

## **“Can Two Walk Together: Cambridge Versus Oxford”**

Amos 3:3

Introduction: In this text of Scripture, a shepherd from the south has a sermon for the Northern Kingdom. Although he was no prophet or a prophet’s son, this simple herdsman was prophesying to Israel that they could not walk in unison with the Lord because of their differences. Israel had fallen into sin, and they were not progressing with the Lord, thus they could not walk together. Another illustration of this principle was given by Moses. Deuteronomy 22:10 states, *“Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together.”* According to Aben Ezra, an ass did not have the equal strength of an ox, and plowing the two together would be a calamity. Paul also addressed this issue in 2 Corinthians 6:14, *“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers...”* The unequal yoke would not lead to fellowship and communion. Therefore, unless two are in agreement, there will be differences, unless two are in agreement there will be different strengths, and unless two are in agreement there will not be any fellowship and communion. Such is the case of the Cambridge editions of the King James Bible and the Oxford editions of the King James Bible. They cannot walk together, plow together, and labor together because they are different in their actual text of the Scriptures. In other words, the Oxford KJV does not match word-for-word the 1611 King James Version and the Cambridge KJV. Why is this so? Which one is right? Let us note a brief history of both printers, then address the issues of the two printing companies.

### 1. The Cambridge Printing Press

- a. “The University of Cambridge is a collegiate public research university in Cambridge, England. Founded in 1209, Cambridge is the second-oldest university in the English-speaking world and the world's third-oldest surviving university. It grew out of an association formed by scholars leaving the University of Oxford after a dispute with townfolk; the two ‘ancient universities’ have many common features and are often jointly referred to as ‘Oxbridge’.” (Wikipedia)
- b. “Cambridge University Press is the publishing business of the University of Cambridge. Granted letters patent by Henry VIII in 1534, it is the world's oldest publishing house, and the second largest university press in the world, after that of Oxford University Press.” (Wikipedia)
- c. “Cambridge published its first book in 1584, making it the oldest publishing house in the world. Over the next four centuries the Press's reputation spread throughout Europe, based on excellence in scholarly publishing of academic texts, poetry, school books, prayer books and Bibles.” (www.cambridge.org)
- d. “Today, Cambridge has over 50 offices across the globe, employs over 2,000 people, publishes over 50,000 titles by authors from over 100 countries, and is still growing, bringing thousands of subjects and millions of ideas to the world.” (www.cambridge.org)

### 2. The Oxford Printing Press

- a. “The University of Oxford is a collegiate research university located in Oxford, England. While having no known date of foundation, there is evidence of teaching as far back as 1096, making it the oldest university in the English-speaking world, and the world's second-oldest surviving university. It grew rapidly from 1167 when Henry II banned English students from attending the University of Paris. After disputes between students

and Oxford townsfolk in 1209, some academics fled northeast to Cambridge, where they established what became the University of Cambridge.” (Wikipedia)

- b. “Oxford University Press is the largest university press in the world, and the second-oldest, after that of Cambridge University Press.” (Wikipedia)
- c. “The first book was printed in Oxford in 1478, just two years after Caxton set up the first printing press in England. The University was involved with several printers in Oxford over the next century, although there was no formal university press.” (www.oup.com)
- d. “In 1586, the University of Oxford's right to print books was recognized in a decree from the Star Chamber. This was enhanced in the Great Charter secured by Archbishop Laud from King Charles I, which entitled the University to print ‘all manner of books’.” (www.oup.com)
- e. “The University also established its right to print the King James Authorized Version of the Bible in the seventeenth century. This Bible Privilege formed the basis of Oxford University Press’s publishing activities throughout the next two centuries.” (www.oup.com)
- f. “Today Oxford University Press has offices in 50 countries, and is the largest university press in the world.” (www.oup.com)

Body: Most King James Version defenders state that the 1629 and 1638 revisions of the 1611 correct printing errors while the 1762 and 1769 changes standardized the spelling of the 1611. They state that after 1769, there were no more revisions to the 1611. To some extent this may be true, but not altogether. Cambridge had their 1629, 1638, 1762, 1790, 1824, 1833, 1842, 1844, 1865, 1869, 1872, and 1887 editions with newer ones on the market today. Then, Oxford had their 1795, 1804, 1810, 1821, 1828, 1829, 1835, 1838, 1840, 1847, 1857, 1859, 1865, 1868, 1870, 1876, and 1880 editions with newer ones on the market today. Now the question is which one of these editions will be true to the 1611 printing of the Authorized Version. A comparison of the Cambridge “Concord 8vo” to the Oxford “8vo Refs.”, commonly used in the Old Scofield Bible, will reveal that the Cambridge University Press has preserved the original 1611 with accuracy while the Oxford University Press has many differences. Let us note just a few of the differences between the companies.

1. Genesis 10:7
  - a. Authorized Version 1611- “...and **Sabtecha**...”
  - b. Cambridge- “...and **Sabtecha**...”
  - c. Oxford- “...and **Sabtechah**...”
2. Genesis 24:57
  - a. Authorized Version 1611- “...and **enquire** at...”
  - b. Cambridge- “...and **enquire** at...”
  - c. Oxford- “...and **inquire** at...”
3. Genesis 25:4
  - a. Authorized Version 1611- “...**Abida**...”
  - b. Cambridge- “...**Abida**...”
  - c. Oxford- “...**Abidah**...”

4. Genesis 46:12
  - a. Authorized Version 1611- "...and **Zerah**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...and **Zerah**..."
  - c. Oxford- "...and **Zarah**..."
  
5. Exodus 34:23
  - a. Authorized Version 1611- "...your **men children**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...your **men children**..."
  - c. Oxford- "...your **menchildren**..."
  
6. Deuteronomy 22:3
  - a. Authorized Version 1611- "with all loft **thing**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...with all lost **thing**..."
  - c. Oxford- "...with all lost **things**..."
    - (1) There is a difference between thing and things.
    - (2) One is singular and one is plural.
  
7. Joshua 13:18
  - a. Authorized Version 1611- "And **Jahazah**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "And **Jahazah**..."
  - c. Oxford- "And **Jahaza**..."
  
8. Joshua 19:2
  - a. Authorized Version 1611- "...Beer-sheba, **or** Sheba, and Moladah,"
  - b. Cambridge- "...Beer-sheba, **or** Sheba, and Moladah,"
  - c. Oxford- "...Beer-sheba, **and** Sheba, and Moladah,"
    - (1) The Oxford text offers a discrepancy from the 1611. It describes the inheritance of the families of Simeon receiving Beer-sheba and Sheba as an inheritance.
    - (2) If this were true, then it would contradict verse number six. In verse six, it states that these families received 13 cities. Counting all the cities, we see that it had to be Beer-sheba or Sheba in order to calculate 13 cities. If it were "and Sheba", then that would make 14 cities.
  
9. Joshua 19:19
  - a. Authorized Version 1611- "And **Hapharaim**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "And **Hapharaim**..."
  - c. Oxford- "And **Haphraim**..."
  
10. Joshua 19:19
  - a. Authorized Version 1611- "...and **Shion**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...and **Shion**..."
  - c. Oxford- "...and **Shihon**..."
  
11. Judges 13:19
  - a. Authorized Version 1611- "...did **wonderoufly**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...did **wondrously**..."

- c. Oxford- "...did **wonderously**..."
12. 1 Samuel 17:48
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...that David **hafted**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...that David **hasted**..."
  - c. Oxford- "...that David **hastened**..."
13. 1 Samuel 31:2
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...and **Malchifhua**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...and **Malchishua**..."
  - c. Oxford- "...and **Melchishua**..."
14. 2 Samuel 5:14
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...**Shammua**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...**Shammua**..."
  - c. Oxford- "...**Shammuah**..."
15. 2 Samuel 21:21
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...fonne of **Shimea**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...son of **Shimea**..."
  - c. Oxford- "...son of **Shimeah**..."
16. 2 Samuel 23:37
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...**Naharai** the Berothite..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...**Naharai** the Beerothite..."
  - c. Oxford- "...**Nahari** the Beerothite..."
17. 1 Kings 8:56
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "Bleffed be the **LORD**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "Blessed be the **LORD**..."
  - c. Oxford- "Blessed be the **Lord**..."
    - (1) The capitalization of the LORD is very important in revealing the Trinity and the deity of Jesus Christ.
    - (2) Psalm 110:1- "*The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*"
    - (3) Matthew 22:44- "*The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?*"
    - (4) Even Jesus and the New Testament writer saw the importance of capitalizing LORD.
18. 1 Chronicles 2:47
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...and **Gefhan**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...and **Geshan**..."
  - c. Oxford- "...and **Gesham**..."
19. 1 Chronicles 2:49
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...was **Achfah**."

- b. Cambridge- "...was **Achsah**."
  - c. Oxford- "...was **Achsa**."
20. 1 Chronicles 7:1
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...and **Shimron**, four."
  - b. Cambridge- "...and **Shimron**, four."
  - c. Oxford- "...and **Shimrom**, four."
21. 1 Chronicles 7:19
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...of **Shemida**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...of **Shemida**..."
  - c. Oxford- "...of **Shemidah**..."
22. 1 Chronicles 7:27
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...**Jehofhua** his fonne."
  - b. Cambridge- "...**Jehoshua** his son."
  - c. Oxford- "...**Jehoshuah** his son."
23. 1 Chronicles 23:20
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...**Michah** the firft..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...**Michah** the first..."
  - c. Oxford- "...**Micah** the first..."
24. 1 Chronicles 24:11
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "The ninth to **Jefhua**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "The ninth to **Jeshua**..."
  - c. Oxford- "The ninth to **Jeshuah**..."
25. 2 Chronicles 33:19
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...and all his **sinne**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...and all his **sin**..."
  - c. Oxford- "...and all his **sins**..."
- (1) In this comparison, the Cambridge cited "sin" as singular. Oxford pened it as "sins".
  - (2) The significance of using "sin" is that it relates to the next word "trespass". It describes the particular "sin" and "trespass" that caused blight on the character of Manasseh.
  - (3) Distinguishing "sin" from "sins" is also important when we come to 1 John chapter one. 1 John 1:8 states, "If we say that we have no sin..." Then, verse nine asserts, "If we confess our sins..." Verse eight concerns someone denying a sin nature while verse nine relates to a believer confessing his individual sins. There is a difference between a sin nature (v. 8- "sin") and individual sins (v. 9- "sins").
26. 2 Chronicles 35:20
- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...againft **Carchemifh**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...against **Carchemish**..."
  - c. Oxford- "...against **Charchemish**..."

27. Ezra 2:2

- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...**Mifpar**..."
- b. Cambridge- "...**Mispar**..."
- c. Oxford- "...**Mizpar**..."

28. Ezra 4:10

- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...and noble **Afnappar**..."
- b. Cambridge- "...and noble **Asnappar**..."
- c. Oxford- "...and noble **Asnapper**..."

29. Nehemiah 7:30

- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...and **Geba**..."
- b. Cambridge- "...and **Geba**..."
- c. Oxford- "...and **Gaba**..."

30. Job 30:6

- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...dwell in the **clifts**..."
- b. Cambridge- "...dwell in the **clifts**..."
- c. Oxford- "...dwell in the **cliffs**..."

31. Psalm 148:8

- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...fnow and **vapour**..."
- b. Cambridge- "...snow, and **vapour**..."
- c. Oxford- "...snow, and **vapours**..."

32. Proverbs 20:29

- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...the **gray** head."
- b. Cambridge- "...the **gray** head."
- c. Oxford- "...the **grey** head."

33. Jeremiah 34:16

- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...whome **ye** had set..."
- b. Cambridge- "...whom **ye** had set..."
- c. Oxford- "...whom **he** had set..."

(1) Only the 1611 and the Cambridge texts hold true to the word "ye" in this verse.

(2) We must understand that there is a difference between "ye" and "he". "Ye" is plural relating to a group of people. "He" is singular concerning a certain individual that is of the male gender.

(3) In this passage, Zedekiah, the 20th king of the Southern Kingdom (Judah), is described. It reveals his and the people's crooked dealings with the servants of the land as he made a covenant that he would set them at liberty (vs. 8-11). This is a principal found in Exodus 21:2. However, they (Zedekiah and the people of Judah) did not fulfill their promise.

(4) From verse 14 through verse 17, the plural form is found. The words "ye", "thou", "thee" and "you" are used repeatedly referring to the entire people of Judah.

Therefore, verse 16 needs to use the word “ye” to remain in the context of the passage. Changing this word to “he” (referring to Zedekiah) would break the flow of thought and the intent of the rebuke.

34. Amos 2:2

- a. Authorized Version 1611- “...the palaces of **Kerioth**...”
- b. Cambridge- “...the palaces of **Kerioth**...”
- c. Oxford- “...the palaces of **Kirioth**...”

35. Nahum 3:16

- a. Authorized Version 1611- “...the cankerworme spoileth & **flieth** away.”
- b. Cambridge- “...the cankerworm spoileth, and **flieth** away.”
- c. Oxford- “...the cankerworm spoileth, and **fleeth** away.”
  - (1) Yet another passage where the 1611 and the Cambridge texts are the only texts that agree (in this illustration) is found in Nahum 3:16.
  - (2) There seems to be a difference between “flieth” and “fleeth”. “Flieth” refers to the air while “fleeth” alludes to the land. Webster’s 1828 dictionary will be helpful to establish the diversity between these two words.
    - (a) “fly”- “To move through air by the aid of wings, as fowls. To pass or move in air, by the force of wind or other impulse;”
    - (b) “flee”- “To run with rapidity, as from danger; to attempt to escape; to hasten from danger or expected evil.”
  - (3) The cankerworm is a young locust (as found in v. 15- “cankerworm” “locusts”; as found in v. 17- “locusts” “grasshoppers”) which is an insect of the grasshopper family. While it was in the early stages as a caterpillar, it spoiled the land. Then it developed into the locust, thus flying away.
  - (4) The correct interpretation is that the cankerworm eventually flies away through the air. Therefore, we understand that it did not run on the land to another place as the Oxford text suggests.

36. Matthew 4:1

- a. Authorized Version 1611- “...Jesus led vp of the **Spirit** into...”
- b. Cambridge- “...Jesus led up of the **Spirit** into...”
- c. Oxford- “...Jesus led up of the **spirit** into...”
  - (1) The 1611 and the Cambridge texts reveal that the Spirit that led Jesus into the wilderness was the Holy Spirit.
  - (2) We see the same Spirit of God that descended like a dove and lighted upon Jesus at His baptism in chapter three (Matthew 3:16) was the same Spirit of God that led Him into the wilderness in chapter four.
  - (3) Certainly, the importance of translating this passage as the Holy Spirit is to show that Jesus was being led by the Spirit of God and not the spirit of antichrist (1 John 4:3). We should try the spirits (1 John 4:1) because there are many spirits that desire to lead us astray (1 Timothy 4:1). This passage firmly states that Jesus was not being led by some devil but by the Spirit of God.

37. Matthew 26:39

- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...he went a little **further**..."
  - b. Cambridge- "...he went a little **further**..."
  - c. Oxford- "...he went a little **farther**..."
- (1) Although these words are almost similar, there is still a difference that the 1611, the Cambridge, and the Kirkbride retains. (Keep in mind that there are several places in these other translations that change "further" to "farther".)
  - (2) Referring to the Webster's 1828 dictionary will prove helpful in this instance.
    - (a) "further"- "More or most distant; as the further end of the field. To a greater distance. He went further."
    - (b) "farther"- "More remote; more distant than something else. Longer; tending to a greater distance."
  - (3) Meditating on these definitions reveals that "farther" is going beyond most things ("more distant than something else") while "further" is taking it to the extremes (hence the "end"). When someone goes "further", no more distance can be traveled. It is to the "end". It is the "most" distance that can be trod.
  - (4) We can take solace in the fact that Jesus bore all of our shame, sin, and sorrow taking it to the very "end".

38. Mark 1:12

- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...immediately the **Spirit**..."
- b. Cambridge- "...immediately the **Spirit**..."
- c. Oxford- "...immediately the **spirit**..."

39. Romans 9:9

- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...and **Sara** fhall haue..."
- b. Cambridge- "...and **Sara** shall have..."
- c. Oxford- "...and **Sarah** shall have..."

40. 1 Corinthians 4:15

- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...ten thousand **inftructors**..."
- b. Cambridge- "...ten thousand **instructors**..."
- c. Oxford- "...ten thousand **instructors**..."

41. Revelation 2:6

- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...of the **Nicolaitans**..."
- b. Cambridge- "...of the **Nicolaitans**..."
- c. Oxford- "...of the **Nicolaitanes**..."

42. Revelation 21:20

- a. Authorized Version 1611- "...the feuenth **Chryfolite**..."
- b. Cambridge- "...the seventh, **chrysolite**..."
- c. Oxford- "...the seventh, **chrysolyte**..."

Conclusion: Can two walk together, except they be agreed? Are you supposed to plow an ox and an ass together? Isn't an unequal yoke forbidden? It appears if an individual desires the King



James Version without any changes they need to purchase a Cambridge King James Version. To put it in the words of Samuel Goldwyn, Oxford University, “You’ve improved it worse”.

Many a preacher has suggested to their congregation that they should use the King James Version (formerly known as the Authorized Version) as their Bible. However, given the many translations of the King James Version, they need to state specifically which one to use. It must be brought to our attention that there are many varieties of the King James Version on the market today. A simple listing of the more prominent translations is:

- |                        |                                       |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. AMG                 | 9. Kregel                             |
| 2. Baker               | 10. Mathis                            |
| 3. Bethany             | 11. Moody (Ryrie)                     |
| 4. Broadman and Holman | 12. Nelson (Thomas Nelson Publishers) |
| 5. Cambridge           | 13. Oxford (University) (Scofield)    |
| 6. Dake                | 14. Tyndale                           |
| 7. Hendrickson         | 15. World                             |
| 8. Kirkbride           | 16. Zondervan                         |

Does it really matter from which company you purchase your King James Version of the Bible? Are not they all the same? After a careful examination of the text of these, we find that not all of these are the same. However, in almost all these instances the Cambridge text held true to the original Authorized Version (1611). Therefore, we must conclude that the Cambridge text is the only text that is reliable enough for our daily reading, study, teaching, and preaching of the Bible.