

However, if verse 4 is modified ever so slightly to read, "There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard," the conflicts are resolved and the passage is smoothed out. And then verse 4 asserts that their voice is being heard in every speech and language, which seems to be what verses 2, 3, and 5 are also saying! What a simple solution at such a small cost!

But can this small modification be justified exegetically? Is the Hebrew sufficiently ambiguous at the crucial point to allow for the insertion of "where" or "in which", thereby changing the whole thrust of the statement in verse 4?

The crucial Hebrew word is **לֹא** (b'liy), a particle of negation. Ludwig Koehler's *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1951; and Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951) states that **לֹא** means not or without, and that it is sometimes used like the prefix un_ or the suffix _less.

So, for example, in Job 30:8 we read of "fools, even those without a name" (nameless). In Job 31:39 we read, "If I have eaten its fruit without money" (moneyless). In Psalm 63:2 we read, "My soul thirsts for Thee, my flesh yearns for Thee, in a dry and weary land where there is no water." (literally, "in a dry and weary land, waterless"). In II Samuel 1:21 we read of "the shield of Saul, not anointed with oil." In Hosea 7:8 we read that "Ephraim has become a cake not turned." In Genesis 31:20 we read that "Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean, by not telling him that he was fleeing." And in Job 8:11 Bildad asks, "Can the rushes grow without water?"

Psalm 19:4 says simply, "There is no speech and there are no words; their voice is not being heard."

But the question remains: How can verse 4 be reconciled with verses 2, 3, and 5?

There are two interpretations that attempt to resolve the conflicts and make sense of the passage, while retaining integrity in the exegesis.

One interpretation proposes that the external general revelation of God's glory and handiwork is going forth to the ends of the earth, but that it falls on sin-blinded eyes and sin-deafened ears, so that it is not "heard" (i.e., not subjectively apprehended or perceived by unregenerate human beings). This interpretation explains the statement in verse 4 that "their voice is not being heard," but it does not resolve the conflict between the statement in verse 4 that "there is no speech and there are no words," and the statements in verse 3 and 5 that there is speech and there are words.

A second interpretation proposes that the external general revelation of God's glory and handiwork is not couched in a written or spoken language, but is rather embodied in a (nonpropositional) "language" that transcends all languages and thus reaches all