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WITNESSES TO THE WOUND

A Covenant Investigation into the Exploitation of the Zamar Carriers

100 Years of the Music Business on Trial

Report No. 15 of an Ongoing Series

SAM MOORE

1935 – 2025

One Half of Soul Man — Double Dynamite — The Voice That Built Stax

Second only to Otis Redding at Stax Records — ten straight Top 20 R&B hits — Soul Man won the Grammy — pension after 30 years and a million-selling catalog: \$2,285 total or \$73 per month — Atlantic contributed zero to his pension from 1965 to 1992 — his own words: 'Two thousand dollars for my lifetime? Don't give me cornbread and tell me it's biscuits' — died January 10, 2025

NOTE: Sam Moore died January 10, 2025 — two months before this report was written. His primary testimony is documented in AP wire service interviews conducted in 1994.

March 2026 · Kepha Arcemont, Elder and Founder

SECTION ONE — THE GIFT: WHO YAHWEH MADE HIM

Biography: Double Dynamite from the Miami Church

Samuel David Moore was born October 12, 1935, in Miami, Florida — son of a church family. His father was a deacon. His grandfather was a Baptist preacher. He began singing in church and moved into the Miami soul and R&B club circuit as a young man. In 1961, at the King of Hearts Club in Miami, he met Dave Prater at an amateur night Moore was hosting. They began performing together immediately. In 1965, after signing with Atlantic Records, producer Jerry Wexler sent Sam & Dave to Stax Records in Memphis to record. At Stax, they were assigned to the songwriting and production team of Isaac Hayes and David Porter, backed by Booker T. & the MGs and the Memphis Horns. The combination was incendiary. Between 1965 and 1968, Sam & Dave produced ten straight Top 20 Billboard R&B hits: ***You Don't Know Like I Know, Hold On I'm Comin', When Something Is Wrong With My Baby, Soul Man, I Thank You. Soul Man*** reached number two on the all-genre Hot 100. It won the Grammy Award for Best R&B Performance by a Duo in 1968 — beating Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell's ***Ain't No Mountain High Enough***.

At their peak, Sam & Dave had their own airplane, a 16-piece band, an entourage of 35, and averaged 280 shows a year. They were second only to Otis Redding at Stax Records. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame called them *"the greatest of all soul duos."* The Stax house band backed them. Isaac Hayes wrote for them. Booker T. and the MGs played behind them. The results were foundational to American soul music.

◆ *Soul Man. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame put it in their 500 Songs That Shaped Rock and Roll. The Blues Brothers covered it in 1979 and took it to a new generation. I have been a vocalist since I was fourteen. I know what it means to carry a call-and-response performance tradition from the church into secular music. Sam Moore's voice was the covenant zamar in its purest commercial expression: the church, the field, the blood-memory of gospel — brought into a recording studio in Memphis and laid down on top of Booker T. and the MGs. That is a sound that does not come from technique alone. That comes from where he came from. And it was worth \$73 a month.*

The duo broke up in 1970. The hits stopped. Moore entered a fifteen-year struggle with drug addiction. He opened for Elvis impersonators. He did cruise ships. He auditioned for oldies shows. He did, in his own words, *"the little money"* and went about paying his bills. The voice that had filled the Apollo, that had toured with Otis Redding, that had won the Grammy — auditioned for shows.

SECTION TWO — THE WOUND: THE \$2,285 PENSION

Thirty Years of Million-Selling Records — \$73 Per Month

The Pension Accounting

When Sam Moore considered retirement in the early 1990s, he expected a pension commensurate with thirty years of commercial music performance. He had made millions of records. His songs had shaped a genre. *Soul Man* had been re-charted twice — once by the Blues Brothers in 1979, once in the Reagan-era John Hughes film *Soul Man* in 1986. The Atlantic catalog continued to generate revenue.

“Sam was told his pension would be \$63.67 a month. It should have been \$8,000. It's wrong, and it all ties back to royalties. From 1965 to 1992, Atlantic contributed not one penny to Sam's pension. The whole problem is accounting and accountability. We know the labels don't know how to count except when it comes to their own money.” — Joyce Moore, Sam's wife and manager — WLTX Columbia SC

Sam Moore told the Associated Press directly in 1994:

“Two thousand dollars for my lifetime? If you're making a profit off of me, give me some too. Don't give me cornbread and tell me it's biscuits.” — Sam Moore, AP interview 1994

The pension accounting: **\$2,285 total, offered either as a lump sum or in payments of \$73 per month.** A lifetime of million-selling records. A Grammy. Ten straight Top 20 R&B hits. Second only to Otis Redding at Stax. **\$73 per month.**

DOCUMENTED FIGURES: Pension total: \$2,285 (AP, CBC, NPR, PBS NewsHour, CBS News — five independent national outlets). Monthly equivalent: \$73 (AP)/lump sum option. Joyce Moore stated pension should have been \$8,000/month. Atlantic contributed zero to pension from 1965 to 1992 (Joyce Moore, WLTX). Sam Moore sued Atlantic and AFTRA for unpaid royalties and pension contributions. Moore: 'Two thousand dollars for my lifetime? Don't give me cornbread and tell me it's biscuits.'

The Mechanism: Unaccounted Royalties and Zero Pension Contributions

The underlying mechanism was the same one documented throughout this series, confirmed by Joyce Moore directly: **royalties not accurately reported** meant pension contributions not accurately made. The American Federation of Television and Radio Artists Health and Retirement Funds required label contributions based on reported royalties. If the royalties were underreported — and Moore's suit against major labels including Atlantic, Sony, Universal, BMG, Warner and EMI alleged exactly this — the pension contributions calculated from those royalties were proportionally reduced. **The false accounting in the royalty statement produced the false pension figure.** The lie compounded itself across 27 years, from 1965 to 1992, until the accumulated shortfall produced a lifetime pension of \$2,285.

The Life After Double Dynamite

Sam Moore kicked his drug habit in 1981. He married Joyce McRae in 1982. She saved his life, then became his business manager and his advocate for artists' rights. He testified before Congress in 1989 about impostor acts — performers using the Sam & Dave name without the original members. He became a Pioneer Award recipient from the Rhythm and Blues Foundation in 1991. He and Prater were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1992 — the year after Prater's death in a 1988 car crash, Moore brought Prater's son to the ceremony.

He performed with Bruce Springsteen. He performed at the Kennedy Center Honors. He sang for multiple presidents. He released a Grammy-nominated solo album in 2006 with Sting, Mariah Carey, Springsteen, Jon Bon Jovi, and Eric Clapton. **He survived. He worked. He advocated.** He died January 10, 2025, at age 89, of complications from surgery. He had spent the last decades of his life fighting for artists' rights alongside his wife Joyce — the same fight Ruth Brown had waged, the same testimony before Congress, the same demand that the industry account for what it had taken.

SECTION THREE — THE THREE WITNESSES (DEVARIM 19:15)

Corroboration of the Record

WITNESS One: *Sam Moore's own direct testimony to the Associated Press, 1994 (quoted in CBC News, NPR, PBS NewsHour, CBS News, AP wire): 'Two thousand dollars for my lifetime? If you're making a profit off of me, give me some too. Don't give me cornbread and tell me it's biscuits.' Additionally: Moore confirmed pension total of \$2,285 and monthly payment option of \$73 to AP. This is primary testimony from the artist himself, preserved in wire service documentation cited by five independent national news outlets.*

WITNESS Two: *Joyce Moore (Sam's wife and business manager) to WLTX Columbia SC: 'Sam was told his pension would be \$63.67 a month. It should have been \$8,000. It's wrong, and it all ties back to royalties. From 1965 to 1992, Atlantic contributed not one penny to Sam's pension. The whole problem is accounting and accountability.' This is primary testimony from his manager about the specific pension figure, the correct expected amount, and Atlantic's specific failure to contribute. It corroborates and supplements Sam's AP testimony with the insider financial specifics.*

WITNESS Three: *WLTX Columbia SC ('Sam, from Sam & Dave, is suing for royalties'): documents Moore and other R&B veterans suing major labels Sony, Universal, BMG, Warner, and EMI for 'failing to accurately report royalties or make required contributions to the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists' Health and Retirement Funds.' This confirms the structural mechanism of the exploitation: underreported royalties producing undercontributed pension funds. Additionally: NPR, CBC News, PBS NewsHour, CBS News, AP, Hollywood Reporter obituary coverage all independently confirm the \$2,285/\$73 monthly pension figure.*

SECTION FOUR — THE COVENANT ANALYSIS

The Torah Charges — Applied to Sam Moore

Charge One: False Weights in the Royalty Account — Vayikra 19:35-36

"You shall do no wrong in judgment, in measures of length or weight or quantity. You shall have just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin: I am Yahweh your Elohim."

— Vayikra (Leviticus) 19:35-36

The pension fund calculation was based on reported royalties. The reported royalties were not accurate. The pension contribution was calculated from the false figure. The pension paid was the fruit of the false weight multiplied across 27 years. **Vayikra's command for just measures applies to every entry in a royalty ledger with the same force it applies to a merchant's scale.** Joyce Moore confirmed: Atlantic contributed nothing to the pension from 1965 to 1992 — *"The whole problem is accounting and accountability. We know the labels don't know how to count except when it comes to their own money."* The Torah grounds the command in **Yahweh's own identity: I am Yahweh your Elohim.** Every false entry in an Atlantic royalty ledger between 1965 and 1992 was witnessed. Every one is in the permanent record.

Charge Two: Wages and Benefits Withheld From the Hired Worker — Vayikra 19:13

"You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired worker shall not remain with you all night until the morning."

— Vayikra (Leviticus) 19:13

The pension is wages deferred. It is the covenant's mechanism for ensuring that the laborer who can no longer work is still provided for by the labor they performed when they could. **Atlantic Records held Sam Moore's deferred wages for 27 years and returned \$2,285.** The wages of the hired worker did not merely remain with Atlantic until morning. They remained with Atlantic for 27 years and were returned in a fraction of their true amount. **Lo ta'ashoq** — do not oppress — applies to the withholding of pension contributions with the same force it applies to the withholding of session fees. The mechanism differs. The violation is identical.

Charge Three: The Cornbread Verdict — Mishlei 13:23

"The fallow ground of the poor would yield much food, but it is swept away through injustice."

— Mishlei (Proverbs) 13:23

Sam Moore's fallow ground yielded much food. **Soul Man. Hold On I'm Comin'. When Something Is Wrong With My Baby.** Ten straight Top 20 hits. A Grammy. Stax's second biggest act. Atlantic's catalog revenue for five decades. The food was abundant.

The injustice swept it away — not in one transaction, not in one fraudulent contract, but in 27 years of unreported royalties producing uncalculated pension contributions. **\$2,285. 'Don't give me cornbread and tell me it's biscuits.'** Sam Moore said it himself. He was describing a false measure. He was invoking the Torah's food metaphor. He was naming what Mishlei named three thousand years before Atlantic Records existed.

SECTION FIVE — THE LIVING WITNESS: KEPHA ARCEMONT, 2026

A Blues Guitarist Reads the Record

He died January 10, 2025. This report is being written two months after his death. The wound this report documents is not historical in the way that Bessie Smith's wound is historical. Sam Moore spent the last thirty years of his life actively fighting it. He testified before Congress. He filed lawsuits. He spoke to the Associated Press. His wife gave interviews. **He never stopped naming what was done to him.** And in January 2025, he died having spent his final years still advocating for artists' rights alongside the wife who had saved his life and managed his career.

◆ *I am the Elder and founder of Miqdash Bethel Covenant Assembly. I have been a musician since I was fourteen. Soul Man is one of those recordings that defines what music at its best can be — two voices operating in covenant with each other, with the band, with the tradition they came from, making something that carries more than the sum of its parts. That is the zamar in its fullest commercial expression. And \$73 per month is what the industry decided that sound was worth to the man who produced it. Don't give me cornbread and tell me it's biscuits.*

Joyce Moore: *"The whole problem is accounting and accountability. We know the labels don't know how to count except when it comes to their own money."* That sentence has lived in me since I read it. The labels know how to count. They count their own money with extraordinary precision. The imprecision is deliberate and directional: it always flows away from the artist and toward the label. The false weight is not accidental. It is structural. It is the system described in this report's predecessor reports, from Scott Joplin's one-cent contract to Ruth Brown's \$785 royalty statement to Sam Moore's \$63.67 monthly pension. **The structure does not change. Only the names of the artists being processed through it.**

◆ *He auditioned for oldies shows. He opened for Elvis impersonators. Double Dynamite — the man who stood at the Apollo with Otis Redding, who won the Grammy, who made Soul Man — auditioned for shows. And I am not saying this to diminish his survival. He survived. He kept singing. He advocated. He testified before Congress. He and his wife did everything Ruth Brown had done, in parallel, in the same era, fighting the same industry. The Rhythm and Blues Foundation that Ruth Brown built was part of the same movement. What this series documents is not the story of individual artists*

who were unlucky. It is the story of a system that produced the same outcome for every artist who passed through it.

SECTION SIX — THE COVENANT VERDICT

Yahweh's Record on Sam Moore

Sam Moore died January 10, 2025. He was 89 years old. He had spent thirty years as half of one of the greatest soul duos in the history of American music. He had spent the next thirty years fighting for what that music owed him. His legacy includes not only ***Soul Man*** and ***Hold On I'm Comin'*** but testimony before Congress, lawsuits against the major labels, and thirty years of public advocacy for artists' rights alongside his wife Joyce. **He named what was done to him. He never stopped naming it.** The covenant honors that. The Torah requires it.

COVENANT CHARGE ONE: Atlantic Records contributed zero dollars to Sam Moore's pension fund from 1965 to 1992 — 27 years. His pension, based on underreported royalties, was \$2,285 total or \$73 per month. His wife documented that it should have been \$8,000 per month. This is confirmed across five independent national news outlets and Joyce Moore's direct primary testimony. Vayikra 19:35-36 — false weights in the accounting. Vayikra 19:13 — wages withheld from the hired worker. The judgment is entered. It covers 1965 to 1992. Every unreported royalty is in the record.

COVENANT ACKNOWLEDGMENT: Sam Moore spent thirty years fighting what was done to him. He testified before Congress. He sued the labels. He gave interviews. He advocated alongside his wife Joyce until his death in January 2025. The covenant records the fighter as fully as it records the wound. He named it. He never stopped naming it. Mishlei 13:23 — the fallow ground yields much food. His ground yielded Soul Man. The injustice swept the harvest away. He spent thirty years demanding it back. The covenant honors the demand.

"Don't give me cornbread and tell me it's biscuits." He said it to the Associated Press in 1994. He was saying what this entire series has been saying in covenant language since Report No. 1: **a false measure is a false measure regardless of how the ledger is formatted.** The label called it accounting. Sam Moore called it cornbread. The Torah calls it a false weight. All three descriptions point to the same thing. The record is complete.

"A full and fair weight you shall have, a full and fair measure you shall have, that your days may be long in the land that Yahweh your Elohim is giving you."

— Devarim (Deuteronomy) 25:15

A full and fair weight. From 1965 to 1992, Atlantic Records did not give Sam Moore a full and fair weight. **Yahweh requires it. Yahweh saw the ledger. Yahweh sees the \$2,285 against what it should have been. Yahweh is still looking. Selah.**

SERIES NOTES

Next in series: Report No. 16 — The Hip-Hop Era to 2026. The system documented across Reports 1–15 did not end with the 20th century artists. It transformed, adapted, and continued. Report 16 documents how streaming, 360 deals, digital royalties, and the modern label system carry forward the same structural extraction — and who is still carrying that wound today.

Series roster: Reports 1–15 complete. Report 16 pending: The Hip-Hop Era to 2026.

Selah.

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