

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

God the Preserver of Man

For the week of June 5 - 11, 2023

The Common English Bible (CEB) is an excellent translation.

- A Hebrew Bible scholar (Christian Scientist) told some of us about CEB when the project began in 2008, so we signed up to 'help' in any way we could.
- Because of that, we received hot-off-the-press New Testaments in 2010.

CEB is the first Bible I read each morning, since I get an emailed Verse-of-the-day from Biblegateway.com, and CEB is listed first of the 5 Bibles I chose. I've grown to appreciate it (and trust its translation) over the past 13 years.

CEB [adapted by me] is also this week's Golden Text from 2 Sam 22:3 (to 2nd !)

My God is my rock—I take refuge in [God]! —
[God's] my shield and my salvation's strength,
my place of safety and my shelter.
My savior!

God's refuge, safety, shelter – all related to or outcomes of "God the Preserver"

Mary Baker Eddy writes that "God ... preserves" in *S&H* 550 (citation 15):

- "God is the Life, or intelligence, which forms and preserves the individuality and identity of animals as well as of men."

Along with that *S&H* sentence, the subject of "God the Preserver" generally repeats several KJV verses using the word "preserve," a word not used as often in current Bibles. It's fun to explore Bibles for other ways to express these concepts.

One example, refuge:

In addition to the GT, almost all sections start with God as our refuge:

Last RR PS 94:22

- NRSV: "The Lord has become my stronghold and my God the rock of my refuge."
- CEB: "The Lord is my fortress; my God is my rock of refuge."

First section 1 citation, 1, Ps 16:1

- NRSV: "Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge."
- ESV used to get "preserve": "Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge."

Citation 4, Isa 25:1, 4, 9

- “O Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you; ... you have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress, a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat.”

First section 2 citation, 6, Ps 46:1

- “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”

First section 3 citation, 9, Ps 91:2

- I will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.”

Citation 14, *S&H* 394:24

- “Are material means the only refuge from fatal chances? We should remember that Life is God, and that God is omnipotent.”

First section 5 citation, 19, Ps 142:5, 7

- I cry to you, O Lord; I say, “You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living. Bring me out of prison, so that I may give thanks to your name.”

Citation 24, *S&H* 83:6–9

- “Mortals must find refuge in Truth in order to escape the error of these latter days.”

Last of this week’s Bible citations, #26, Ps 62:7, 8

- “... my mighty rock, my refuge is in God. **Trust in God at all times.**”

First *S&H* section 6 citation, #28, 444:10 (and citation B6)

- “Step by step will **those who trust** Him find that **‘God is our refuge** and strength, a very present help in trouble.”

Using Bibles other than KJV can be difficult with partial verses. Three examples:

Citation 16, Prov. 14:26b Another ‘refuge’ reference:

- The Inclusive Bible v. 26b: “**As God’s children we find a refuge.**”

KJV Prov. 14:26 *and*

- “... and his children shall have a place of refuge.” (no noun for pronoun ‘his’)

Most (NIV, CSB, ESV, CEB, RSV, NRSV, etc.) need the full verse to make sense:

- NRSV 26b: “... **and one’s children will have a refuge.**”
- CEB (full): “In [God] is strong confidence and **refuge for one’s children.**”
- EXP (full) Those who respect [fear] the Lord will have security [or confidence], and **their children will be protected [have a refuge].**

RR PS 9:7a Underlying verb refers to timing of one’s reign (this is not clear in KJV)

- The Inclusive Bible: “You, God, reign forever.”

KJV 9:7 **the (to :)**... the Lord shall endure for ever: [**Hebrew verb *yāšab* means properly, to sit down (specifically as judge)**] which is made clear in the full verse.

- CEB, ICB, NCV, NIRV: “The Lord **rules** forever!”
- NRSV, CSB, ESV: “The Lord **sits enthroned** forever;”
- NIV, NLT: “The Lord **reigns** forever.”
- WEB: “**You, Yahweh, reign forever.**”

- CEV full verse: “You rule forever, Lord, and you are on your throne, ready for judgment.”

RR PS 9:14b– used AMPC’s end of sentence:

- “I will rejoice in Your salvation and Your saving help.”

This interesting verse has to do with gates:

- ESV: “In the gates of the daughter of Zion I may rejoice in your salvation.”
- CEB: “I can declare all your praises, so I can rejoice in your salvation in the gates of Daughter Zion.”
- NRSV: “I may recount all your praises and, in the gates of daughter Zion, rejoice in your deliverance.”

Mary Baker Eddy and extra-canonical writings: Citation 13, S&H, page 243

- “The divine Love, which made harmless the poisonous viper, which **delivered men from the boiling oil**, from the fiery furnace, from the jaws of the lion, can heal the sick in every age and triumph over sin and death.”

Since the Mary Baker Eddy Library (MBEL) opened in 2002, the public has been allowed to meet Eddy through her letters, and some very interesting information has surfaced.

First, I knew Eddy was aware of extra-canonical writings because of this comment:

- “The divine Love, ... **which delivered men from the boiling oil**,” etc.

According to Tertullian's testimony, John had been thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil before the Porta Latina at Rome without suffering injury. This comes from sources and writings of early Church Fathers and was included in a popular book *The History of Christianity* by John Abbott, which Eddy owned and used.

Next, I knew her Bibles contained the Apocrypha including the 1795 one that was her grandparent’s wedding gift. During her day, the books of the Apocrypha (writings about the time between the canonical testaments) were included in virtually every Bible; they were sometimes left out of Bibles starting with the Revised Version and are rarely found in today’s Bibles.

Then, I knew about her interest in the Oxyrhynchus “New Sayings of Jesus” found in an ancient dump starting in the late 1890’s, since it was mentioned several times in the CS periodicals of her day, and she ordered extra copies of a booklet for friends and the Bible Lesson Committee. (Today we know these “new sayings” as the Gospel of Thomas!)

But Mary Baker Eddy’s regard for Apocryphal, extra-canonical books and writings didn’t become clear until I researched all this at the MBEL several years ago.

- Below my signature you can see many interesting examples of what I found.

Citation 20, Acts 12 – This week’s reference to “church” in the Bible:

- “King Herod laid violent hands upon some who belonged to the church. Peter was kept in prison, the church prayed fervently to God for him.”

So, what did ‘church’ mean? Nothing like today –see last week for house church info.

God as Father-Mother in this week's Sunday service from start to finish:

Mary Baker Eddy's spiritual sense of the Lord's Prayer, *S&H* 16:

- Our Father which art in heaven,
Our Father-Mother God, all-harmonious,

First *S&H* citation 1,332:4-5

- **"Father-Mother is the name for Deity**, which indicates His tender relationship to His spiritual creation."

Last *S&H* citation 32, 516:21

- "Man and woman as coexistent and eternal with God forever reflect, in glorified quality, **the infinite Father-Mother God.**"

Correlative Scripture from the NRSV Inclusive Version: 1 John 3:1

- "See what love **the Father-Mother** has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are."

Have a blessed week taking refuge in God, Linda

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Mary Baker Eddy's regard for Apocryphal, extra-canonical books and writings became clear when I researched all this at the MBEL several years ago. Here are some examples of what I found interesting.

1. **The Apocryphal New Testament (NT) where Eddy marked p.58 [*Infancy of Jesus* 21:12-20]** (B00023 MBEL)

The *Syriac Infancy Gospel* (also known as the *Arabic Infancy Gospel*) is one of the texts among the apocryphal NT writings concerning the infancy of Jesus. It may have been compiled as early as the sixth century, and was partly based on the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*, and *Protevangelium of James*. (Ask me if you are interested in Eddy's markings.)

2. **Notes from Eddy's class by E.J. Foster Eddy;**

notes from class lesson 2/27/1889 – "The Apocryphal history of Jesus is an important factor in the history of the law and Gospel." (A10274 MBEL)

3. **Eddy's gift to Calvin Frye "who has served me 20 years to-day" – the book *Ecclesiasticus***, Old Testament (OT) Apocrypha from the Modern Reader's Bible 1899 Macmillan NY (8/16/02 MBEL)

In a 34-page Intro, Moulton writes that *Ecclesiasticus* is like "Proverbs, addressed to practical life." It's also called "a Miscellany of Wisdom." The Intro says Moulton quotes from the Revised Version and on p. 33 he gives this history: "The Apocrypha has disappeared from our Modern Bibles; and to the ordinary reader of the present generation *Ecclesiasticus* is almost an unknown book."

4. **Notes from Eddy's class by Joshua Bailey;**

52 pages from the March 1889 class where she quotes apocryphal history in 1 *Infancy* 9: 2-5 and later says "I teach you through Jesus, period."

5. **Eddy thanked Anna Iten for *The Life of Jesus, according to Extra-Canonical Sources*, which she says, “have been quite a help to me.”**

Of the 25 verses by Rev Bernhard Pick, PhD sent by Anna Iten of Chicago, she marked 7 and underlined “mother” and “in love.” (A11406 1908/10/06 MBEL)

6. **Eddy wrote to Alfred Baker re. “the words of Christ” recently discovered:**

“O I wish you could see a book just sent to me from a Prof. in Great Britain giving the words of Christ that have been found in a recently discovered Logia, recent excavation, and words not in the Canonical Gospels and 200 [300?] years before the Christian era! These words correspond precisely with some of my writings in Science and Health. I only wish the students all would awaken to see the wisdom of what God says through His window...” (F00300 original of V00429 July 20, 1903, MBEL)

7. **Early Reading Rooms sold an Apocryphal NT which included extra-canonical gospels, letters, and other writings more common today.**

8. **Eddy says this info/letter is “deeply interesting” in CSS October 6, 1906:** “Some Interesting Translations by Bertha S. Reinke with contributions from Mary Baker G. Eddy.”

Bertha Reinke has read the “*Apocryphal New Testament*,” published by Pastor Lic. Dr. Edgar Hennecke of Betheln, Germany, which, in its present form first appeared in 1904. (Appears to be same book as B00023 which Eddy owned.) Reinke writes; “The teachings are identical with your teachings in our textbook, which you have given to the world.” She refers to the *Shepherd of Hermas*, among other things.

9. **Re. *New Sayings of Jesus and Fragment of a Lost Gospel from Oxyrhynchus with Translation and Commentary* by Bernard Grenfell & Author Hunt 1904**

Eddy was sent this booklet, loved it, so ordered many more and distributed them to students, etc. Here is some of the conversation about the “New Sayings” which was also in the CS periodicals between 1901 and 1911.

- Two copies disseminated to Bible Lesson Committee
- L09168 1904/07/23 to Charles Brown ordering a half dozen copies since the first one he sent “pleased her greatly.”
- 1904/08/01 to Charles Brown – received the books complimentary – MBE ordered him a Bible.
- Then 1904/08/01 again asking for one more “Sayings” and sending \$1 this time (for Betty Belle since MBE had pasted her pamphlet into one of the books and ruined the pamphlet)
- One of the 7 gift books is in the MBEL from Ella Sweet CSB and 3 more without inscriptions.
- V03867 1904/08/21 to Hanna re Primitive Christians and New Sayings
- L16798 1904/09/02 Kinter to MBE re. Hanna and sayings of Jesus
- L19029 Oxyrhynchus book to Ella Sweet signed “Love, MBGE Aug. 1904”
- B00190 and B00191 New Sayings of Jesus booklets -191 has “For reference Eddy” on front cover and letter pasted on back.
- L19030 is a calling card that Eddy wrote “Love” on in a red hardbound *New Sayings of Jesus* published by Oxford U.

Letter from Lida Fitzpatrick to MBE Feb 25, 1904, re. “MSS found in the English Museum recording conversation between John & Jesus.” She marked up a lot of it!

Bible quotes in S&H this week. Which Bibles are they from?

No Bible quotes in S&H are only from the KJV. If quotes are not the same in

1. **Geneva,**
2. **KJV,**
3. **Webster's and/or**
4. **British Revised,**
5. **the Revised Version (British),**

the differences are noted so you can see how minor they usually are.

11) 12: "a very present help in trouble." **(PS 46:1)** Same in KJV, Webster's, RV, ASV, Tanakh 1917, RSV, NASB, NRSV, ESV. Geneva has "help in troubles, ready to be found."

11) 13: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." **(ISA 55:1)** Same in Geneva, KJV, Webster's, RV, ASV.

25) 174: "the night is far spent, the day is at hand" **(Rom 13:12)** Same in KJV, Webster's. GNV has "past" instead of "far spent" and RV adds "and" the day is at hand.

28) 444: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." **(Ps 46:1)**

Same in KJV, Webster's, RV, ASV, Tanakh 1917, RSV, NASB, NRSV, ESV. Geneva has "God is our hope and strength, and help in troubles, ready to be found."

Comparing the archaic language of KJV to NRSV (also the 'other translations' and definitions from CSS—CS Sentinel)

RR PS 9:1 I will tell of **(shew forth)**

RR PS 94:14 will not desert those who belong to the Covenant. **(KJV "neither will he forsake his inheritance")**

RR PS 94:19 cares of my heart are many, **(KJV "In the multitude of my thoughts within me")**

1) Ps 16: **(CSS quotes NCV)**

You show **(shew)**

4) Isa 25: **(CSS quotes The Voice)**

ruthless **(KJV: CSS *Terrible ones* is variously translated as *cruel, ruthless, or violent*)**

5) Deut 33: **(CSS quotes ICB)**

7) II Kings 4:38–41 As the company **(sons x2)** of prophets

10) Ps 32:7 **(CSS quotes CEB)**

11) Ps 36:6 people **(man)** and animals.

13) Jer 17:14 **(CSS quotes NCV)**

14) Ps 40:11 **(CSS quotes CEB)**

15) Zep 3:17 **(CSS quotes GNT)**

19) Ps 142:5, 7 **(CSS quotes GWT)**

20) Acts 12: prayed fervently **(KJV: CSS *Without ceasing* is translated from the Greek adverb *ektenes*, meaning fervently.)**

"Now I am sure **(know of a surety)**

21) Ps 145: **(CSS quotes CEV)**

all those who **(them that)**

22) Ps 91:11 **(CSS quotes NLT)**

24) Ps 18:35, 36 (**CSS quotes GNT**)

25) Ps 121: (**CSS quotes NIRV**)

26) Ps 62:7, 8 (**CSS quotes NLT**)

Archaic endings you don't need to pronounce this week:

RR PS 94:18 My foot is slipping," (**slippeth**)

3) Isa 66:13 As a mother comforts (**comforteth**)

11) Ps 36:6 You, Lord, preserve (**preserveth**)

12) Dan 6: pays no attention to (**regardeth not**) you,

O king, or to the interdict you have (**hast**) signed,

but he is saying his prayers (**maketh his petition**)

establishes (**establisheth**)

faithfully serve, (**serveth x2**)

My God (**KJV adds 'hath'**) sent an angel

and (**KJV adds 'hath'**) shut the lions' mouths.

18) John 4: "Go; your son will live." (**liveth**)

"Your son will live." (**liveth**)

21) Ps 145: Lord preserves (**preserveth**)

24) Ps 18: has supported me; (**hath holden me up**)