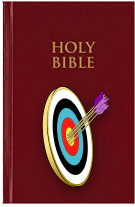


## Spot On

*Restoring the Hebraic foundational emphasis on the processes of how you live your life:*



- the responsive actions our Lord commands all of His followers,*
- and their responsibility to deferentially obey by grace the One they love.*

### Spot 3. Those who lead Father's family don't rule over them!

There should be no doubt as you go through the Newer Testament that Jesus was bringing together a family of brothers and sisters to the glory of His Father. The generations of seniors, middle-agers, young adults, teens and children who comprise a family aren't ruled by an authority figure who coerces his will like an overlord or CEO. Yet maintaining a church hierarchy of overlords ruling over passively compliant pewsitters was the obvious intent of the translators of the King James Version. Even the New International Version has used mistranslation to maintain an organizational system within Christianity — a system which eliminates the essential role of wise older family members in passing along spiritual wisdom and interpersonal responsibility through compassionate role modeling of servant leadership.

King James Version, Hebrews 13:7 - *“Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God...”*

King James Version, Hebrews 13:17 - *“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”*

The KJV refers to men who *“have the rule over you.”* Yet none of these 5 words are part of the original Greek! The KJV translators manufactured this phrase out of a single Greek word which literally means **“to go before, as a guide”** — in other words, to lead the way as an example. But the translators were pressured to make sure both the king and the church hierarchy could maintain their position of domination and rule. So any thought of the biblical concept of **“shepherds who lead a flock”** or “wise elders guiding an extended family of believers through role modeling” was hastily jettisoned.

Both Hebrews 13:7 and 13:17 speak of **“the ones leading you”** as wise guides. As noted before, no “rule” is involved in *any* family of people who are learning from the more mature and putting that wisdom into practice. Biblical leadership is *servant* leadership as modeled by the One Who washed the feet of His disciples at the Last Supper. Out of love, the individuals who were guiding along (the literal meaning of the word for *leading*) others in their faith were keeping watch on their behalf, not wanting them to be picked off by Satan's schemes or by strange and heretical teachings. So there's a strong willingness on behalf of these followers of Jesus to regard favorably their respected disciples — not out of obligation as to an ecclesiastical authority of some kind.

King James Version, Hebrews 13:17 - *“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls...”*

Let's look at the command to "obey". Again, the goal of King James' translator lackeys was to appease the monarch and his ecclesiastical establishment by promoting both a monarchy of "absolute rule," and a religious ruling class to support it. But top-down authoritarian rule has no place in the priesthood of believers comprised of all who trust in Jesus as Lord! (See Revelation 1:6, 5:10.)

The Greek word translated "obey" in these verses actually means ***"let yourself be persuaded by the ones who are leading you."*** It's an intentional choice of humility to respectfully receive their wisdom and guidance as those who have gone before you in obedient trust to their Lord. So you can readily see the domination slant of "obedience" and "authority" which leaps out in this mistranslation of the same verse:

New International Version, Hebrews 13:17: "*Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.*"

The NIV does a grave injustice to the scriptural pattern of servant leadership by referring to the leaders' "authority" — a word which is not in the original Greek but has been added to fit an inherent agenda. Incidentally, the second "obey them" doesn't appear in the original text either, nor does the phrase "their work", which would add false credence to the view of clergy as an occupation.

Let's briefly look at the word "submit" as it's used in this translation and in the KJV. Rather than silently giving way to someone who is demanding obedience, the Greek word used here simply means **"yield"** — in other words, voluntarily yielding to someone who cares about you and is offering you wise counsel from the Holy Spirit as they role model their true Leader, Jesus.

### **Something to carry away from this discussion:**

Paul calls himself a "fellow worker" on behalf of the Corinthian called-out ones in Christ, and refers to Timothy and Titus and Philemon the same way. Peter refers to himself as a "*fellow elder*" among other older men in the Body of Christ scattered abroad. These terms indicate that there's no sense of hierarchy or dominion or rule in any of these followers of our Lord! So, how should we capture the essential intent of relational interaction among people who are serving as they lead and those who are willingly letting themselves listen and be persuaded? Here's a translation from the *Concordant Literal New Testament* which clearly hits the mark:

***"Be persuaded by the ones leading you, and be deferring to them, for they are vigilant for the sake of your souls, as having to render an account, that they may be doing this with joy, and not with groaning, for this is disadvantageous for you"*** (Hebrews 13:17).