

# Bible Corrections

By A.P. Adams

**In the \*Common Version (see footnote), there are many passages scattered throughout the Bible, that from one cause and another are misunderstood. Some are mistranslated, others are invariably misquoted; others again are wrongly punctuated; and so from various causes the truth is obscured. I have thought that it would be profitable to notice some of these defects and correct them if possible, hence this article; others may appear from time to time.**

**We will look at some passages in the Psalms and then at one or two in The New Testament.**

The first one to which I would call attention is **Psalm 7:11; "God judgeth the righteous and God is angry with the wicked every day."** So it reads in the common version, but so it ought not to read. The correct reading is just the opposite, viz., **"God is a righteous judge and He is not angry always."** So, Young renders it, so also the Vulgate, Septuagint and Syriac. The original word for **"God"** is very similar to the word for **"not."** **"El" means God; "al" means not;** in the original there is not so much difference as in the English, as the vowels are very nearly alike. **Doubtless these two words became confused and thus the error occurred;** the corrected rendering agrees perfectly with such passages as Psa. 103:8,9; Isa. 57:16; Mic. 7:18,19.

The next passage I would call attention to is **Psalm 9:17; "The wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God."** It is commonly understood that the word **"hell"** here means the place of future punishment; but this view cannot be true, for the original word is **"sheol,"** equivalent to **"hades"** in the New Testament, and means the grave. It is the same place that Christ went to when he died, see Psa. 16:10; compare Acts 2:27,31, N.V.\* With this view of the word hell what is the force of the passage? **"The wicked shall be turned into the grave."** What is

the special point in making that declaration, since we know that all the righteous as well as the wicked, shall go down into the grave? There is no special point to it; the translation is incorrect; **the correct rendering is as follows: "The wicked shall turn back to the grave all the nations that forget God."** It will be noticed that in the common version the word " and" is in italics, indicating that it is not in the original. I suppose that it is understood by the readers of this paper that **words in italics in the common version are not in the original but are supplied by the translators to make out, or help out, the sense.** These have no authority excepting the opinion or judgment of the translator: we have a right to ignore them, or substitute other words in their place, if the context or other scripture, or common sense warrants it. Usually these supplied words are judiciously inserted and help to make the sense clear; but **not infrequently they obscure the truth, and in many cases, they pervert it.** We should look out for these supplied words when we read the Bible, and take notice whether they are warranted or not. I have noticed in previous issues several instances in this line that will illustrate what I have said; see 1-1-13 and 1-2-41. **If we leave out the word "and" in the passage we are examining, we have almost the reading that I have given above as the correct one. The sense of the passage is that wickedness will destroy any nation; and this fact is demonstrated in past history and in the present condition of the nations of the world.** With the proper understanding of the word "*hell*" the common rendering has no force or point whatever; but the correct rendering I have given is a great truth confirmed by all human experience.

The next passage is **Psalm 109th.** This psalm has been severely criticized by infidels and other opposers of the Bible because it represents David, "*a man after God's own heart,*" as breathing out the most awful imprecations and curses upon his enemies and all their posterity. **The psalm reads like the anathemas of the Romish inquisition and the Christian finds it utterly irreconcilable with the spirit of Christ, of whom David was a type.** Now there is a very reasonable explanation of this psalm, which clears up all this difficulty and shows us that David was never guilty of uttering these curses, but that, on the contrary, **he is simply reporting to the Lord in prayer the curses that his enemies pronounce upon him.** Now notice how naturally this explanation corresponds with the language of the psalm. **The first five**

verses are a prayer to the Lord setting forth how his enemies have been talking against him; *"For the mouth of the wise and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue; they compassed me about also with words of hatred."* Notice here that David refers to himself by the first person, singular pronoun, "me," and to his enemies by the third person, plural pronoun, "they." Now with the sixth verse David begins to tell what his enemies are saying against him; that this is the true meaning is indicated by the pronouns. *"Set thou a wicked man over him,"* For whom? Is David saying this of his enemies? No, for if he was he would have said, *"Set thou a wicked man over them,"* i.e. over mine enemies. David is not pronouncing curses upon his enemies; but is rehearsing the curses that his enemies pronounce upon him, and this is the drift of the psalm way through until we get to the 20th verse. **Just supply the words "They say" before verse 6,** and read the first 19 verses and it is as plain as can be that the above explanation is correct. Now leave out the supplied words from verse 20, and read it thus, *"This [i.e. all this cursing] is the work of mine adversaries before the Lord, and of them that speak evil against my soul."* The remainder of the psalm is in perfect harmony with this explanation; see especially verses 25 and 28. It was a great pleasure to me to find this explanation of this puzzling scripture. How David could utter such imprecations and be a man after God's own heart would be hard to tell; but the above view is reasonable, in perfect harmony with the language of the psalm and clears up all the difficulties.

We will now notice a passage where a wrong punctuation obscures the truth. See Isaiah: *"If favor is shown to the wicked, he does not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness he deals perversely and does not see the majesty of the LORD. O LORD, thy hand is lifted up, but they see it not. Let them see thy zeal for thy people, and be ashamed. Let the fire for thy adversaries consume them"* (Isaiah 26:10,11, RSV}. Change the various clauses in this passage into questions implying an affirmative answer and the sense is very materially changed, and is much more in harmony with the context. **The punctuation of the Bible is another thing that the translators have supplied; in the original there are no punctuation marks at all;** hence the punctuation has no more authority than the supplied words, and we may change it if the sense requires it or other scripture gives us

warrant. Now see the passage under consideration together with the two preceding verses; as it stands now in the common version there seems to be a fault in the connection. **In verses 8 and 9 the prophet is earnestly longing and waiting for the coming of the Lord in the way of his judgments, for when his judgments are in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness;** thus does the prophet speak of a time of special favour and blessedness, when the whole world shall be enlightened and learn righteousness. Then he goes on according to the common version, *"Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness,"* this seems a positive contradiction of the sentiment of the preceding verse; in that verse the prophet says that in that specially favoured period, when the Lords comes in the way of his judgments, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness; in the next verse the common version makes him say that though favour is shown to the wicked yet will he not learn righteousness; and the rest of this verse and the next verse seems to still further carry out this contradiction. Now all the trouble is in the punctuation of verses 10 and 11. **Change the declarative clauses in verses 10 and 11 to questions, implying the answer "Yes," and all is harmony.** Read it thus: *"In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; with my soul have I desired thee, for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let favour be shewed to the wicked, will he not learn righteousness? In the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and not behold the majesty of the Lord? Lord when thy hand is lifted up will they not see? they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at thy people, yea the fire of thine enemies shall devour them."* With the above punctuation the drift of the passage is very apparent.

In the preceding paper I have shown that the judgment day is a period of special blessing for the race, the time when God will shew the exceeding riches of his grace, favour; then *"the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."* After making this statement, the prophet goes on to show by questions how reasonable this view is. *"Let favour be shewed to the wicked, will he not learn righteousness? In the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and not behold the majesty of the Lord?"* As though he had said, when favour is shown the wicked, i.e. *"when he is enlightened and brought to a knowledge of the truth,"* will he not then learn righteousness? Of course

he will, for with the knowledge will come the power and the desire to do right. ***"In the land of uprightness,"*** that is, when all around him is fair, and honorable, and truthful, ***"Will he deal unjustly?"*** Certainly not, it would be hardly possible to be unjust amid such surroundings; and as for beholding the Lord's majesty, we know that it is just the time when, ***"God's glory shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it"*** (Isa. 40:5). The prophet goes on, ***"Lord, when thy hand is lifted up,"*** that is, when his power and authority is plainly manifested in the earth, so that all shall recognize it, ***"will they not see? They shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at thy people;"*** compare Jude 14,15. ***"Yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them;"*** their enmity shall be destroyed, when they see and experience these things; compare Zeph. 3:8,9. Thus explained the whole passage is plain and harmonious.

Now we will look at a passage in the New Testament; viz., that precious declaration in John 3:16, ***"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son,"*** etc. We will take into consideration verses 14-17 inclusive; first I will clear up several points of obscurity and error and then give the rendering as it should be. In verse 15 the words ***"not perish but"*** should be omitted; according to the best authorities they have been interpolated, probably from the following verse; they are left out from the New Version. The word ***"whosoever"*** in the 15th and 16th verses should be rendered ***"all"***; in the original it is the word usually rendered all throughout the New Testament; it occurs hundreds of times, and it is rendered ***"all"*** in over nine hundred instances, and whosoever in only about forty; the rendering all then is plainly the usual one. The word rendered ***"believeth"*** in the original is a participle, ***"believing"***; the clause should read, ***"that all, believing in him should not,"*** etc. The words, ***"believing in him,"*** are explanatory, telling us how "all" are to be saved, viz, by believing in him. In the common version it will be noticed that the participle is, without authority, rendered by the verb ***"believeth,"*** and the words, ***"whosoever believeth in him"*** are thereby made to have a conditional force, as though it read, if they believe in him, implying that some will not believe in him, and hence will perish, and be lost eternally. But this is not a correct rendering of the original, as I have

shown above; **the clause is not conditional, but is thrown in, as a participial form, as explanatory of the manner of the world's salvation, by believing in him;** this view is fully confirmed by the 19th verse; *"for God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through him might be saved."* Now I will give the whole passage as it ought to be. *"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up, that all, believing in him, might have æonial life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that all, believing in him, might not perish, but have æonial life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through him might be saved."* Thus truthfully translated this passage is one of the grandest and most sweeping declarations of the final universal triumph of God's grace in the salvation of the world, contained in the Bible. It is positive and direct, and mighty enough, could they only appreciate it, to utterly silence all those narrow, shortsighted souls who think that God will only gain a partial victory over the devil, that he will not save the world, but only a portion of it, a vast number being eternally lost. **It is very plain why the translators of the common version handled this passage as they did.** Their creed would not allow them to accept it just as it reads; it required only a slight change to make it conform to their own idea. **They insert the unusual rendering "whosoever," change believing to "believeth," and then, punctuating it accordingly, the passage is "tinkered" so as to harmonize with the creed.** Thank God for deliverance from man made creeds! *"Let God be true, though every man be false"* (Rom. 3:4).

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