

BIBLICAL INSIGHTS #7:
BIBLE INCIDENTALS AND COINCIDENCES, PART TWO
By John Temples

THE PRECISE NATURE OF THE GREEK LANGUAGE

The New Testament was written in Greek, and it was (and is) a VERY precise language. You can get nuances of meaning in studying the Greek of many Bible passages that you cannot get in English. Here are two examples:

“Go in peace” (Luke 7:50). When Jesus was eating in the house of Simon, a woman entered and began to wash the Lord’s feet and anoint them with fragrant oil. Simon disapproved of the situation, because she was a “sinner.” Jesus, though, praised the woman’s penitent attitude and actions. He also pronounced her sins forgiven (verse 48). Finally, He dismissed the woman with these words: “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace” (Luke 7:50).

“Go in peace” to us sounds casual and perfunctory, almost as if Jesus was simply saying “have a nice day.” But the Greek reveals far more. Jesus did not use the ordinary word for “in” (which is *en*). The Greek word is *eis*, the significance of which is “go INTO peace.” Rather than just wishing her a momentary peace, Jesus told this woman to “depart and enter into a new state of peace and remain there.” What a beautiful thought!

“Another gospel, which is not another” (Galatians 1:6,7). In the KJV, this passage reads, “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel, which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.” This is confusing--how can a doctrine be “another gospel” and yet “not another”?

The NKJV tries to clear up the matter by rendering it “a different gospel, which is not another”; but that still doesn’t make the meaning clear. A look at the Greek text, however, immediately clears it up.

It turns out that the Greeks had two different words for “another.” One was *heteros*, which means “another of a different kind”; the other is *allos*, “another of the same kind.” Paul used both words in verses 6 and 7, first *heteros* and then *allos*.

So here is the text translated and expanded: “I marvel that you are turning away so soon to a gospel of a different (*heteros*) kind, which is not a gospel of the same (*allos*) kind.” There are a lot of *heteros* (different, false) gospels out there, but no *allos* gospels--the true gospel stands alone.

SOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT PEOPLE WHO WERE RAISED FROM THE DEAD

Three people were raised from the dead in the Old Testament and three people were raised by Jesus. Elijah raised the son of a widow (1 Kings 17). Elisha raised the son of a Shunammite woman (2 Kings 4). A man was raised from the dead when his body touched Elisha’s bones (2 Kings 13). Jesus raised the son of the widow at Nain (Luke 7), the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8), and Lazarus (John 11). In fact, *every time Jesus came into the presence of a dead body, that body was raised from the dead, and no one ever died in His presence!* Everything about Jesus is LIFE! Truly He was “the Man who broke up funerals.”

The case of Lazarus is interesting. It is probably the most stupendous miracle Jesus did during His lifetime, yet it is recorded in only one gospel--John’s. Why? Perhaps because Lazarus was still alive when Matthew, Mark, and Luke were written, but was likely dead when John wrote his gospel some 20-30 years later.

It turns out that the Jewish leaders were so incensed by the miracle Jesus had done that they plotted to kill not only Jesus, but also Lazarus. John 12:9-11 says, “Then a great many of the Jews knew that he was there; and they came, not for Jesus’ sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. But the chief priests took counsel that they might also put Lazarus to death, because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.”

Another interesting detail in John 11:17 is that Jesus waited four days after He heard of the death of Lazarus before He went and raised him. Why? The reason is so that there would be no doubt that Lazarus was truly dead and not merely unconscious. The Jews believed that the soul of a dead person hovered around the body for three days before it finally departed. Burton Coffman says, "According to rabbinical tradition, the soul of a deceased person hovers around the body for three days in hope of a reunion, but takes its final departure when it notices that the body has entered a state of decomposition....Jesus already knew what situation was there; thus he "found" it to be what he already knew it was. Due to the superstition of the rabbis, cited by Hendriksen, the four days of Lazarus in the tomb were significant. Jesus removed from his enemies any such possible explanation of the resurrection of his friend Lazarus, 'an explanation' they doubtless would have resorted to if it had not been removed." (From Coffman's Bible Commentary, Copyright © 1971-1993 by ACU Press, Abilene Christian University. All rights reserved.)

THE TERM "FLESH AND BLOOD" IN CONNECTION WITH JESUS

"Flesh and blood" is a euphemism for humanity or personhood. (Technically, it is a *synecdoche*, a figure of speech in which you name a part of a thing, but you mean the whole thing.) The term is common in the Bible, and it is used in the same way we use it--to mean a person or persons.

Here are some Biblical examples of this usage:]

- "...*flesh and blood* has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 16:17).
- "*Flesh and blood* cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 15:50).
- "I did not confer with *flesh and blood*" (Galatians 1:16).
- "For we do not wrestle against *flesh and blood*, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph 6:12).

Christ Himself was spoken of as "flesh and blood" during His earthly life. Hebrews 2:14 says, "Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of *flesh and blood*, He

Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.”

But here is something curious: we are reading along in the gospels, encountering this customary term “flesh and blood” to describe human beings; then, all of a sudden, we come to Luke 24:39. Jesus proclaims to His disciples after His resurrection, “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Handle me and see, for a spirit does not have *flesh and bones* as you see I have.”

Jesus did not say He was flesh and blood, but “flesh and bones.” (This distinction is clearly seen in the Greek. “Flesh and blood” is *sarx kai haima*; “flesh and bones” in Luke 24:39 is *sarka kai ostea*.) Why did Jesus make that distinction?

Here is a possibility (and I stress that it is only a possibility, a theory): *Could it be that there was no blood in the body of Jesus after the resurrection?*

The body of Jesus post-resurrection was His physical body, without a doubt; but it was a *glorified* physical body. There were certain things about it that were different:

- Jesus could appear and vanish at will (Luke 24:31).
- He could choose to be recognized or not (Mark 16:12, Luke 24:13-16).
- He could enter rooms with locked doors (John 20:19).
- He could ascend into heaven while the apostles watched (Acts 1:9).

Might it also be possible that His resurrection body was bloodless?

I don't understand all the theological ramifications of this, but it is a fact that the blood of Christ was shed for a special purpose: to purchase our pardon. Perhaps for that blood to have gone back into His body after the resurrection would have been out of harmony with its special purpose.

Hebrews 9:12 is worthy of your study in this regard: “Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.”

Is there any other reference to Christ's post-resurrection body that might lend credence to what we have been saying? Yes, there is. In Ephesians 5:30, Paul said, "For we are members of His body, *of His flesh and of His bones.*" This is also after the resurrection, and Paul is careful and precise not to use the common euphemism "flesh and blood." Coincidence? Or amazing design?

I hope these examples of Bible incidentals and coincidences have stimulated your thinking and your desire to dig even deeper into God's word. Any book written by man can be mastered and even surpassed by man. You will never in this life, however, master or surpass the wonderful Book. Love it and study it daily to show yourself approved of God. --John Temples