvin said whenever it says "every family" it means all the family of Christians on earth; all the family of angels in heaven. But I don't think anybody else has reached that conclusion from it. I certainly don't see anything very satisfactory in that picture.

But then you look in the Greek Grammar and you find that while this law may be given, it also says under a different head that this word can mean "whole" if it is used with a proper name. Then you find a place where it says "the whole house of Israel." It's not every house of Israel. It's speaking of the nation. The whole house of Israel. So they say in that case the house of Israel is the same as a proper name!

It reminds me of an experience I had when I was studying Egyptology. I heard at that time how about 100 years ago there was a great German philologist, ~~and who~~ who studied ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics very thoroughly and he wrote an excellent grammar that has much that is tremendously helpful in reading Egyptian hieroglyphics. There was so much in it that worked out just right that it became generally accepted that his was the standard grammar of Egyptian hieroglyphics that had some very positive rules in it which worked out in all the Egyptian that was known up to that time. Ancient Egypt. The modern Egyptians speak Arabic, not the original Egyptian language.

Then some French excavators unearthed a great monument in Egypt which had a very long important hieroglyphic inscription on it in which it was very clear that some of Ermond's rules were not followed. They said the trouble is that the writers of these inscriptions hadn't read Ermond's grammar! I think that shows the danger of our thinking we can lay down absolute rules of this sort.

If it can be the whole house of Israel, it certainly can be the whole family of God. We learn from this v. that there is the whole family of God in heaven and in earth. Surely that embraces all who are saved. Those who have passed on--those in heaven; those who are on earth here. We are one family, and God the Father is the name we bear--the followers of God the Father. He has sent His Son to save us. We are saved through Christ but we are members of the family of God.

This matter of names is a very interesting thing. So often you