



How things fit together in the Kingdom

‘The Flesh’: Our Human Base Nature

The Kingdom is about reality, so we need to get real and speak in real terms when we communicate with ‘rational’ (reasoning) people. One term we need to change is ‘the flesh’. This is an archaic term that the church system uses, so it needs to be translated into simple, modern-day terms.

I’m not referring to ‘flesh’ as in the tissues of a living thing,ⁱⁱ but rather the same term which is used to describe the evil that we do.ⁱⁱⁱ

To uncover the meaning of this use of ‘flesh’, there’s an old-fashion expression, "wanton destruction", which is a good starting point to understand what ‘the flesh’ means. This is destruction caused by a person (not an animal) who does it maliciously and with unnecessarily cruelty. It is done in an unrestrained manner. The expression is derived from the word ‘wanton’ which means ‘without care’¹. It outworks in a person's life as ‘dissolute’, ‘licentious’, ‘immoral’^{iv}, ‘without motive, provocation, or justification’.² It’s the type of thing a drunk person would do in their anger, or a person ‘blinded’ by rage. It’s also indicative in modern times of the destruction and mayhem caused by a person using the drug called “ice”.

‘Wanton’ is the term that fits well with ‘the flesh’ as they are both about being unrestrained^v.

‘The flesh’ is easy to see in little children because they can’t restrain themselves – they lack self-control^{vi}. It appears as self-centredness and manifests as ‘hissy fits’, ‘tantrums’, hysterical screaming performances, manipulation, bullying, grabbing, not sharing, punching, biting, hating, disobedience, sullenness, hurting animals, etc. These are recognised by adults as anti-social behaviours and undesirable, especially from a Christian perspective. Eliminating these bad habits in children takes years of discipline, correction and, yes, punishment, to override them.

Is it any wonder why our society is in such a mess these days, now that undisciplined children have become our young adults. Removing corporal punishment from the home and school under the guise of preventing abuse and protecting the emotional development of children has had its devastating downside on our nation. One could say, “That was the purpose all along, the destruction of Western society”.

The term ‘flesh’ used in 1st century Greek comes from *sarx* (σάρξ), meaning ‘the body’ and ‘flesh of a person or an animal’. It’s use in the NT refers mainly to carnality^{vii} – i.e. ‘the sensuous nature of man’, ‘the animal nature with cravings which incite us to sin’.³

The best example of this, in the extreme, is what occurred in Sodom with respect to deviant sexual activity.^{viii}

The term we should use, rather than ‘flesh’, is ‘**base nature**’. ‘Base nature’ is what a person would do without any form of personal restraint. It allows the enemy to manipulate their mind and desires so they do whatever they want to do (i.e. ‘wanton’) without any control of themselves.

BASE = the bottom, lowest level

1 – dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/wanton

2 – Google dictionary search

3 – www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Lexicon.show/ID/G4561/sarx.htm

Our base nature comes from the fact that our body, mind and soul weren't regenerated when we were spiritually reborn. Our spirit was regenerated, but nothing else. We have to work on the remainder of our person, with Holy Spirit's assistance, to renew it. Unfortunately, if we stop working on keeping all non-spirit areas of ourselves in a renewed state, it will quickly degenerate back to where it was, or where it could lower itself to. This is why we need to be vigilant and keep watch over ourselves.

Debauchery^{ix} is another word that aligns with the meaning of 'the flesh'(our 'base nature') because of The Fall^x. Debauchery may feel good to the person involved in it, and they may feel that they are being loving in what they are doing, however, debauchery is still debauchery.

A person's base nature can manifest in a range of ways, like this.

No base activity  **Full blown base activity**

We all have our base nature manifest in some way, every day.^{xi} We can't get away from it because we aren't perfect.

The signs of our base nature coming through are:

- Areas of our lives where we are undisciplined (where we don't have full control)^{xii}
- Areas of our lives which aren't under the control of our spirit and Holy Spirit^{xiii}
- Any non-essential activity that could be classified as self-gratification^{xiv}

So, does that change of terminology for 'flesh' make sense?

We can now talk to 21st century people using 'base nature' and they'll have more of an idea about what we mean. That's because the term is being used by commentators of the chaotic, destructive, "evil" behaviour that's being exhibited by ordinary people all around the world in our day.

Some More About 'The Flesh'

There is confusion about what is the 'flesh' and what is the 'soul'. Here's a way to look at it which will help you get away from religious jargon.

The 'flesh' is the sin-nature's desire to do what it wants through the soul and the mind. It's the component of our 'fallen' nature (carnal nature^{xv}) that the enemy works through to get us to do base things. The 'flesh' draws it's strength to control us from the mind, soul, emotions and heart (our attitudes).^{xvi} Remember, everything comes from the state our heart is in.^{xvii}

Our base nature came as a fit-out from The Fall, when we entered Satan's realm, so it wasn't part of our created being.^{xviii} As we are restored image-bearers of our Creator, who are now learning to live as Adam originally did, our 'flesh' needs to be eliminated. As this can't completely happen until we are in our 'glorified bodies'⁴, in the meantime, it needs to be subdued. Otherwise, if we don't, we live more grossly in sin, which is not pleasing to our Father.

The 'flesh' uses our soul, mind, will and emotions to control us, so these need to be kept in check. In fact, the aim is to have our spirit in control of our being because this has been regenerated and aligns with the Trinity. This can't happen if the other four parts aren't controlled by being made subservient to our spirit.

This is the battle we face every day.^{xix}

This may cut across what you've been taught or what you believe. The important thing is this: What we were taught about 'flesh' from the pulpit was an understanding from a religious and theological

4 – The bodies we will have, like Jesus' resurrected body, when we are back on Earth in the Coming Age.

perspective. We can't get a straightforward understanding of 'the flesh' from the Bible because we're too far removed from the writers of the NT and their understanding of it. That's why we have no comprehension of this archaic term.

On the other hand, it's also hard to comprehend the 'flesh' because it's a spiritual matter that hasn't been properly understood by natural, theological minds. It's like understanding what the 'sin-nature' is which kept us from Father's presence before Jesus' sacrifice. What is the 'sin-nature'? It's not that we sin and that gives us a 'sin-nature'. No. We sin because we have a 'sin-nature'.^{xx}

Our 'sin-nature' comes from our lineage of Fallen Adam. How does that happen? Where does our sin-nature come from?

Our fallen nature comes from the DNA of Fallen Adam which is transferred to every generation through the genes of the father. It can't be somewhere in the male Y chromosome as that would mean that women would not be 'fallen' – they don't have a Y chromosome. It may be transmitted in the X chromosome as every person has one. More likely, it is located somewhere on the father's non-sex chromosomes (the autosomes)

This is why Jesus was sinless – he had no sin-nature. His father (actually, his sire) was Holy Spirit, not Joseph. This meant that he didn't have an autosome from a human father which contained the Fallen marker. He wasn't sinless because his spirit was God (The Son), it was that his Adam-marker was missing. Women obviously don't have this Adam-marker otherwise Mary would have passed it on to Jesus, endowing him with a 'fallen' nature.

Hopefully this clears up some of theological misunderstandings that you may have had.

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References are on the next page

i **REFERENCES**

- ii – Matthew 16:17; 19:6; 24:22; Romans 2:28; 3:20; 1 Corinthians 1:29; 15:39 (all NKJV or KJV)
- iii – Matthew 26:42; Romans 6:19; Galatians 5:16-17, 19; Ephesians 2:3; Colossians 2:18 (all NKJV or KJV)
- iv – See Romans 1:29 (NKJV)
- v – e.g. Exodus 32:24-26 (NKJV)
- vi – 1 Corinthians 7:5; 2 Timothy 3:2-4 (all NKJV)
- vii – Romans 8:7; 1 Corinthians 3:1-4 (all NKJV)
- viii – Genesis 19:1-10
- ix – Romans 13:13; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19; 1 Peter 4:3 (all NIV)
- x – Genesis 3 [‘The Fall’ is a religious term to describe their fall from grace and to fall from their position as eternal light beings]
- xi – 1 Peter 2:11 (NKJV)
- xii – e.g. 1 Corinthians 7:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:4; 2 Timothy 3:3 (all NIV)
- xiii – e.g. 2 Peter 1:5-7
- xiv – e.g. Romans 1:24-27; Galatians 5:17; Ephesians 4:22 (all NKJV)
- xv – 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 (NKJV)
- xvi – Matthew 5:21-28; 9:4; 12:34; 15:18
- xvii – Matthew 15:18
- xviii – Genesis 4:6-8 [the first sin]
- xix – e.g. Romans 7:15
- xx – James 1:15