A Biblical Word Analysis for the Landfowl (Aves: Galliformes)

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Overview

- Introduction to the galliform birds
- Introduction to the uses of Scripture in baraminological analyses
- Methods & Results of our analysis
- Conclusions

Introduction to the Galliform Birds

- Class Aves = all birds
- Order Galliformes = landfowl
  - ≈250 species in 70 genera and 7 families
  - Almost all continents
  - Familiar = chickens, turkeys, pheasants, grouse, quail, partridges, peacocks & guineafowl
  - Less familiar = mound-builders, scrub-fowl, brush-turkeys, guans, chacalacas & curassows

Galliformes = 7 families

Megapodiidae:
Mound-builders

Cracidae:
Chacalacas, Guans
& Curassows

Galliformes = 7 families

Meleagrididae:
Turkeys

Tetraonidae:
Grouse

Galliformes = 7 families

Odontophoridae:
New World Quail

Phasianidae:
Old World Quail,
Pheasants & Partridges

Galliformes = 7 families

Numididae:
Guineafowl

Uses of Scripture in Baraminology

- Apobaraminic limits from Creation Account
  - God created plant life, swimming things, flying things, land animals, and humans separately
  - These separate acts of creation imply fundamental discontinuities between the groups
  - Their creation & completion on separate days of creation reinforces the discontinuity between them
  - These separate, discontinuous groups are apobaramins

Uses of Scripture in Baraminology

- Clues from organisms that occurred during and before the Flood
  - Fig leaves in the Garden of Eden
  - Noah was commanded to take seven of every kind of bird onto the Ark
  - Noah sent out a raven & a dove from the Ark
  - The dove returned with an olive leaf
- These may give us an indication of the level of the baramin or created kind

Uses of Scripture in Baraminology

- Rate & mode of post-Flood diversification from early references in Genesis & Job
- Abram & Job (≈400 yrs post-Flood) had camels
  - Hebrew word *gamal* occurs 54x in OT and probably refers to the modern one-humped dromedary
  - Camels on the Ark, however, were probably smaller and very unlike modern dromedaries
- Diversification of camelids from two individuals on the Ark occurred within first 400-500 yrs after the Flood

Methods of Our Analysis

- We compiled a list of 31 words that had the potential to be found in English OT
- We used Bible Gateway & UVA's Electronic Text Center to locate these words in: KJV, NKJV, NASB, NIV & RSV
- We consulted BibleWorks, 3 concordances & several lexicons to verify our understanding of the corresponding Hebrew or Aramaic words

Results of Our Analysis

- Seven of the 31 words are found in at least one English translation:
  - Fowl
  - Quail
  - Partridge
  - Peacock

  Rooster
  Cock
  [Water] Hen

- These occur 94 times and correspond to 16 different Hebrew or Aramaic words

Results of Our Analysis

- Eighty-one occurrences come from Hebrew or Aramaic words that refer to a general fowl or bird category or to birds of prey:
  - ***ôp***
  - ***ôpā***
  - ***ṣippôr***
  - ***ṣippar***
  - ***‘ayiṭ***
  - ***yāqûš***
  - ***yqš***
  - ***yāqôš***
- These are of little use in delimiting landfowl baramins or determining diversification rates

Results of Our Analysis

- Seven occurrences come from Hebrew words for which English translation differences exist:
  - ***'barbur*** ***tukkiyyîm***
  - ***tinšemet*** ***motnayim***
  - ***'ls*** ***zarzîr***
- The lexicons also express uncertainty of translation and usually give multiple possibilities

Results of Our Analysis

- Six occurrences, however, probably refer to members of the landfowl order

- These correspond to two Hebrew words

qōrē' ***śelāw***

qōrē' *= Partridge*

- All English translations & lexicons agree that ***qōrē'*** *is usually translated as "partridge"*
- No clear cognates from other Sem. languages
- ***qōrē'*** *is "named for its call"*
  - Possibly a form of onomatopoeia ("bob-white")
  - One source says song is "kwa-kwa-kwa"
  - Or because of the general distinctiveness of its call
  - Easton refers to ***qōrē'*** *as the "caller" and says...*

qōrē' = Partridge

This bird, unlike our own partridge, is distinguished by "its ringing call-note, which in early morning echoes from cliff to cliff amidst the barrenness of the wilderness of Judea and the glens of the forest of Carmel"

(Easton's Bible Dictionary, 1897)

qōrē' = *Partridge*

- Aharoni (1938) identifies ***qōrē'*** as the sand partridge (*Ammoperdix heyi*)

Sand Partridges

- In 1 Samuel 26:20, ***qōrē'*** *is described by David as being hunted in the mountains*

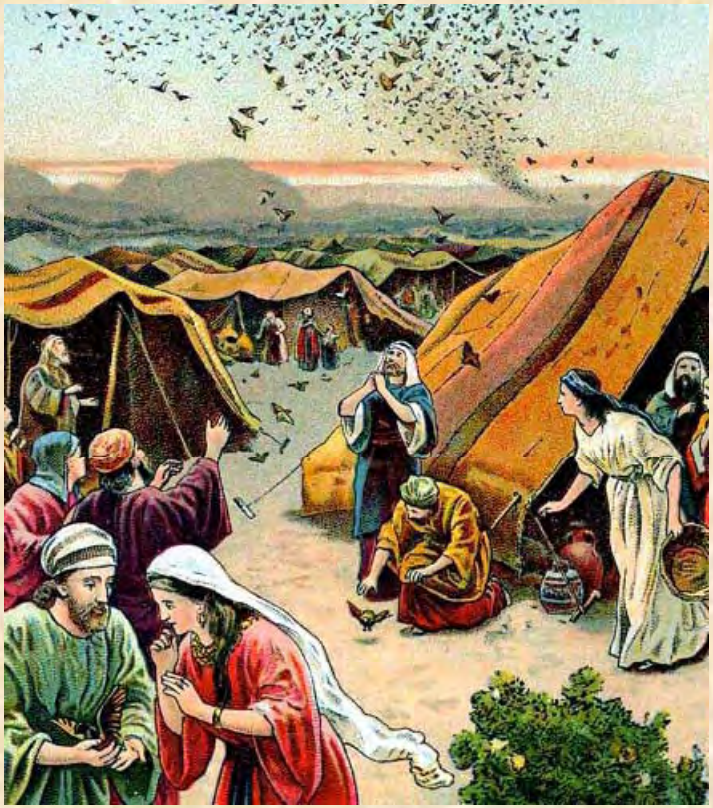
- Similarly, sand partridges are:
  - Game birds still hunted in the Middle East
  - Native to the Dead Sea region of Palestine
  - Inhabit rocky, steep, hilly areas

Sand Partridges

- Jeremiah 17:11 refers to… "a partridge that hatches eggs it did not lay" (NIV)
- Two sand partridge females frequently lay their eggs together in one hole
- One female eventually displaces the other, supplants it, and sits on both clutches

śᵉlāw Sent to the Israelites

- In God's timing and by His direction, ***śᵉlāw*** were sent to the Israelites in the desert
  - Expression of God's graciousness to his children (Ex. 16:13; Psalm 105:40)
  - Expression of His wrath against a rebellious people (Numbers 11:31-32; Psalm 78:26-30)



śᵉlāw Sent to the Israelites

- Exodus 16:13 - That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp.

- Numbers 11:31-33 - Now a wind went out from the LORD and drove quail in from the sea. It brought them down all around the camp to about three feet above the ground, as far as a day's walk in any direction. All that day and night and all the next day the people went out and gathered quail...and he struck them with a severe plague.

śᵉlāw Sent to the Israelites

- Psalm 105:40 - They asked, and he brought them quail and satisfied them with the bread of heaven

- Psalm 78:26-30 - He let loose the east wind from the heavens and led forth the south wind by his power. He rained meat down on them like dust, flying birds like sand on the seashore...he put to death the sturdiest among them.

śᵉlāw = Quail

- All English translations & lexicons agree that ***śᵉlāw*** *is to be translated as "quail"*
- Sem. cognates: Aramaic Targum (***sᵉlāyw***), Syrian (***salway***), and Arabic (***salwā***)

- ***śᵉlāw*** *is named for its fatness*
  - From a root word meaning "to be fat"
  - Descriptive of round plump form & fat flesh of quail
  - Pre-migration "binge" = 50% increase in body weight

Coturnix coturnix – Common Quail

- Four lexicons refer to this quail as *Coturnix*
- Unlike most other landfowl, *Coturnix coturnix* (common quail) are long-distance migrants
- Their wings are much longer/fuller and better suited for migration than the shorter wings of most landfowl
- They breed during the summer in Europe & Asia and winter in sub-Saharan Africa

Coturnix coturnix – Common Quail

Coturnix coturnix – Common Quail

- Because of their "fatness", they utilize strong winds to carry them over large bodies of water
- Very large flocks still migrate northward over the Red Sea in Spring and arrive at the Sinai Peninsula after wintering in Africa
- These flocks, migrating at night, are extremely weakened after their journey over the sea
- They fall to the ground in exhaustion and can be easily caught by hand

Conclusions

- None of the passages examined in this study are useful for setting apobaraminic limits
- The "Miracle of the Quail", however, gives us some clues as to the rate & mode of post-Flood diversification in the landfowl
- *Coturnix coturnix* descended from some other species (probably non-migrating) on the Ark
- These events suggest that the migratory habits of *C. coturnix* were fully established within 1000 yrs after the Flood