

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

Thanksgiving 2020

2020 is a year of transmutation, and, like most everything else in our lives, the Thanksgiving Lesson is changed, different for the first time in over 100 years!

This Lesson has 5 sections, with 24 citations!

That makes me chuckle, since I suspect the change won’t bother anyone in 2020, compared to just 12 years ago.

In 2008, when the Bible Lessons went back to the way things were in Mrs. Eddy’s day, with revised versions and other translations, with more or less than 6 sections, some people were so angry that they actually added or subtracted sections to get to their ideal 6! At the time, I read a “Sheep Alert” that had been sent the followers of a CS leader about why the Bible Lesson must be only 6 sections and must be only KJV. There are still some KJV-only churches left (who paste the KJV over other Bibles used in the *Quarterly*), but I don’t believe there are any 6-section-only churches left.

After all the hoopla in 2008, I noticed that, in recent years, the artificial limit of 30 *S&H* citations was easily forgotten, since the markers (used since about 1930), which came in sets of 30 are not a factor in these days of Full Text, electronic text, and sticky notes. I’ve not heard one complaint about more than 30 *S&H* citations!

That said, I was VERY surprised to see more than 4 sections in the Thanksgiving Lesson. So, I did a bit of research on the history of the form of the Thanksgiving Lesson.

I don’t have many full years of *Quarterlies*, but this is what I found:

- 1900, 1901 and 1902 – no Thanksgiving Lesson in the *Quarterlies*.
- 1903 – 6 sections! This is before citations were numbered, but there were 20 of them, all whole verses.
- 1910 – 4 sections, 12 citations, all whole verses.
- 1912 – 4 sections, 9 citations, all whole verses.
- 1921 – 4 sections, 9 citations, which continued for 100 years, until:
- 2020 – 5 sections, 24 citations!

Consequently, I’m proud of us as a people. Some are still arguing about the change in the Bible Lessons (expanding the use of Bibles as in Mrs. Eddy’s day) but all seem to be coping with other changes, even ones like this which have been in place for 100 years or more!

This Responsive Reading Commentary was interesting to me, based on the Revised Version of Mrs. Eddy's day:

I Chron. 16:29c Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness! (NKJ)

CSS quotes *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*. 58 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1882–1922 in part: “Worship the Lord for the majesty of [his] holiness.” I like this 1882-1922 commentary, because they use the Revised Versions (or RV margin notes) of that period, just as Mrs. Eddy did. The *Cambridge Bible* entry for 1 Chron. 16:29c continues: **“God’s beauty (majesty) is His holiness. To translate (as R.V. mg.) in holy array.”** Mrs. Eddy talks about “beauty’s array” at Po. 15.

The androcentric God portrayed in the NKJV in the Golden Text and Responsive Reading of the Thanksgiving Lesson is a disappointment.

Generally, I’m a fan of current language Bibles (especially the past 70 years) compared to the KJV, but the NKJV comes in at the bottom of that list. Created in 1982 by ultra-conservatives attempting to pry fundamentalists away from KJV, it was not successful. Based on Textus Receptus, which is the least accurate standardized text (from the 16th c.) the NKJV goes far beyond any claim of scholarship, for example, to portray Jesus as God.

There are 24 uses of He, His, Him in 14 verses – some with as many as 4 male pronouns in one verse! It can be confusing when God is treated the same as all other males in the Bible Lesson for Thanksgiving

- Jesus,
- disciples Peter and John,
- Solomon,
- King Hiram,
- The Prophet Nathan,
- David,
- Ahijah the Shilonite,
- Jeroboam son of Nebat,
- the seer Iddo, etc.

Therefore, I left all those men with the he, him, his pronouns, and accurately portrayed God as God or the Lord.

I suppose Thanksgiving might be different for you as it will be for us. For many years, I’ve loved bringing up to a dozen young people to our Thanksgiving service! Even though it’s different, it is still good.

As the last line of this long Lesson reminds us:

“Thanks be to God for God’s indescribable gift!” (citation 24, 2 COR 9:15)

Our church is having a gratitude discussion after the Thanksgiving service on ZOOM, which will be full of Christian fellowship.

However you share the day, remember that:

“Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever!” (citation 19, Rev. 7:12)

Much love, Linda

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Which Bibles are these S&H quotes in?

9) 428: "to the unknown God" (**Acts 17:23**) Same in Tyndale, Geneva, Douay-Rheims, Bishops, KJV, Webster's, RV, Darby.

9) 428: "ignorantly worship," (**Acts 17:23**) Same in Tyndale, Geneva, Bishops, KJV, Webster's, RV.

25) 519: "we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ"? (**Eph 4:13**) Same in KJV, Webster's. Geneva has "meet together" for "come"; RV has "fullgrown" for "perfect."

Not much archaic language in this Lesson. Most of these references are from the *Sentinel* (CSS) using BibleGateway.com abbreviations:

1) Revelation 11:17 (**CSS quotes CSB**)

2) Psalms 145: ...make known to all people (**sons of men**) your mighty deeds,

4) Ps 136:1, 25, (**CSS quotes CEB**) 26

5) Deut. 11:1, (**CSS quotes GWT**) 7

7) Psalms 147:5, (**CSS quotes AMP**) 7

8) I Kings 4:1, 24, 29 (**CSS quotes NIV**)

9) I Kings 5:1, 2-4, (**CSS quotes NCV**) 5, 7, 10, 12

...as the Lord said (**spake**) to my father David,

12) I Kings 9:3 I have consecrated (**KJV:CSS hallowed: made holy**) this house...

14) Colossians 3:15 (**CSS quotes NCV**)

17) Matt 15: I do not want to send them away hungry, (**KJV:CSS fasting: going without food**)

...after giving thanks he broke (**brake**) them ...

And all of them ate (**did eat**) and were filled;

and they took up the broken pieces (**meat**) left over,

19) Revelation 7:12 (**CSS quotes AMP**)

Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor (**honour**)

20) Psalms 145:3, 4 (**CSS quotes NLT**)

21) Psalms 116:1, 7, (**CSS quotes GWT**) 17

22) Acts 3: And a man lame from birth (**KJV:CSS from his mother's womb: since birth**) was being carried in.

24) II Corinthians 9:15 (**CSS quotes NLT**)

Archaic verbs:

1) Rev. 11:17 Lord God Almighty, who are **(art)**
and who were, **(wast)**

for you have **(hast)** taken your great power...

4) Ps 136: God's steadfast love endures **(endureth)** forever;

who gives **(gifeth)** food to all flesh, for

God's steadfast love endures **(endureth)** forever.

9) I Kings 5: "You know **(knowest)** that my father David...

Lord my God has **(hath)** given me rest on every side;

11) I Kings 8: ...in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping **(keepeth)** covenant...

12) I Kings 9:3 ...which you **(KJV adds 'hast')** made before me;

...this house that you have **(hast)** built,

17) Matt 15: The disciples said to him; Jesus asked **(saith to)** them; They said,

21) Psalms 116: ...the Lord has **(hath)** dealt bountifully with you.