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ALLEGED MISTAKES IN THE KING JAMES BIBLE

**FOR EXAMPLE:
Conies, Brass
and Easter**

Dr. Jack A. Moorman

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Jeremiah 6:16

DEDICATION

Dr. Jack A. Moorman has gone on to his reward, so as publisher of this work, which was originally printed many years ago, but not published, I am going to speak for this dear friend. I know Brother Jack would want this work to be dedicated to his one and only wife, Dot Moorman, whom he loved with all his heart. So, Sister Dot, I have spoken for your precious husband who now walks with Jesus on the streets of gold, talking with the saints through the ages.

Dr. J. A. Moorman and his wife, Dot, 2017



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INTRODUCTION

The practice of publicly "correcting" the Standard English Bible, the Authorized Version, is probably the quickest way to undermine faith. When conservative pastors and teachers tell their people "a better rendering would be, "a more accurate translation is," "this is an unfortunate translation," "the original would better be expressed as," they are starting a chain reaction of unbelief more damaging than that caused by attacks of modernism. They are in effect saying: "God has not preserved His Word," "The Standard Bible is sullied with error." "The focus of authority has shifted from the Scriptures themselves to the teacher." Reverent exposition of the text and translation is one thing, "correction" is quite another!

But are there not justifiable reasons for "occasional" correction of the KJV? A survey of modern preaching, commentaries, Study Bibles, helps, etc., shows that there is nothing "occasional" about it! Once the practice is begun, resistance to further alteration weakens, and there is little which is not affected. Sitting under such a ministry, God's people soon find their Bible to be "in tatters."

When a Version has been a Standard for nearly 400 years, has been the measuring rod against which all others are judged, has resulted in many millions receiving Christ as Savior, has been the impetus in sending missionaries to the ends of the earth, and has spawned a world of

supplemental literature - then we are dealing with a work of God! To say the least, such a Bible should be treated with the greatest respect.

If the experience of a considerable number of fundamental/evangelical leaders is anything to go by; to publicly go on record in criticizing the Authorized Version, doesn't seem to have a very happy aftermath. There is often a loss of authority in their ministry. The pulpit power is not what it once was. They seem to find themselves on unstable and vulnerable ground. And more than a few have crashed completely and are no longer in the ministry!

THREE AREAS OF CRITICISM

1. Criticisms that are common to the Bible generally: For example, the so-called "contradictions," the reigns of the kings, etc. Without any attempt to alter the AV, completely sound answers have been given to this kind of "problem" passage. We will not be dealing with these here.
2. Criticisms which have to do with the underlying text of the Authorized Version: For example, Mark 16, John 8, 1 John 5:7, Acts 8:37, etc. Here too, substantial evidence has been brought forward which testifies to the trustworthiness of the Received Text. The present author has prepared "Manuscript Digests" which demonstrates support for a large number of passages.

INTRODUCTION

“When the KJV Departs from the Majority Text” and “Early Manuscripts, Church Fathers and the Authorized Version” available from: The Old Paths Publications here:

<http://theoldpathspublications.com/Pages/Authors/Moorman.htm#Manuscripts>

3. Criticisms directed at the English of the Authorized Version: It is this third area that we now look at, and will examine the twenty-one most frequent charges of translation error. Of course, there are other passages which might be cited, but these are the ones posing the “biggest problem.” If they can be satisfactorily answered, there shouldn't be much problem with any others. The “knots” in the Bible test the heart and motives and tell a true story about a person's devotion to Scripture. When one chips away at the Standard Bible, he should be asked: “How hard did you try to get an answer?”

SAMPLE PAGES

CHAPTER 1

BORROWED AND LENT, OR ASKED AND GAVE

ALLEGED MISTAKE: Not only does the AV translation depart from the usual meaning of the Hebrew, *shaal*; but it implies a certain amount of dishonesty on behalf of the Israelites. Both the Septuagint and Vulgate have 'ask', while Luther's German renders it 'demand.'

*Exodus 3:21,22. And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall I not go empty: [22] But every woman shall I **borrow** (shaal) of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall **spoil** the Egyptians (*

*Exodus 11:1 And the LORD said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether. 2 Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man **borrow** (shaal) of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold. 3 And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people.*

Exodus 12:33 *And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send*

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*them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men. 34 And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders. 35 And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they **borrowed** (shaal) of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: 36 And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they **lent** (shaal) unto them such things as they required. And they **spoiled** the Egyptians.*

ANSWER: The initial instructions concerning the people "borrowing," and also how Pharoah was to be first approached, are given in the same context (3:18-22). Pharoah was only to be told about a three days journey (3:18; 5:3). When the Israelites first mentioned the matter of "borrowing" to their masters, they themselves may not have realized they were leaving Egypt for good. Moses was told the full extent of the Exodus in 3:8, the elders in 3:16 and 4:29; but the first clear indication of the people being so told is not until 6:6-9.

When the Orientals go to their sacred festivals they always put on their best jewels. The Israelites themselves thought they were only going three days' journey to hold a feast unto the Lord, and in these circumstances it would be easy for them to borrow what was necessary for a sacred festival (Jameson, Fausset, and Brown on Exodus 12:35).

In a reference to "Studies in Oriental Social Life", pp 330-31, by H.C. Trumbull ; Merrill Unger writes:

CHAPTER 1: BORROWED & LENT, OR ASKED & GAVE

A persistent ancient Near East tradition, experienced by those who have servants, is that the servants **borrow** from their employers in addition to receiving their wages. The coveted articles they get are called a "gift." Neither dishonesty nor unfairness is implied (Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament, Moody Press, Vol. I, p. 108, emphasis mine):

This was the means by which God in judgment "spoiled" the Egyptians, compensated His people for the long years of slavery, and fulfilled the prophecy given to Abraham

And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance (Genesis 15:14).

Though the overriding meaning of *shaal* is "ask," and is so rendered 88 times in the AV (Young's Concordance); it is, nevertheless, capable of a number of other meanings including "enquire" - 22 times. The "Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon" lists among its possible meanings - "To ask as a loan."

Notice two other places where *shaal* clearly means, and is translated "borrow."

And if a man borrow aught of his neighbour and it be hurt, or die, the owner thereof being not with it, he shall surely make it good (Ex. 22:14).

Then he said, Go, borrow (shaal) thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow (maat) not a few (2 Kings 4:3).

There is the further truth that all the "great substance" which the Israelites brought out of

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Egypt was ultimately from God. For the first time in their history they were entrusted with material wealth. But it was "on loan," and tragically they did give it all back. In the captivities they lost everything. But even prior to that, Egypt received back some of what she had "lent"!

So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all :he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made (2 Chronicles:12:9),

CHAPTER 2

BRASS, OR BRONZE

ALLEGED MISTAKE: "The AV translators confused brass with bronze. The process for making brass (melting copper with zinc) was unknown in Old Testament times. Whereas bronze smelting (copper with tin) was widespread at a very early age."

*...Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in **brass** and iron (Gen. 4:22).*

*thou shalt overlay it with **brass** (Ex. 27:2).*

*Thou shalt also make a laver of **brass** (Ex. 30:18).*

*...out of whose hills thou mayest dig **brass** (Deut, 8:9).*

*he cast two pillars of **brass** (I Kings 7:15).*

*he made two chapters of molten **brass** (I Kings 7:16).*

*...and all these vessels which Hiram made to King Solomon for the house of the LORD, were of **bright brass**. In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in the clay ground (I Kings 7:45,46).*

*Iron is taken out of the earth, and **brass** is molten out of the stone (Job 28:2).*

ANSWER: It is not impossible that the Hebrews had some zinc mixed in with their copper. Note the "bright brass" of (1 Kings 7:45, 46)

The World Book Encyclopedia says:

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Some historians believe people made the first brass accidentally by melting copper ore that also contained a small amount of zinc. Brass was made on the island of Rhodes as early as 500 B.C. The ancient Romans were the first to make extensive use of brass, shortly before the beginning of the Christian Era. They made a variety of brass objects, including coins, kettles and ornaments. They made brass by melting zinc ores with copper.

The fact remains, however, that what we now call bronze and not brass was the chief alloy of the ancient world, but it was not always called this in English! Until more recent times, "brass" was the general term used for copper based alloys, whether with zinc or tin. The word "bronze" was first introduced into the English language (from the Italian "bronz") during the 16th century, but did not displace the use of "brass" as the term for both until well into the 19th century.* Therefore, while the term may need to be explained today, the AV translators were quite correct in their choice of the word which had long-standing usage both before and after 1611."

*See: "The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology," "The Etymological Dictionary" by W.W. Skeat, and the Oxford English Dictionary (unabridged).

CHAPTER 3

COAT OF MANY COLOURS, OR TUNIC

ALLEGED MISTAKE: "A better rendering would be 'long tunic' or one of several other translations. The Hebrew word passim (occurs five times) has at its root the idea: to expand, extend, extremities. Hence, it is a long robe with long sleeves."

*Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a **coat of many colours** (Gen, 37:3),*

*they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his **coat of many colours** that was on him (37:23).*

*And they sent the **coat of many colours**, and they brought it to their father... (37:32).*

*And she had a **garment of divers colours** upon her: for with such robes were the king's daughters that were virgins apparelled,...And Tamar put ashes on her head and rent her **garment of divers colours** that was on her (2 Sam. 13:18,19),*

ANSWER: In Bible times there was certainly nothing remarkable about a long garment with long sleeves! The Hebrew word means more. Young's Concordance interprets it as "pieces," "ends," "extremities." Editions of the AV have "pieces" in the margin. Today we speak of a "remnant" of cloth or material.

The JFB Commentary says:

Gesenius defines it, a tunic reaching to the palms of the hands and soles of the feet . . . But the word signifies a piece as well as the palm of the hand; and hence the phrase is usually rendered "a coat of pieces of various colours" . . . it was formed in those early days by sewing together patches of coloured cloth, and considered a dress of distinction (Judges 5:30, 2 Sam. 13:18).

This latter is the view of the Targum of Onkelos (2nd century B.C.), the Talmud, Septuagint, and Jerome's Vulgate. It is the view of Luther, Tyndale and the other European Versions of the Reformation. A number of the modern versions translates passim virtually as the AV, including the NASV and NIV. Quoting from Thornley Smith (Joseph and His Times, p. 12) Peter Ruckman says that the coat of many colours "is illustrated in Egyptian inscriptions where Semitic rulers come in to Pharaoh. They are clothed in a patch-work quilt-type of garment that consists of different pieces of cloth, each one a different colour sewed together" (The Christian's Handbook of Biblical Scholarship, 1988, p. 339).

CHAPTER 4

CONIES, OR ROCK BADGERS

ALLEGED MISTAKE: "The AV 'Coney' (older English for Rabbit, cf. 'Coney Island') is certainly an error! Rabbits do not chew the cud, nor do they live in the rocks, nor in Palestine. Much the same must be said for the translation, 'Hare'! Though they are found in Israel, yet they do not chew the cud. Clearly the Rock Badger is meant for the 'Coney', and we are not certain which animal is intended for 'Hare' (See NIV and New Scofield Bible.)"

*And the **coney**, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. And the **hare**, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you (Lev. 11: 5,6).*

*Nevertheless these ye shall not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the cloven hoof; as the camel, and the **hare**, and the **coney** for they chew the cud, but divide not the hoof (Deut. 14: 7).*

*The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the **conies** (Psa. 104:18).*

*The **conies** are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks (Deut. 30:26).*

The Hebrew word for Coney is shaphan. And that for Hare is arnebeth.

ANSWER: While neither animal is a true ruminant, they do rechew their food, and so in

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that sense "chew the cud." Rechewing was accepted in this sense by the Hebrews.

Dake's Bible says of the hare:

After first nibbling and partially chewing its food, the hare deposits some in its cheeks to be chewed a second time more fully before swallowing. This is spoken of as "chewing the cud" (See Lev. 11: 6).

In fact, the rock badger is not a ruminant either! It chews the cud only in the sense that a rabbit does.

As for their location, the hare is found in Palestine today and there is reason to believe that in Bible times the rabbit was also. Rabbits proliferated in North Africa and would easily have spread to Israel.

This Is the opinion of C.D. Ginsburg:

The coney... is the meaning of the Hebrew expression shaphan according to the definition of those who had to explain and administer this law at the time of Christ. As these interpreters lived in Palestine, where they saw the animals in question, the objection that the rabbit is not indigenous in Palestine falls to the ground (Ellicott's Commentary on Leviticus 11: 5).

As for rabbits not living in rocky places: What about those known as desert cottontails and mountain cottontails living in North America?

"Rabbit" is the translation of the Greek dasupoda in the Bagster "Septuagint, Greek and English Old Testament."