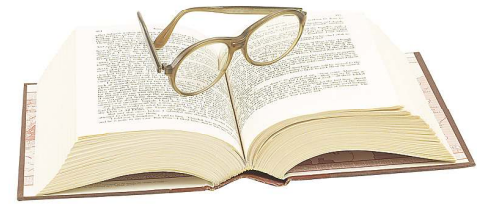


MESSAGES FROM WAYNE'S STUDY



WHAT???

Study0021

So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that pertain to him by the morning light any that xxxxxx¹ against the wall. And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, 1 Samuel 25:22-23 (KJV)

This is one of my sons' favorite verses to learn at Bible Camp. I pity the poor counselors. (There are four other such verses, 1 Samuel 25:34, 1 Kings 14:10, 1 Kings 21:21 and 2 Kings 9:8)

But, seriously, it **is** a verse in the Bible (the KJV anyway as well as in the Hebrew), so it must have some meaning. Almost every translation I have in my library replaces the above "obnoxious" phrase with "men" or something very similar. I did find one translation that finally got it right, but I shall reserve that for later.

Being a thorough type of person, I decided to see why David didn't just say something like, ***May God deal with David, be it ever so severely, if by morning I leave alive one male of all who belong to him!***" (NIV). The Hebrew certainly have the words to say that. So, there must be some idiom involved here that is not well known.

If you get stuck on a verse, turn to one or more of your Bible commentaries. Do you know what Dr. McGee says about the above verse? Nothing at all - he skips over it as do a number of the other commentaries. Maybe I am weird or something, but if there is a verse in the Bible I do not understand, I want someone to explain it to me! According to the doctrine of the Inspiration of the Scriptures, that verse is supposed to be there.

Keil & Delitzsch's commentary on the Hebrew Old Testament (10 volumes) mention the phrase twice but never really say what it signifies. Adam Clark is the only other commentator that speaks to this passage. He wrote as follows: *Any that xxxxxx against the wall—This expression certainly means either men or dogs, and should be thus translated, if I leave, any male; and this will answer both to men and dogs, and the offensive mode of expression be avoided. I will not enter farther into the subject: Bochart and Calmet have done enough, and more than enough; and in the plainest language too² I wish I knew what "Bochart and Calmet" (mentioned above) had to say!*

Now, one more translation! ***May God do his worst to me if Nabal and every cur in his misbegotten brood isn't dead meat by morning!***" 1 Samuel 25:22 (The Message). I find some things in this translation that surprise me - surprise me in the sense that they are really "right on" with their translation. As noted in the previous passage, this expression would refer not only to men but to dogs as well. The Oxford Dictionary has *cur* >n. *1 an aggressive dog, especially a mongrel. 2 informal a despicable man.* What you may not know is that the Israelites were not like most of people today, they did not like dogs at all! They were all curs!

Unger's Dictionary says, *In Bible times, as now, troops of hungry and half-wild dogs roamed the fields and the streets feeding upon dead bodies and other refuse and thus became objects of dislike. Fierce and cruel enemies were called dogs.*

So, "men," "males," etc. is not a good translation. "Curs" is actually the right translation of this idiom!

¹Pisseth

²Adam Clark's commentary on the Bible