

Research from the Bible Lesson-Sermon

A resource of CSDirectory.com – researched by Linda Bargmann, CPA
Excerpts from Linda Bargmann’s weekly research and musings into the Christian
Science Bible Lesson-Sermon (BLS) and Bible Translations

Doctrine of Atonement For week of April 16 - 22, 2018

This week’s section 6 citations were the subject of my research musings six months ago!

1. **The Greek word (katallagē) is the same in two citations - 18, II Cor. 5:18 and 20, Rom. 5:11.** Katallagē is only translated once as atonement in some 16th century translations (TYN [Tyndale Bible], GNV [Geneva Bible] and KJV) and Webster’s common version; otherwise, Rom. 5:11 is some form of reconcile in WYC [Wycliffe] and Bishops, then, starting with the Revised Version, to today. The other three usages of “katallagē,” including the two in II Cor. 5:18, most often translated “reconcile” from WYC to today. (Some 16th century translations used “atonement” for the second “katallagē” at the end of II Cor. 5:18, including TYN, the Great and the Matthew Bibles. Consequently, the New Matthew Bible [NMB] (2016) says “office of atonement” where NRSV says “ministry of reconciliation.” I’m not familiar with NMB, but I was introduced to it last Sunday when the second reader read from NMB at the First Church DC service I attended, so I’ll start paying more attention to it.)
2. Six months ago, I also researched the odd NRSV [New Revised Standard Version] phrase in Rom 5:11: “we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ...”

When converting the BLS from KJV to NRSV [New Revised Standard Version], there are two citations this week where words need to be added or deleted, to put each verse into context, since they both refer back to a prior verse with a conversation that is not in the BLS [Bible Lesson-Sermon]:

First the RR [Responsive Reading], John 17:1. NRSV (and other contemporary versions of the past 100 years,) begin with: “After Jesus had spoken these words.”

KJV (and other 16th century Bibles translated from Textus Receptus) begin with: “These words spake Jesus.” (Spake is an archaic word which is a simple past tense of speak.)

Both the KJV and NRSV lead-ins refer to Jesus talking with his disciples in John 16, as he moves from teaching them and turns to God in John 17.

Webster’s common version has “These words spoke Jesus...”

Dr. Noyes and Weymouth have “When Jesus had thus spoken...”)

Therefore, beginning a new thought in the RR with: “**After Jesus had spoken these words**, he looked up...” doesn’t work when the words he has just spoken are not included. The verse becomes clear when the reference to the words just spoken is removed. Therefore, the RR begins

this week with:

“Jesus looked up to heaven and said...”

Second: The flip side of that is found in citation 10 | John 7:15. To put 7:15 into context, one needs to look back to John 7:10, starting with Jesus at the Festival of Booths. 7:14 explains that he went up to the temple (about the middle of the festival) and taught the people. The Jews “marveled” (says all 16th century Bibles from Tyndale to KJV in John 7:15) at these teachings! NLT [New Living Translation] says simply:

“The people were surprised when they heard him.”

Since NRSV refers to the teaching during the festival as “it,” explanatory words need to be added so that John 7:15 can stand on its own, as a new thought, by referencing the teaching in John 7:14. Therefore, citation 10 reads:

“The Jews were astonished **at it (Jesus’ teachings in the temple)**, saying, ‘How does this man have such learning, when he has never been taught?’”

Continuing with the RR, it seems that every week the BLS has at least one Bible verse with the underlying Hebrew word “basar” (last week Isa. 40:5) or the Greek word “sarx,” (this week John 17:2) both of which are translated “flesh” from Wycliffe, through all 16th century Bibles to the Revised Standard Version (RSV) of 1946-71 (almost 600 years!)

After the mid-20th century RSV, “basar” and “sarx” have generally been translated “people” or “everyone.” NRSV has:

“...since you have given him authority over all **people**, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.”

When I clicked on Strong’s to look up “sarx” I was thrilled to find what (to me) is a new feature! Right at the top, it has:

“**Textus Receptus Occurrences** — 151x in 9 unique form(s)” and then it lists those Greek forms and how often each is in TR!

I love that Strong’s, based on KJV in 1898, is identifying those Greek words as Textus Receptus (TR.) That might help Christian Scientist’s learn that KJV is not a stand-alone miraculous translation from 1611, but the last of many great 16th century translations based on TR, from Tyndale, then revised through Coverdale, Matthews, the Authorized-by-the-King Great Bible, the people’s Geneva Bible, the Authorized-by-the-King Bishops Bible and what we now call the KJV (also Authorized by the King)!

JSH Online references “sarx” 23 times; 20 times in Bible Notes between 1939 and 1943. The other three references are in Bible Notes in the early 1960’s. If you are interested in more detail on “sarx,” I researched it for the February 18, 2018 Lesson on Mind. Also, below my signature, I’ve included:

- Strong’s Definitions and Outline of Biblical Usage for “sarx”
- Recent writings on “sarx” by Richard Rohr in his “Daily Meditation” from the Center for Action and Contemplation (sent to me by a friend)
- Applicable comments by another friend on the same Rohr blog

Recently, in one of these Monday musings, I described contemporary versions’ practice of adding “**Other ancient authorities read**” when there is early manuscript evidence of Greek words which might produce a slightly different take on an English translation. One of those occurs this

week in citation 17, Hebrews 12:1-

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the **“sin that clings so closely,”** [footnote = **Other ancient authorities read “sin that easily distracts”**] and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith...”

Either phrase (“sin that clings so closely” or “sin that easily distracts”) is acceptable according to “critical texts” but “sin that easily distracts” seems more metaphysical, and so was chosen for citation 17 this week.

Mary Baker Eddy interprets Heb. 12:1 in this way:

- “...that is, let us put aside material self and sense, and seek the divine Principle and Science of all healing.” (S&H 20:30)
- “So shall mortals soar to final freedom, and rest from the subtlety of speculative wisdom and human woe.” (Mis. 361:21)

She also uses the phrase “put aside” in S&H 286:12 about Jesus.

It was fun to find that a few Bible translations also use Mrs. Eddy’s “put” instead of “lay” in Heb. 12:1.

- 1 CJB (Complete Jewish Bible 1998) “let us, too, put aside every impediment — that is, the sin which easily hampers our forward movement...”
- 2 LEB (Lexham English Bible 2010) “putting aside every weight and the sin that so easily ensnares us...”
- 3 NLV (New Life Version 1969) “Let us put every thing out of our lives that keeps us from doing what we should.”
- 4 YLT (Young’s Literal – late 1800’s sold by CSPS) “...every weight having put off, and the closely besetting sin...”

Love, Linda

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ADDENDUM:

Contents:

- 1 Strong’s Definitions and Outline of Biblical Usage for “sarx”
- 2 Recent writings on “sarx” by Richard Rohr in his “Daily Meditation” from the Center for Action and Contemplation (sent to me by a friend)
- 3 Applicable comments by another friend on the same Rohr blog

1 Strong’s Definitions:

sarx; flesh (as stripped of the skin), i.e. (strictly) the meat of an animal (as food), or (by extension) the body (as opposed to the soul (or spirit), or as the symbol of what is external, or as the means of kindred), or (by implication) human nature (with its frailties (physically or morally) and passions), or (specially), a human being (as such):—carnal(-ly, + -ly minded), flesh(-ly).

Outline of Biblical Usage in BlueLineBible.com, but created by Larry Pierce, creator of the Online Bible:

- I. flesh (the soft substance of the living body, which covers the bones and is permeated with blood) of both man and beasts
- II. the body
 - A the body of a man
 - B used of natural or physical origin, generation or relationship
 - 1 born of natural generation
 - C the sensuous nature of man, "the animal nature"
 - 1 without any suggestion of depravity
 - 2 the animal nature with cravings which incite to sin
 - 3 the physical nature of man as subject to suffering
- III. a living creature (because possessed of a body of flesh) whether man or beast
- IV. the flesh, denotes mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God

2 Richard Rohr's Daily Meditation From the Center for Action and Contemplation:

Flesh and Spirit, Friday, April 6, 2018

The Apostle Paul tends to use dialectics in his writing, jockeying two seemingly opposite ideas to lead us to a deeper and third understanding. One of his most familiar dialectics is the way he speaks of flesh and spirit. Paul uses the word *sarx*, typically and unfortunately translated as "flesh" in most contemporary languages with a negative connotation in opposition to spirit. John's Gospel uses this same word, *sarx*, in a wonderfully positive way: "The Word became flesh" (John 1:14). So flesh must be good too! But Paul's usage had the larger impact.

If you read Galatians or Romans, you'll probably understand these two terms in the usual dualistic way, which has done great damage: "Well, I've got to get out of my flesh in order to get into the spirit." This was even true of many canonized saints, at least in their early stages—as it was with the Buddha. But I want to say as strongly as I can: you really can't get out of the flesh! That's not what Paul is talking about.

The closest meaning to Paul's *sarx* is today's familiar word "ego"—which often is a problem if we are trapped inside of it. So what Paul means by "flesh" is the trapped self, the small self, the partial self, or what Thomas Merton called the false self. Basically, spirit is the whole self, the Christ Self, the True Self "hidden with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3) that we fall into by grace. The problem is not between body and spirit; it's between part and whole.

Sarx or ego is the self that tries to define itself autonomously, apart from spirit, apart from the Big Self in God. It's the tiny self that you think you are, who takes yourself far too seriously, and who is always needy and wanting something else. It's the self that is characterized by scarcity and fragility—and well it should be, because it's finally an illusion and passing away. It changes month by month. This small self doesn't really exist in God's eyes as anything substantial or real. It's nothing but a construct of your own mind. It is exactly what will die when you die. Flesh is not bad, it is just inadequate to the final and full task, while posing as the real thing. Don't hate your training wheels once you take them off your bicycle. You should thank them for getting you started on your cycling journey!

To easily get beyond this confusion, just substitute the word ego every time you hear Paul use the word flesh. It will get you out of this dead-end, false, and dualistic ping-pong game between body and spirit. The problem is not that you have a body; the problem is that you think you are separate from others—and from God. And you are not!

3 After reading this Rohr blog, a friend told me:

“I often translate 'flesh' as 'limitations of human thought' - which is pretty much what Rohr is saying about the ego.

And his metaphor with the training wheels is a good one. Somewhat similarly, I've often talked about our 'two-year-old bodies.' We no longer need them or even want them, but they sure were useful a long time ago. They're not here, but we don't miss them either. We have something more useful now, and we will continue in that direction.

It's very helpful to find the language that doesn't lead us down the wrong path - like the path of dualism, docetism, or even orthodoxy.”