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JEWISH APOLOGETICS (104)
<http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/Jewish-Apologetics-104.pdf>

Objection #88: Psalm 22 does not speak of death of crucifixion. In fact, the King James translators changed the words of verse 16 [17] to speak of “piercing” the sufferer’s hands and feet, whereas the Hebrew text actually says, “Like a lion they are at my hands and feet.”

Brown’s short response to this objection:

It is interesting to note that verse 16 [17] is not quoted in the New Testament even though other verses from Psalm 22 are cited in the Gospels. This means that verse 16[17] was not the primary verse on which the New Testament authors focused. As to the allegation that the King James translators intentionally changed the meaning of the Hebrew text, their translation (“they pierced my hands and feet” verses “like a lion [they are at] my hands and feet”) actually reflects an ancient Jewish interpretation along with some important variations in the medieval Masoretic manuscripts. In other words, it’s as much of a Jewish issue as it is a Christian one! In any case, there really is no problem. With either rendering, the imagery is one of extreme bodily violence done to the sufferer’s hands and feet, corresponding to the realities of the crucifixion.¹

Jewish anti-missionaries love to slam Christian translators for what they describe as deliberate dishonesty in the translation of Old Testament passages to make Jesus look like the Messiah. This charge demonstrates either the lack of scholarship on the part of the Jewish anti-missionaries or just plain dishonesty. Brown makes three relevant points: 1) the New Testament never quotes this verse—so it is not a major issue; 2) the oldest surviving translation of Hebrew Old Testament is the Septuagint which translates the phrase with “they pierced”—this took place in the 3rd century *before Christ*, hardly by prejudiced Christian translators; rather it was by the Jews and for the Jews; and 3) instead of duplicity by the King James translators, the duplicity is

¹Michael L. Brown, *Messianic Prophecy Objections—Volume 3*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 122-27. In his book, Brown lists the objection and then gives a short response which is followed by a more developed response. This DDR series, for the most part, tracks the objection and his *short* response after which you will find my comments. I highly recommend his book if you are interested in his longer responses (there is far too much material to include in this series).

by the anti-missionaries for continuing this charge in the hope that the listener would be ignorant of all of the facts.

In Christ Alone,

Pastor Don