

# SEED & BREAD

FOR THE SOWER    ISA. 55: 1 0    FOR THE EATER  
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

## THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

Otis Q. Sellers, Bible Teacher

## THE RIGHTS OF GOD

In the Gospel according to Mark we read that after the Lord has spoken His final words to His disciples, "**He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God**" (16: 19). As a result of this statement the picture or concept that comes to the minds of most readers is one of a row of separate chairs on a great platform in heaven with God seated on the central chair and Jesus Christ seated on the chair on His right. This is a very low concept of God, but it is one that is commonly held, and it is one that seems to be supported by this passage and about thirty more that say virtually the same thing.

The English word "right" has many meanings. A glance at an unabridged dictionary will reveal this. "Right" means the opposite of "left," it also means the opposite of "wrong." It means fit and suitable, also actual, genuine and real, etc., etc.

This multiplicity of meanings is also found in the Greek word **dexios**. This word has 73 occurrences in the Greek New Testament, and if each one of these is carefully considered it will be found that there is one important meaning of the word *dexios* which translators of the New Testament have failed to recognize. This is when the word *dexios* (right) designates the fundamental claims which a person or other entity can properly make; that is, something to which one may lay claim to and is entitled to do so by the principles of morality, by grant, by the laws of the land, or by purchase.

This meaning can be clearly seen in the opening words of the Declaration of Independence: "*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government. . . .*"

The three occurrences of the word "right" in this excerpt, twice plural and once singular, clearly sets forth one true meaning of this word, a meaning once it is recognized and brought into the translations of the New Testament will bring forth some very significant and precious truth concerning the nature and being of our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus.

For example Mark 16:19 if translated literally and truly should read: "**The Lord, indeed, then after speaking with them was taken up into heaven and is seated on the rights of God.**" If this is done, the noun (*dexios*) is not treated as if it were an adjective, a plural is not changed to a singular, and no word (hand) is inserted into the text. Thus, it can be seen that if the Lord Jesus is now seated on the rights of God, this is because He is God. Otherwise, if not God, He is a usurper who has taken a place that does not belong to Him.

There are those who insist that no such meaning as this can be found in any New Testament passage where the word *dexios* is found. This, I will admit, so far as the King James Version is concerned, but it will not hold up when the Greek is considered.

In at least 40 of the 73 passages in which *dexios* is found, this noun is translated as an adjective, an error that starts the confusion. Then, the plurals of this word are translated as singulars. this adds to the chaos. Next the word "hand" is added, when there is no such word in text or context. Furthermore, the confusion created is compounded when the translators do not print the added word (hand) in italics, as it is customary to do when a word is added.

Some commentators have gone so far as to say that these occurrences of *dexios* have *cheir* (hand) understood, a statement they have no right or reason to make. All these actions when brought together constitute an unacceptable cover-up which completely obscures one important meaning of the word *dexios*. It also negates a glorious truth that God was revealing.

All this trifling with the text seems to have started with the so-called "church fathers," whose minds, as Sir Robert Andersen says it, "were impregnated by the superstitions of Pagan religion, or the subtleties of Pagan philosophy. . . And inquiry will show that it is to them that we should attribute every perversion of the truth which today defaces what is called the Christian religion."

So, from the so-called "church fathers" began a flow of error in harmony with their own concept of God, and this error has continued down to present translations that now come forth every year. The momentum of these errors is so great that now it seems no one dares to challenge them. This will be pointed out as we consider certain

passages in which the word *dexios* is found.

In Matthew 5:29 we come upon the first passage. The word here is singular, and appearing with it is the word **ophthalmus** (eye), therefore, it should read "**your right eye**" even as it does in most versions. Next occurrence we find in Matt. 5:30 the word in a different form (*dexia*), and with it we find the word *cheir* (hand), and these two words are translated "**thy right hand**" which is correct.

Then in Matt. 5:39 we find the word *dexian* which is the singular form, and closely accompanying it is the word **siagona** (cheek), and it should read, even as it does in most versions, "**thy right cheek.**"

Thus, the first three occurrences of *dexios* have been well translated. They are true to the Greek. However, when we come to the fourth occurrence (Matt. 6:3) we find something different. Here the form of the word is *dexia*, which could be either singular or plural, but since it is preceded by the singular article (*he*) we know that it is singular.

The words **he dexia** (the right) and **he aristeros** (the left) stand alone. However, it is evident that some early translator or expositor thought that some additional word was needed for clarity, so he added the word "hand" even though there is nothing in text or context to indicate that this word was needed. This passage should read, "**When you give your alms, let not your left be knowing what your right is doing.**" This is a Hebrew idiom for doing things in secret.

In fact, the insertion of the word 'hand' twice in this passage makes it somewhat absurd since the hand is neither a projector or receiver of knowledge. Those who insist that the word "hand" should be understood here, might do well to follow the example of the sincere fellow who always put his left hand in his coat pocket when he put his offering in the collection basket.

The reader will note that in none of the passages cited so far is there any evidence that the meaning of *dexios* is found to be what was set forth in the first part of this study. This is because all of these occurrences are singular in number. However, in the next five occurrences of *dexios* we find instances of the plural (Matt. 20:21,23; 23:44; 25:33,34). These are all mistranslated as a singular, and the word hand is added, but it is not placed in italics. The request of this woman and her use of the plural form of this word does not help us much in understanding the meaning of this as used in Scripture.

When we come to the next reference (Matt 26:24) which reads "**sitting on the right hand of power,**" but should read, it being plural and no word for "hand" is found in it "**sitting on the rights of power.**"

This is true to the Greek and true to the truth, inasmuch as the Lord Jesus had declared: "**All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth**" (Matt 28:18). Power has its rights, and He to whom power is given has every right to take to Himself the rights that go with such power.

From this passage it can be seen that the word *dexios* can mean the fundamental claims that a person or entity can properly make, as set forth in the first part of this study. Thus, when we come to Mark 16: 19 where the word *dexios* is plural (*dexion*), and there is nothing to show that the word "hand" is in the text, this passage tells us that the Lord Jesus was taken up into heaven "**and is seated on the rights of God.**"

The word "seated" which ordinarily means to rest on the haunches, or to take a sitting position also means to assume a position of authority.

This is what the Lord did when He ascended, and as said already, it being obvious that no one has the right to take to Himself 'the rights of God' unless He is God, this passage is a powerful witness to the truth that Jesus Christ is God.

In all passages where *dexios* is found there is nothing that contradicts this, although some feel quite sure that they find something that challenges it in Galatians 2:9. This reads: "**They gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship.**" Many read into this our present custom of "shaking hands," and feel the word "hands" should be added. The form here is *dexias* which could be singular or plural, yet it is evidently singular so it should read: "**They gave to me and Barnabas the right of fellowship.**" Paul and Barnabas had entered into an exclusive group and they were granted all privileges that pertained to it.

There are at least 35 passages in the New testament where *dexios* is found that the translators have ignored the plural and treated the word as a singular. In addition they have added the word "hand" in these passages when it should not be there. This makes the passage to say something different than God intended. This should not be.

**End Issue No. SB187**