

**IS MODERN MEDICINE THE SORCERY – φαρμακεία -
pharmakiea, THAT IS CONDEMNED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT
SCRIPTURES?**

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NOTE: - All Bible texts are taken from the King James Version unless otherwise specified; and the compiler has supplied all emphasis throughout this Study Document.

A STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE TO BE EXAMINED: -

The issue that I am going to be considering in this Study Document, is summarized in the following belief that is held by some sincere, well intentioned Christians. This belief goes basically like this: -

“In the New Testament, the Apostles John and Paul have plainly condemned “sorcery.” In our English translation of the New Testament, the Greek word that has been translated as “sorcery” is **φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea”**. Strong’s Concordance, Greek Lexicon defines this word as “medication ... magic”. It is the very same root word from which the modern English words “pharmacy,” “pharmacist,” “pharmacology” and “pharmaceutical” are derived. Therefore, modern medicine is a modern form of the sorcery that is condemned in the New Testament, because it is largely dependent upon “pharmacology”, as one of its main methods of treating disease.”

While this belief may appear on the surface to be valid, there are a number of serious considerations that must be investigated, to arrive at the thorough and correct conclusion on this issue. For example: -

1. What is the etymology¹ of the words “pharmacy, “pharmaceutical”, “pharmacology” etc? Is it possible that the meaning of these words, have changed over time, from the days of the Apostles of Christ?
2. As the Greek word **φάρμακον** – “**phármakon**” is the root word from which **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakiea**”, and the other closely related Greek words which are used in the New Testament are derived, I shall undertake a thorough Lexical examination of its meaning?
3. I will undertake a thorough Lexical examination of the meaning of **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakiea**”, and the other closely related Greek words that are used in the New Testament.
4. An examination will also be undertaken, of the surrounding context of the occurrences of **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakiea**”, and the other closely related Greek words that are used in the New Testament.
5. An examination of the other Greek words that are translated as “sorcery” or “sorcerer” in the New Testament.
6. What does the Bible teach about physicians?

Rick Henwood – November, 2017.

¹ “**etymology**” is defined as “The study of the origin of words and the way in which their meanings have changed throughout history” – Oxford English Dictionary.

1.] WHAT IS THE ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORDS “PHARMACY, “PHARMACEUTICAL” ETC?

We first need to understand the origin and history of the words “pharmacy”, “pharmaceutical”, and “pharmacology”, before we go any further in this Study Document. I shall give three witnesses for each one of these closely related words.

The reader may be surprised to learn the following facts, how each of these words have entered into the English language. It is **NOT** correct to assume as the belief that I am considering in this Study Document does, that these words came directly from the ancient Greek, straight into English, some 2, 000 years after they were originally used in the ancient Greek literature. Rather, they have entered into English, via other languages, such as old French and Latin, which were derived from the Greek, over the stream of many centuries of time.

- **“Pharmacy” origin: -**

“Late Middle English (denoting the administration of drugs): from Old French *farmacie*, via medieval Latin from Greek *pharmakeia* ‘practise of the druggist’, based on ‘*pharmakon*’ ‘drug’.”²

“The word *pharmacy* is derived from **Old French** *farmacie* “substance, such as a food or in the form of a medicine which has a laxative effect” from **Medieval Latin** *pharmacia* from **Greek** *pharmakeia* (**Greek**: φαρμακεία) “a medicine”, which itself derives from *pharmakon* (φάρμακον), meaning “drug, poison, spell” (which is etymologically related to **pharmakos**).”³

“*phar·ma·cy* \ˈfär-mə-sē\ *n*, *pl* **-cies** [LL *pharmacia* administration of drugs, fr. Gk *pharmakeia*, fr. *pharmakeuein* to administer drugs, fr. *pharmakon* magic charm, poison, drug] (1651)”⁴

- **“Pharmaceutical” origin: -**

“Mid 17th century: via late Latin from Greek *pharmaceutikos* (from *pharmakuetēs* ‘druggist’, from *pharmakon* ‘drug’) + *-al*.”⁵

“From **pharmaceutic** + *-al*, from **Latin** *pharmaceuticus* (“of drugs”), from **Ancient Greek** *φαρμακευτικός* (*pharmaceutikós*, “drug maker”).”⁶

“*phar·ma·ceu·ti·cal* \ˈfär-mə-ˈsü-ti-kəl\ *adj* [LL *pharmaceuticus*, fr. Gk *pharmaceutikos*, fr. *pharmakeuein* to administer drugs — more at **pharmacy**] (1640)”⁷

² “Pharmacy” - Oxford English Dictionary.

³ “Pharmacy” - Wikipedia.

⁴ “Pharmacy” - Merriam-Webster Dictionary and Thesaurus.

⁵ “Pharmaceutical” - Oxford English Dictionary.

⁶ “Pharmaceutical” - Wiktionary.

⁷ “Pharmaceutical” - Merriam-Webster Dictionary and Thesaurus.

- **“Pharmacology” origin: -**

“Early 18th century: from modern Latin *pharmacologia*, from Greek *pharmakon* ‘drug’.”⁸

“1721, formed in Modern Latin (1680’s) from *pharmac-* + *-logy*.”⁹

“From the New Latin word *pharmacologia*, dating back to 1715 - 25.”¹⁰

NOTE: - Another question which I need to address, is a very simple one: - Do the meaning of words change over time? Particularly do they change, over a time span covering many centuries?

A couple of simple examples show that the meaning of words, even within one language do indeed change over time. The more time that passes, the more changes in a word’s meaning will occur.

The word “conversation” which appears in the King James Bible, has indeed undergone a change in its meaning, over the last few centuries.

In the times when the King James Bible was translated, “**conversation**” was defined as “General course of manners; behavior; deportment; especially as it respects morals.”

“Let your conversation be as becometh the gospel. Philippians 1:27.”

“Be ye holy in all manner of conversation. 1 Peter 1:15.”¹¹

Today, “**conversation**” is defined as: - “A talk, especially an informal one, between two or more people, in which news and ideas are exchanged.”¹²

The word “**gay**” is an example of another word that has undergone a radical change in its meaning in the last fifty years.

“Adjective – 1. (of a person) homosexual (used especially of a man).”

“2. *Dated* Light-hearted and carefree.”

“2.1 Brightly coloured; showy.”

“3. *offensive, informal* Foolish, stupid, or unimpressive.”¹³

⁸ “*Pharmacology*” - Oxford English Dictionary.

⁹ “*Pharmacology*” - Online Etymology Dictionary.

¹⁰ “*Pharmacology*” – Dictionary.com.

¹¹ “*Conversation*” – Noah Webster’s 1828 Dictionary.

¹² “*Conversation*” – Oxford English Dictionary.

¹³ “*Gay*” – Oxford English Dictionary.

☞ To believe that the Greek word of 2, 000 years ago **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakiea**” has the exact same meaning now in English, is naive in the extreme. Words do indeed change their meanings over time, even within the same language. Let alone covering a period of approximately 2, 000 years, and passing through three different languages.¹⁴

2.] AN EXAMINATION OF THE LEXICAL MEANING OF THE ROOT GREEK WORD

φάρμακον – “phármakon” FROM WHICH φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea” AND THE LIKE ARE

DERIVED:-

As I have just documented in the previous Section of this Study Document, the root word for **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakiea**”, is the Greek word **φάρμακον** – “**phármakon**”. This word does not appear in the New Testament, but it would be very helpful to have a thorough understanding of its lexical meaning in the Greek tongue.

I will reproduce in its entirety, its lexical entry from the following Greek-English New Testament Lexicon.

“A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.” By Walter Bauer. Translated and adapted by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich. Revised and Augmented by F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker. Second Edition, 1979. It shall from henceforth, be referred to as “**BAGD**”.

As I will be referring to this Lexicon a number of times throughout this Study Document, I should point out from the outset of its use, that it is the acknowledged “*rolls-royce*” of Greek New Testament Lexicons.

NOTE: - Before I do this, the reader may well ask, “What is the value of these historical Greek extracts? After all, they are not from the Bible.”

The answer to this question is very simple. The Greek that the New Testament Scriptures were written in, was **NOT** a special type of Greek, or a so called “Holy Ghost Greek”, that only Christians could understand. The New Testament Greek has been demonstrated for the last 120 years or so, to have been written in what is called κοινή - “**koinē**” – or the common Greek language, for the time period of around 300 BCE to 300 CE. Therefore, these extracts from ancient Greek literature, reveal how **φάρμακον** – “**phármakon**” was commonly understood during this time period.

¹⁴ That is, from Greek to Latin to English.

BAGD, pg. 854: -

φάρμακον, ου, τό (Hom. +; inscr., pap., LXX, Philo; Jos., VI. 150)—1. *poison* (Hom. +; Jos., Ant. 16, 253; 17, 62; Test. Jos. 5: 1) H_v 3, 9, 7a (w. *φαρμακός*); in the symbol of the 'poisoned' heart, *ibid.* b. *θανάσιμον φάρμ.* (s. *θανάσιμος*) IT_r 6: 2.

2. *magic potion, charm* (Hom. +; PSI 64, 20 [I BC]; 4 Km 9: 22; Jos., Ant. 15, 93; 19, 193; Test. Reub. 4: 9) R_v 9: 21 v.l. (for *φαρμακειῶν*).

3. *medicine, remedy, drug* (Hom. +; Dit., Syll.³ 1168, 40; 77; 119; PRyl. 62, 22 [I BC]; PTebt. 117, 22 [I BC]; PGM 5, 247; Philo; Jos., Bell. 4, 573; Test. Jos. 2: 7), also *means of attaining someth.*, w. gen. of the thing desired (Eur., Phoen. 893 φ. *σωτηρίας*; *likew. the teaching of Epicurus*: ChJensen, GGAbh. III 5, '33, 81; Kleopatra I. 45; 130 φ. *τῆς ζωῆς*; Sir 6: 16), the Eucharist as *φάρμακον ἀθανασίας the medicine of* (i.e. *means of attaining*) *immortality* IEph 20: 2 (φ. *ἀθαν.* Antiphanes Com. 86, 6; Diod. S. 1, 25, 6; Herm. Wr. 460, 13 Sc. The remedy, widely designated by the t.t. *φάρμ. ἀθ.*, whose origin was credited to Isis, was prescribed for the most varied diseases. ThSchermann, ThQ 92, '10, 6ff; Rtzst., *Mysterienrel.*³ 400). M-M. B. 310f. *

We can readily see from this detailed entry, that φάρμακον – “phármakon” has three basic meanings: -

1. Poison;
2. Magic potion, charm; or,
3. Medicine, remedy, drug.

I have been able to locate some of the specific extracts from the ancient Greek literature, along with their English translations, that are listed in the above entry. I shall now reproduce some of these documentary witnesses.

1. POISON: -

Josephus - Antiquities, Book 16, 253: - [253] πολλῆς δὲ τῆς εἰς τὸ τοιοῦτον ἐτοιμότητος οὕσης καὶ φόβου καὶ παραχῆς περὶ τὸ βασιλεῖον, εἷς τις τῶν νεωτέρων ὡς ἐν ταῖς ἀνάγκαις ἐγένετο, διαπέμπειν ἔφη τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ φίλοις τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ἀξιοῦντα κληθῆναι θᾶπτον ὑπὸ Καίσαρος: ἔχειν γὰρ αὐτῷ πρᾶξιν ἐπ' αὐτὸν συνισταμένην μηνῦσαι Μιθριδάτην τὸν βασιλέα Πάρθων τοῦ πατρὸς ἡρημένου κατὰ Ῥωμαίων φίλον: εἶναι δ' αὐτῷ καὶ **φάρμακον** ἐν Ἀσκάλωνι παρεσκευασμένον.

“253 While he was most intent on this matter and terror and upheaval racked the palace, one of the younger men, in direst agony, confessed that Alexander had sent to his friends in Rome asking to have himself quickly invited there by Caesar so that he could reveal a plot against him, namely that his father had opted for a friendship with Mithridates, the king of Parthia, against the Romans and that he had a **poison** ready prepared for him at Askelon.”

Josephus - Antiquities, Book 17, 62: - [62] τοῦ δ' ἐπιστραφέντος τοῖς λόγοις, πιστὰ γὰρ ἐδόκει, δεῖπνῆσαι μὲν αὐτὸν ἔλεγον παρὰ τῆς γυναικὸς τῆς προτέρας τῆς νόσου, **φάρμακον** δὲ προσκομισθὲν ἐν βρώματι μὴ πρότερον εἰωθότι ἐμφαγόντα ὑπὸ τούτου τελευτῆσαι: κομιστὸν μὲντοι γενέσθαι τὸ **φάρμακον** ὑπὸ γυναικὸς ἐκ τῆς Ἀραβίας λόγῳ μὲν ἐπὶ προσποιήσεσιν ἐρώτων, φίλτρον γὰρ δὴ ὄνομα αὐτῷ εἶναι, τὸ δ' ἀληθὲς ἐπὶ τῆς Φερῶρου τελευτῆς.

"062 As he was moved by these words which seemed to him true, they said that the man had dined with his wife the day before he fell sick and that **poison** had been brought to him in a kind of food not usually part of his diet, and that he died after eating it. **This poison** had been brought from Arabia by a woman as though it were an aphrodisiac for she called it a love - potion, but in truth it was meant to kill Pheroras."

Ignatius - 1st to the Trallians, 6:2: - 2. οἱ ἑαυτοῖς παρεμπλέκουσιν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καταξιοπιστευόμενοι, ὡσπερ **θανάσιμον φάρμακον** διδόντες μετὰ οἰνομέλιτος, ὅπερ ὁ ἀγνοῶν ἠδέως λαμβάνει ἐν ἡδονῇ κακῇ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν.

"6:2 for these men do even mingle poison with Jesus Christ, imposing upon others by a show of honesty, like persons administering **a deadly drug** with honied wine, so that one who knoweth it not, fearing nothing, drinketh in death with a baneful delight."

Wisdom of Solomon 1:14 – LXX: - ἔκτισε γὰρ εἰς τὸ εἶναι τὰ πάντα, καὶ σωτήριοι αἱ γενέσεις τοῦ κόσμου, **καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν αὐταῖς φάρμακον ὀλέθρου** οὔτε ἄδου βασιλείον ἐπὶ γῆς

"For he created all things, that they might have their being: and the generations of the world were healthful; **and there is no poison of destruction in them**, nor the kingdom of death upon the earth."

2. MAGIC POTION, CHARM: -

4th Kings 9:22 – LXX text: - καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς εἶδεν Ἰωραμ τὸν Ἰού, καὶ εἶπεν· εἰ εἰρήνη Ἰού; καὶ εἶπεν Ἰού· τί εἰρήνη; ἔτι αἱ πορνεῖαι Ἰεζάβελ τῆς μητρός σου καὶ **τὰ φάρμακα αὐτῆς τὰ πολλά**.

"And it came to pass when Joram saw Ju, that he said, *Is it peace*, Ju? And Ju said, *How can it be peace?* as yet *there are* the whoredoms of thy mother Jezabel, and **her abundant witchcrafts**."

2nd Kings 9:22 – KJV: - "And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, *Is it peace*, Jehu? And he answered, *What peace*, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and **her witchcrafts are so many?**"

Nahum 3:4 – LXX: - πόρνη καλὴ καὶ ἐπίχαρις ἡγουμένη φαρμάκων, ἡ πωλοῦσα ἔθνη ἐν τῇ πορνείᾳ αὐτῆς καὶ λαοὺς **ἐν τοῖς φαρμάκοις αὐτῆς**

"Because of the abundance of fornication: *she is* a fair harlot, and well-favoured, skilled in sorcery, that sells the nations by her fornication, and peoples **by her sorceries**."

Nahum 3:4 – KJV: - "Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families **through her witchcrafts**."

Josephus - Antiquities, 15, 93: - [93] τῷ δ' Ἀντωνίῳ τὸ μὲν ὅλον ἠπαῖσθαι συνέβαινεν τῆς γυναικός, ὡς μὴ μόνον ἐκ τῆς ὁμιλίας, ἀλλὰ καὶ **φαρμάκοις** δοκεῖν ὑπακούειν εἰς ὃ τι ἂν ἐκείνη θέλη, τὸ μέντοι περιφανὲς τῆς ἀδικίας ἐξεδυσώπει μὴ μέχρι τοσούτου κατήκοον γινόμενον ἐπὶ μεγίστοις ἀμαρτάνειν.

"093 Antony was so entirely subject to her that it seemed unlikely to be by the woman's conversation alone, but **by drugs** or some other way that he listened to whatever she wanted. Still, her grossest injustices so embarrassed him that he would not always agree to her most flagrant enormities."

Josephus - Antiquities 19, 193: - [193] οἱ δὲ καὶ τῶν μὲν ἐπὶ τοιούτοις ἐνεκάλουν αὐτῇ γνώμην τὸ δὲ πᾶν καὶ τῶν ὑπὸ Γαίου πεπραγμένων κακῶν ἐκείνη τὴν αἰτίαν ἐπέφερον **φάρμακον** τῷ Γαίῳ δοῦσαν ἐννοιῶν δούλωσιν καὶ ἐρώτων ἐπαγωγὰς αὐτῇ ψηφιοῦμενον, εἰς μανίαν μεταστάντος τὰ πάντα αὐτὴν εἶναι τὴν νευαυπηγημένην ἐπὶ ταῖς Ῥωμαίων τύχαις καὶ τῆς ὑποτελούσης αὐτοῖς οἰκουμένης.

“193 Others accused her of responsibility for these things and being the cause of all that Gaius had done, and said she had given a **potion** to Gaius, which had enslaved him and forced him to love her and drove him mad, so that she had launched all the evils that had happened to the Romans and the world subject to them.”

3. MEDICINE, REMEDY, DRUG: -

Josephus - War of the Jews, 4, 573: - [573] θεὸς δὲ ἄρα τὰς γνώμας αὐτῶν εἰς κακὸν ἔτρεψε, καὶ χαλεπώτερον ἀπωλείας ἐπενόησαν τὸ πρὸς σωτηρίαν **φάρμακον**: ἵνα γοῦν καταλύσωσιν Ἰωάννην, ἔκριναν δέχεσθαι Σίμωνα καὶ μετὰ ἱκετηριῶν δεύτερον εἰσαγαγεῖν ἑαυτοῖς τύραννον.

“573 But God distorted their judgement, so that **the remedy** they planned was worse than the disease. In order to kill John, they decided to admit Simon, thereby appealing for a second tyrant to be brought into the city.

Ignatius - Epistle to the Ephesians, 20:2: - 2. μάλιστα ἐὰν ὁ κύριος μοι ἀποκαλύψῃ, ὅτι οἱ κατ’ ἄνδρα κοινῇ πάντες ἐν χάριτι ἐξ ὀνόματος συνέρχεσθε ἐν μιᾷ πίστει καὶ ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ, τῷ κατὰ σάρκα ἐκ γένους Δαυείδ, τῷ ἀνθρώπου καὶ υἱῷ θεοῦ, εἰς τὸ ὑπακούειν ὑμᾶς τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ ἀπερισπᾶστω κιανοίᾳ, ἕνα ἄρτον κλῶντες, **ὅς ἐστὶν φάρμακον ἀθανασίας**, ἀντίδοτος τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν, ἀλλὰ ζῆν ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ διὰ παντός.

“20:2 especially if the Lord should reveal aught to me. Assemble yourselves together in common, every one of you severally, man by man, in grace, in one faith and one Jesus Christ, who after the flesh was of David’s race, who is Son of Man and Son of God, to the end that ye may obey the bishop and presbytery without distraction of mind; breaking one bread, **which is the medicine of immortality** and the antidote that we should not die but live for ever in Jesus Christ.”

Diodorus Siculus – Book 1, Chapter 25, Section 6: - 6] εὐρεῖν δ’ αὐτὴν καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀθανασίας **φάρμακον**, δι’ οὗ τὸν υἱὸν Ὠρον, ὑπὸ τῶν Τιτάνων ἐπιβουλευθέντα καὶ νεκρὸν εὐρεθέντα καθ’ ὕδατος, μὴ μόνον ἀναστῆσαι, δοῦσαν τὴν ψυχὴν,

“6. Furthermore, she discovered also **the drug which gives immortality**, by means of which she not only raised from the dead her son Horus, who had been the object of plots on the part of Titans and had been found dead under the water, giving him his soul again,”

Wisdom of Sirach 6:16 – LXX: - φίλος πιστὸς φάρμακον ζωῆς, καὶ οἱ φοβούμενοι Κύριον εὐρήσουσιν αὐτόν

“A faithful friend is **the medicine of life**; and they that fear the Lord shall find him.”

☞ So it is clear, that this important root Greek word, from which **φαρμακία – “pharmakiea”**, and the other closely related Greek words which are used in the New Testament were derived from, does not just mean magical potions or charms. It has a broader range of meanings. This is an important point to keep in mind as we proceed further in our investigation of this subject.

3.] A THOROUGH LEXICAL EXAMINATION OF THE MEANING OF **φαρμακεία** – “pharmakiea”, AND THE OTHER CLOSELY RELATED GREEK WORDS THAT ARE USED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: -

I shall now give a thorough Lexical examination of the meaning of the Greek word **φαρμακεία** – “pharmakeia” – Strong’s Concordance, Greek Number 5331.

Strong’s Lexicon defines it as “medication (“pharmacy”), that is (by extension) magic (literal or figurative).”

BAGD, pg. 854: -

φαρμακεία, ας, ἡ (X., Pla. +; Vett. Val., pap., LXX; Philo, Spec. Leg. 3, 94; 98) sorcery, magic (Polyb. 38, 16, 7; Ex 7: 11, 22: 8: 14; Is 47: 9, 12; Wsd 12: 4; 18: 13; En. 7, 1; Sib. Or. 5, 165) Rv 18: 23. Pl. magic arts 9: 21 (v.l. φαρμάκων). In a list of vices Gal 5: 20; B 20: 1; pl. D 5: 1. M-M. B. 1495. *

I have been able to locate some of the specific extracts from the ancient Greek literature, along with some of the entries in the **LXX** Greek text, along with their English translations, that are listed in the above entry. I shall now reproduce some of these documentary witnesses.

Philo, The Special Laws, III, XVII, 93 - 98: - εἰσὶ δὲ ἕτεροι πονηρότατοι, χερσὶ καὶ γνώμῃς εναγεῖς, οἱ μάγοι καὶ **φαρμακευταί**, σχολὴν καὶ ἀναχώρησιν ἐνδιδόντες αὐτοῖς πρὸς καίριους ἐπιθέσεις καὶ τέχνας καὶ μηχανὰς πολυτρόπους ἀνευρίσκοντες ἐπὶ ταῖς τῶν 94 πλησίων συμφοραῖς. Ὄθεν κελεύει **φαρμακευτὰς καὶ φαρμακίδας** μηδεμίαν ἡμέραν ἀλλά μηδ’ ὥραν ἐπιβιοῦν, ἀλλ’ ἅμα τῷ ἀλῶναι τεθάναι, μηδεμιάς ἐγγινομένης προφάσεως εἰς ἀναβολὴν καὶ ὑπέρθεσιν τῆς τιμωρίας* τοὺς μὲν γὰρ ἀντικρυς ἐπιβουλεύοντας δίναιτ’ ἂν τις φυλάσασθαι, τῶν δὲ κρύφα συντιθέντων καὶ σκευωρούντων τὰς ἐπιθέσεις 95 **φαρμακείαις** οὐ ράδιον τὰς τέχνας συνιδεῖν. ἀναγκαῖον οὖν, ἂ μελλήσουσι δι’ αὐτοὺς ἕτεροι ποθεῖν, τοὺς δρώντας προδιαθεῖναι. καὶ γὰρ ἄλλως ὁ μὲν ἐμφανῶς ζῆφει κτείνων ἢ τιτι ὀπλῶ τῶν ὁμοίτροπων καθ’ ἓνα καιρὸν ολίγους ἀνελεῖ, **φαρμάκοις** δὲ **θανασίμοις** μύριους Ὀσους τὴν ἐπιβουλήν οὐ προαισθανομένους ἐδωδῖμοις τισὶν ἀναμίζας καὶ 96 συνανακερασάμενος. ἤδη γοῦν πολυάνθρωπα συσσίτια καθ’ ἕταιρειάν συνεληλυθότων ἐπὶ τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἄλας καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν τράπεζαν ἐν σπονδαῖς ἀσπονδα ἐπαθεν ἐξαίφνης διαφθαρέντα καὶ θάνατον ἀντ’ εὐωχίας ἀνηλλάξατο. διὸ προσήκει κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων καὶ τοὺς ἐπιεικέστατους καὶ τοὺς μετριοπαθέστατους φονάν, μόνον οὐκ αὐτόχειρας γινόμενους καὶ νομίζοντας εὐαγὲς εἶναι τὸ μὴ 97 ἕτεροις τὴν τιμωρίαν ἐπιτρέπειν ἀλλ’ ἑαυτοῖς. πῶς γὰρ οὐκ ἐστὶ πάνδεινον, διὰ τροφῆς ἢ τοῦ ζῆν αἴτια καθέστηκε θάνατον τεχνάζειν καὶ τοῖς φύσει τροφίμοις φθοροποιὸν ἐνεργάζεσθαι μεταβολήν, ἵνα τινὲς διὰ φυσικὴν ἀνάγκην ἐπ’ ἐδωδὴν καὶ πόσιν ἰόντες, οὐ προϊδόντες τὴν ἐνέδραν, ὡς σωτήρια 98 προσώνται τὰ πανωλεθρίας αἴτια; τὴν δ’ αὐτὴν ὑπομενέτωσαν τιμωρίαν, κἀν [εἴ] τινες θανάσιμα μὴ συντιθέντες τὰ δι’ ὧν μακρὰ κατασκευάζονται 16] | νόσοι προσφέρωσι θάνατοι γὰρ πολλακίς αἰρετώτεροι νόσων εἰσὶ καὶ μάλιστα τῶν τοιούτων, αἱ μῆκεσι χρόνων ἀποτείνονται καὶ τέλος ἔχουσιν οὐκ αἴσιον δυσίατα γὰρ ἤδη καὶ παντελῶς αθεράπευτα τὰ **ἐκ φαρμακείων** ἄρρωστη ματα.

“(93) But there are others also of the greatest wickedness, men polluted both in hands and mind, who, being sorcerers and **poisoners**, devoting all their leisure and all their solitude to planning seasonable attacks upon others, who invent all kinds of contrivances and devices to bring about calamities on their neighbours. (94) On which account, Moses commands that **poisoners** and **sorceresses** shall not be allowed to live one day or even

one hour, but that they shall be put to death the moment that they are taken, no pretext being for a moment allowed them for putting off or delaying their punishment. For those who attack one openly and to one's face, any body may guard against; but of those who plot against one secretly, and who disguise their attacks by the concealed approaches **of poison**, it is not easy to see the cunning beforehand. (95) It is necessary, therefore, to anticipate them, inflicting upon them that death which other persons would else have suffered by their means. And again, besides this, he who openly slays a man with a sword, or with any similar weapon, can only kill a few persons at one time; but **one who mixes and compounds poisonous drugs** with food, may destroy innumerable companies at once who have no suspicion of his treachery. (96) Accordingly, it has happened before now that very numerous parties of men who have come together in good fellowship to eat of the same salt and to sit at the same table, have suffered at such a time of harmony things wholly incompatible with it, being suddenly killed, and have thus met with death instead of feasting. On which account it is fitting that even the most merciful, and gentle, and moderate of men should approve of such persons being put to death, who are all but the same as murderers who slay with their own hand; and that they should think it consistent with holiness, not to commit their punishment to others, but to execute it themselves. (97) For how can it be anything but a most terrible evil for any one to contrive the death of another by that food which is given as the cause of life, and to work such a change in that which is nutritious by nature as to render it destructive; so that those who, in obedience to the necessities of nature, have recourse to eating and drinking, having no previous idea of any treachery, take destructive food as though it were salutary? (98) Again, let those persons meet with the same punishment who, though they do not compound drugs which are actually deadly, nevertheless administer such as long diseases are caused by; for death is often a lesser evil than diseases; and especially than such as extend over a long time and have no fortunate or favourable end. For the illnesses which arise **from poisons** are difficult to be cured, and are often completely incurable.”

Didache 5:1 - 1. Ἡ δὲ τοῦ θανάτου ὁδὸς ἐστὶν αὕτη· πρῶτον πάντων πονηρὰ ἐστὶ καὶ κατάρας μεστή· φόνοι, μοιχεῖαι, ἐπιθυμίαι, προνεΐαι, κλοπαί, εἰδωλολατρίαι, μαγεῖαι, **φαρμακίαι**, ἀρπαγαί, ψευδομαρτυρίαι, ὑποκρίσεις, διπλοκαρδία, δόλος, ὑπερηφανία, κακία, αὐθάδεια, πλεονεξία, αἰσχρολογία, ζηλοτυπία, θρασύτης, ὕψος, ἀλαζονεῖα.

“5:1 But the way of death is this. First of all, it is evil and full of a curse murders, adulteries, lusts, fornications, thefts, idolatries, magical arts, **witchcrafts**, plunderings, false witnessings, hypocrisies, doubleness of heart, treachery, pride, malice, stubbornness, covetousness, foul-speaking, jealousy, boldness, exaltation, boastfulness.”

Exodus 7:11 - LXX: - συνεκάλεσε δὲ Φαραὼ τοὺς σοφιστὰς Αἰγύπτου καὶ τοὺς φαρμακοὺς, καὶ ἐποίησαν καὶ οἱ ἐπαῖδοι τῶν Αἰγυπτίων **ταῖς φαρμακείαις αὐτῶν** ὡσαύτως

“But Pharaoh called together the wise men of Egypt, and the sorcerers, and the charmers also of the Egyptians did likewise **with their sorceries**.”

Exodus 7:10 - 12 – KJV: - “And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and **Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent**. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner **with their enchantments**. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.”

NOTE: - **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakeia**” has been translated as “sorceries” in the **LXX**; it is the equivalent of “enchantments” in the **KJV**. Pharaoh's magicians threw down their rods in imitation of what Aaron had just done with his rod, and their rods also became serpents. This was called in the case of the magicians, **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakeia**”. It clearly does **NOT** appear that they were making medications in this Biblical incident.

Exodus 7:22 – LXX: - ἐποίησαν δὲ ὡσαύτως καὶ οἱ ἐπαιδοὶ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ταῖς **φαρμακείαις αὐτῶν**· καὶ ἐσκληρόνθη ἡ καρδιά Φαραώ, καὶ οὐκ εἰσήκουσεν αὐτῶν, καθάπερ εἶπε Κύριος.

“And the charmers also of the Egyptians did so **with their sorceries**; and the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not hearken to them, even as the Lord said.”

Exodus 7:19 - 22 - KJV: - “And the LORD spake unto Moses, **Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and that there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt**, both in *vessels of wood*, and in *vessels of stone*. And Moses and Aaron did so, as the LORD commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that *were* in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all the waters that *were* in the river were turned to blood. And the fish that was in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. And the magicians of Egypt did so **with their enchantments**: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them; as the LORD had said.”

NOTE: - **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakeia**” has been translated as “sorceries” in the **LXX**; it is the equivalent of “enchantments” in the **KJV**. Pharaoh's magicians did the same thing as Aaraon did with his rod, to the waters of Egypt, and this was called in the case of the magicians, **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakeia**”. It clearly does **NOT** appear that they were making medications in this Biblical incident.

Exodus 8:7 – LXX: - ἐποίησαν δὲ ὡσαύτως καὶ οἱ ἐπαιδοὶ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ταῖς **φαρμακείαις αὐτῶν** καὶ ἀνήγαγον τοὺς βατράχους ἐπὶ γῆν Αἰγύπτου.

“And the charmers of the Egyptians also did likewise **with their sorceries**, and brought up the frogs on the land of Egypt.”

Exodus 8:5 - 7 – KJV: - “And the LORD spake unto Moses, **Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt**. And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so **with their enchantments**, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt.”

NOTE: - **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakeia**” has been translated as “sorceries” in the **LXX**; it is the equivalent of “enchantments” in the **KJV**. Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs appeared. Pharaoh's magicians did the same thing as Aaron did, and this was called in the case of the magicians, **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakeia**”. It clearly does **NOT** appear that they were making medications in this Biblical incident.

Exodus 8:18 – LXX: - ἐποίησαν δὲ ὡσαύτως καὶ οἱ ἐπαιδοὶ ταῖς **φαρμακείαις αὐτῶν** ἐξαγαγεῖν τὸν σκνῖφα καὶ οὐκ ἠδύναντο. καὶ ἐγένοντο οἱ σκνῖφες ἐν τε τοῖς ἀνθρώποις καὶ ἐν τοῖς τετράποσιν.

“And the charmers also did so **with their sorceries**, to bring forth the louse, and they could not. And the lice were both on the men and on the quadrupeds.”

Exodus 8:16 - 18 – KJV: - “And the LORD said unto Moses, **Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.** And they did so; for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man, and in beast; all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man, and upon beast.”

NOTE: - **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakeia**” has been translated as “sorceries” in the **LXX**; it is the equivalent of “enchantments” in the **KJV**. Aaron stretched out his rod over the dust of Egypt, and lice appeared. Pharaoh’s magicians did the same thing as Aaron did, and this was called in the case of the magicians, **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakeia**”. It clearly does **NOT** appear that they were making medications in this Biblical incident.

Isaiah 47:9 – LXX: - νῦν δὲ ἤξει ἐπὶ σὲ τὰ δύο ταῦτα ἐξαίφνης ἐν ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ· ἀτεκνία καὶ χηρεία ἤξει ἐξαίφνης ἐπὶ σὲ **ἐν τῇ φαρμακείᾳ σου**, ἐν τῇ ἰσχυίῳ τῶν ἐπαιδῶν σου σφόδρα

“But now these two things shall come upon thee suddenly in one day, the loss of children and widowhood shall come suddenly upon thee, **for thy sorcery**, for the strength of thine enchantments.”

Isaiah 47:8 & 9 – KJV: - “Therefore hear now this, *thou that art* given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, *I am*, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: But these two *things* shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude **of thy sorceries**, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments.”

Isaiah 47:12 – LXX: - στηθι νῦν ἐν ταῖς ἐπαιδαῖς σου καὶ **ἐν τῇ πολλῇ φαρμακείᾳ σου**, ἃ ἐμάνθανες ἐκ νεότητός σου, εἰ δυνήσῃ ὠφελῆθῃναι.

“Stand now with thine enchantments, and **with the abundance of thy sorcery**, which thou hast learned from thy youth; if thou canst be profited.”

Isaiah 47:12 & 13 - KJV: - “Stand now with thine enchantments, and **with the multitude of thy sorceries**, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from *these thing* that shall come upon thee.”

NOTE: - In context, the **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakeia**” that is condemned in this passage, is associated with “**astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators**” mentioned in VS. 13. These practices were condemned in the Law of Moses, because of their occult associations – See Deuteronomy 18:9 – 14. It would appear that in this context, **φαρμακεία** – “**pharmakeia**” is **NOT** associated with making medication.

Wisdom of Solomon 12:4 – LXX: - ἐπὶ τῷ ἔχθιστα πράσσειν ἔργα φαρμακειῶν καὶ τελετὰς ἀνοσίου

“Whom thou hatedst for doing most odious **works of witchcrafts**, and wicked sacrifices.”

Wisdom of Solomon 18:13 – LXX: - πάντα γὰρ ἀπιστοῦντες διὰ τὰς φαρμακείας ἐπὶ τῷ τῶν πρωτοτόκων ὀλέθρῳ, ὡμολόγησαν Θεοῦ υἱὸν λαὸν εἶναι.

“For whereas they would not believe any thing **by reason of the enchantments**; upon the destruction of the firstborn, they acknowledged this people to be the sons of God.”


NOTE: - It would appear that in both of these apocryphal references to φαρμακεία – “pharmakeia”, there is nothing to suggest a reference to making medications.

This word appears three times in the New Testament.

Galatians 5:20: - “Idolatry, **witchcraft** [φαρμακεία – “pharmakeia”], hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies.”

Revelation 9:21: - “Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their **sorceries** [φαρμακεία – “pharmakeia”], nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”

Revelation 18:23: - “And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy **sorceries** [φαρμακεία – “pharmakeia”] were all nations deceived.”

 It is clear from examining all these linguistic witnesses, that Strong’s Greek Lexicon’s definition for φαρμακεία – “pharmakeia” is inaccurate. This Greek word is associated with sorcery and witchcraft, rather than making medications, as BAGD clearly establishes.

* I shall now give a thorough Lexical examination of the meaning of the Greek word φαρμακεύς – “pharmakeus” – Strong’s Concordance, Greek Number 5332.

Strong’s Lexicon defines it as “a druggist (“pharmacist”) or poisoner that is (by extension) a magician.”

BAGD, pg. 854: -

φαρμακεύς, ἕως, ὁ (Soph., Trach. 1140; Pla., Symp. 203D γόης καὶ φαρμ.; Philo, Det. Pot. Ins. 38; Jos., Vi. 149f) mixer of poisons, magician Rv 21: 8 t.r. (s. φάρμακος).*

I have been able to locate a couple of the specific extracts from the ancient Greek literature, along with their English translation, that are listed in the above entry. I shall now reproduce these documentary witnesses.

Sophocles, The Trachinian Maidens, 1140: -

Ἵλλος στέργημα ἀπήμιπλαχ’, Ἡρακλῆς καὶ	γὰρ ὥς τίς	δοκοῦσα προσεῖδε τοσοῦτος	προσβαλεῖν τούς φαρμακεύς	σέθεν ἐνδον Τραχινίων;
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Ἵλλος

Νέσσοσ πάλαι Κένταυροσ ἐξέπεισέ viv
τοιῶδε φίλτρῳ τὸν σὸν ἐκμῆναι πόθον.

“HYL. She erred with good intent. The whole is said.

HER. Good, O thou villain, to destroy thy sire!

HYL. When she perceived that marriage in her home,
She erred, supposing to enchain thy love.

HER. Hath Trachis a magician of such might?

HYL. Long since the Centaur Nessus moved her mind
To work this charm for heightening thy desire.

Plato's Symposium, 203 D: - καὶ αὐχμηρὸς καὶ ἀνυπόδητοσ καὶ ἄοικοσ, χαμαιπετῆσ ἀεὶ ὦν καὶ ἄστρωτοσ, ἐπὶ θύραισ καὶ ἐν ὁδοῖσ ὑπαίθριοσ κοιμώμενοσ, τὴν τῆσ μητρὸσ φύσιν ἔχων, ἀεὶ ἐνδεία σύνοικοσ, κατὰ δὲ αὐτὸν πατέρα ἐπίβουλόσ ἐστί τοῖσ καλοῖσ καὶ τοῖσ ἀγαθοῖσ, ἀνδρεῖοσ ὦν καὶ ἴησ καὶ σύντονοσ, θηρευτῆσ δεινόσ, ἀεὶ τινασ πλέκων μηχανάσ, καὶ φρονήσεωσ ἐπιθυμητῆσ καὶ πόριμοσ, φιλοσοφῶν διὰ παντὸσ τοῦ βίου, δεινόσ γόησ καὶ **φαρμακεὺσ** καὶ σοφιστῆσ:

“[203d] rather is he hard and parched, shoeless and homeless; on the bare ground always he lies with no bedding, and takes his rest on doorsteps and waysides in the open air; true to his mother's nature, he ever dwells with want. But he takes after his father in scheming for all that is beautiful and good; for he is brave, strenuous and high-strung, a famous hunter, always weaving some stratagem; desirous and competent of wisdom, throughout life ensuing the truth; a master of jugglery, **witchcraft**, and artful speech.”

This word appears only once in the New Testament.

Revelation 21:8: - “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and **sorcerers** [**φαρμακεὺσ** – “**pharmakeus**”], and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

* I shall now give a thorough Lexical examination of the meaning of the Greek word **φάρμακοσ** – “**pharmakos**” – Strong's Concordance, Greek Number 5333.

Strong's Lexicon defines it simply as “The same as **5332.**”

BAGD, pg. 854: -

φάρμακος, ου, ό (LXX; on the accent and differentiation fr. φαρμακός 'scapegoat' [Hipponax+] see L-S-J under both words, w. ref. to Herodian, Gr. I, 150; s. PKatz, ThLZ 82, '57, 112; BI-D.-Funk §13; φάρ. is masc. Ex 7: 11; fem. Mal.3: 5) poisoner Hn 3, 9, 7a, b; magician (Ex 7: 11; 9: 11 al.; Sib. Or. 3, 225) Rv 21: 8 (s. φαρμακεύς); 22: 15. M-M.*

I have been able to locate some of the specific extracts from LXX Greek text, along with their English translations, that are listed in the above entry. I shall now reproduce some of these documentary witnesses.

Exodus 7:11 – LXX: - συνεκάλεσε δὲ Φαραὼ τοὺς σοφιστὰς Αἰγύπτου καὶ τοὺς φαρμακοὺς, καὶ ἐποίησαν καὶ οἱ ἐπαιδοὶ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ταῖς φαρμακείαις αὐτῶν ὡσαύτως.

“But Pharaoh called together the wise men of Egypt, and **the sorcerers**, and the charmers also of the Egyptians did likewise with their sorceries.”

Exodus 7:11 – KJV: - “Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and **the sorcerers**: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments.”

Exodus 9:11 – LXX: - καὶ οὐκ ἠδύναντο οἱ φαρμακοὶ στήναι ἐναντίον Μωυσῆ διὰ τὰ ἔλκη· ἐγένετο γὰρ τὰ ἔλκη ἐν τοῖς φαρμακοῖς καὶ ἐν πάσῃ γῆ Αἰγύπτῳ.

“And **the sorcerers** could not stand before Moses because of the sores, for the sores were **on the sorcerers**, and in all the land of Egypt.”

Exodus 9:11 – KJV: - “And **the magicians** could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boil was upon **the magicians**, and upon all the Egyptians.”

Exodus 22:18 – LXX: - φαρμακοὺς οὐ περιποιήσετε.

“Ye shall not save the lives **of sorcerers**.”

Exodus 22:18 – KJV: - “Thou shalt not suffer **a witch** to live.”

Deuteronomy 18:10 – LXX: - οὐχ εὐρεθήσεται ἐν σοὶ περικαθαίρων τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἢ τὴν θυγατέρα αὐτοῦ ἐν πυρὶ, μαντευόμενος μαντείαν, κληδονιζόμενος καὶ οἰωνιζόμενος, φαρμακός

“There shall not be found in thee one who purges his son or his daughter with fire, one who uses divination, who deals with omens, and augury, **a sorcerer**.”

Deuteronomy 18:10 – KJV: - “There shall not be found among you *any one* that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, *or* that useth divination, *or* an observer of times, *or* an enchanter, *or* **a witch**.”

Psalms 57:5 – LXX: - ἥτις οὐκ εἰσακούσεται φωνῆς ἐπαδόντων, φαρμάκου τε φαρμακευομένου παρὰ σοφοῦ.

“Which will not hear the voice **of charmers**, nor *heed the charm* prepared skillfully by the wise.”

Psalm 58:5 – KJV: - “Which will not hearken to the voice **of charmers, charming** never so wisely.”

Jeremiah 34:9 – LXX: - καὶ ὑμεῖς μὴ ἀκούετε τῶν ψευδοπροφητῶν ὑμῶν καὶ τῶν μαντευομένων ὑμῖν καὶ τῶν ἐνυπνιαζομένων ὑμῖν καὶ τῶν οἰωνισμάτων ὑμῶν καὶ **τῶν φαρμακῶν ὑμῶν** τῶν λεγόντων· οὐ μὴ ἐργάσησθε τῷ βασιλεῖ Βαβυλῶνος

“And hearken ye not to your false prophets, nor to them that divine to you, nor to them that foretell events by dreams to you, nor to your auguries, nor **your sorcerers**, that say, Ye shall by no means work for the king of Babylon.”

Jeremiah 27:9 – KJV: - “Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor **to your sorcerers**, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon.”

Daniel 2:2 – LXX: - καὶ εἶπεν ὁ βασιλεὺς καλέσαι τοὺς ἐπαιδοὺς καὶ τοὺς μάγους καὶ **τοὺς φαρμακοὺς** καὶ τοὺς Χαλδαίους τοῦ ἀναγγεῖλαι τῷ βασιλεῖ τὰ ἐνύπνια αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἦλθαν καὶ ἔστησαν ἐνώπιον τοῦ βασιλέως

“And the king gave orders to call the enchanters, and the magicians, and **the sorcerers**, and the Chaldeans, to declare to the king his dreams. And they came and stood before the king.”

Daniel 2:2 – KJV: - “Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and **the sorcerers**, and the Chaldeans, for to show the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.”

Nahum 3:4 – LXX: - πόρνη καλὴ καὶ ἐπίχαρις ἡγουμένη **φαρμάκων**, ἡ πωλοῦσα ἔθνη ἐν τῇ πορνείᾳ αὐτῆς καὶ λαοὺς ἐν τοῖς φαρμάκοις αὐτῆς

“Because of the abundance of fornication: *she is* a fair harlot, and well-favoured, **skilled in sorcery**, that sells the nations by her fornication, and peoples by her sorceries.”

Nahum 3:4 – KJV: - “Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, **the mistress of witchcrafts**, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.”


Malachi 3:5 – LXX: - καὶ προσάξω πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐν κρίσει καὶ ἔσομαι μάρτυς ταχὺς **ἐπὶ τὰς φαρμακοὺς** καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς μοιχαλίδας καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ὀμνύοντας τῷ ὀνόματί μου ἐπὶ ψεύδει καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀποστεροῦντας μισθὸν μισθωτοῦ καὶ τοὺς καταδυναστεύοντας χήραν καὶ τοὺς κονδυλίζοντας ὀρφανοὺς καὶ τοὺς ἐκκλίνοντας κρίσιν προσηλύτου καὶ τοὺς μὴ φοβουμένους με, λέγει Κύριος παντοκράτωρ

“And I will draw near to you in judgment; and I will be a sift witness **against the witches**, and against the adulteresses, and against them that swear falsely by my Name, and against them that keep back the hireling’s wages, and them that oppress the widow, and afflict orphans, and that wrest the judgment of the stranger, and fear not me, saith the Lord Almighty.”

Malachi 3:5 – KJV: - “And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against **the sorcerers**, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in *his* wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger *from his right*, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.”

This word appears only once in the New Testament.

Revelation 22:15: - “For without *are* dogs, and **sorcerers** [φάρμακος – “**pharmakos**”], and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”

 I hope that the reader can now see through a thorough examination of the linguistic evidence produced in the last two Sections of this Study Document, the error of those sincere Christians, who hold to the belief of, “*the Bible according to Strong’s.*” That is, they cling to Strong’s Hebrew and Greek lexical definitions as being absolute and infallible. Whereas, the truth is, Strong’s definitions give nothing more than a brief overview, and a rather superficial one at that, of the definition of any word. It gives the A, B, C’s of any word’s meaning. Whereas, to arrive at a correct and thorough understanding of any word’s lexical meaning, one needs to use a more detailed Biblical Lexicon than Strong’s, and examine as much of the evidence as possible.

4.] AN EXAMINATION OF THE SURROUNDING CONTEXT OF THE OCCURRENCES OF φαρμακεία – “PHARMAKIEA”, AND THE OTHER CLOSELY RELATED GREEK WORDS THAT ARE USED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The Greek word **φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea”** [Strong’s Greek Number 5331] appears three times in the New Testament. I have listed each one of its occurrences below, also giving the surrounding context of its usage.

In the following passage from the Apostle Paul’s pen, he lists among the works of the flesh, **“witchcraft”**, which has been translated from the Greek word **φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea”**. The inspired apostle makes it clear, that those people who practise such works, will not inherit the kingdom of God. In other words, they will be eternally lost!

Galatians 5:19 – 21: - **“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, **witchcraft** [φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea”], hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, **that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**”**

NOTE: - It is clear from the context of this passage, that the inspired apostle is describing a list of actions of disobedience against God’s Law.

In the following list of disobedient actions against God’s Law, the inspired apostle John also lists **“sorceries”**, which has been translated from the Greek word **φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea”**.

Revelation 9:20 & 21: - “And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their **sorceries** [φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea”], nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”

The wicked spiritual city of Babylon, is charged with deceiving the nations of the earth, by its **“sorceries”**, which has been translated from the Greek word **φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea”**.

Revelation 18:23 & 24: - “And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy **sorceries** [φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea”] were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.”

The closely related Greek word **φαρμακεύς – “pharmakeus”** [Strong’s Greek Number 5332], appears only once in the New Testament.

In context, **“sorcerers”** which has been translated from this Greek word, is listed with other unrepentant, disobedient people, whose eternal fate will be found in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, which is

the Second Death. These unrepentant sinners are contrasted with the faithful overcomers, who will inherit all things in God's New Heavens and Earth.

Revelation 21:7 & 8: - **“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers [φάρμακεύς – “pharmakeus”], and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”**

Another closely related Greek word **φάρμακος – “pharmakos”** [Strong's Greek Number 5333], appears only once in the New Testament.

In context, **“sorcerers”** which has been translated from this Greek word, is listed with other unrepentant, disobedient people, whose eternal fate is to be found outside the gates of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem. These people are contrasted with the righteous saints, who are Commandment-keepers, and who are found within the Holy City.

Revelation 22:14 & 15: - **“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers [φάρμακος – “pharmakos”], and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”**

☞ It is clear from examining all five of these New Testament passages, that these three closely related Greek words are all associated with either disobedient actions, that is, practises in violation of God's Law; or, with unrepentant and disobedient sinners, who have violated God's Law. They are sins, committed by sinners [in this case, committed by sorcerers], which is a violation of God's Law – *“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.”* – 1st John 3:4.

5.] AN EXAMINATION OF THE OTHER GREEK WORDS THAT ARE USED FOR “SORCERY” OR “SORCERER” IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: -

The Book of Acts has two specific incidents that refer to “sorcery” or a “sorcerer.” In both of these Biblical incidents, those who were practising “sorcery”, were practising the evil arts of the occult.

Acts 8:9 – 11: - “But there was a certain man, called **Simon**, which beforetime in the same city **used sorcery** [μαγεύω – “mageuō”], and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time **he had bewitched them with sorceries** [μαγεία – “mageia”].”

NOTE: - The Greek word that appears in VS. 9, and that has been translated as “used sorcery”, is the Verb μαγεύω – “mageuō” - Strong’s Concordance, Greek Number 3096.

BAGD., p. 484 defines the Verb μαγεύω – “mageuō” as “*practice magic.*”

The Greek word that appears in VS. 11, and that has been translated as “sorceries”, is the Noun μαγεία – “mageia” - Strong’s Concordance, Greek Number 3095.

BAGD., p. 484 defines the Noun μαγεία – “mageia” as “*magic.*”

Acts 13:6 – 11: - “And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, **they found a certain sorcerer** [μάγος - “magos”], a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus: Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. But **Elymas the sorcerer** [μάγος - “magos”] (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, (who also *is called* Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, and said, **O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?** And now, behold, the hand of the Lord *is* upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.”

NOTE: - The Greek word that appears in VS. 6 & 8, and that has been translated as “sorcerer”, is the Noun μάγος - “magos” – Strong’s Concordance, Greek Number 3097.

BAGD., pp. 484 & 485 defines the Noun μάγος - “magos” as “1. a *Magus* ... wise man and priest, who was an expert in astrology, interpretation of dreams and various other secret arts ... 2. *magician.*”

☞ It should be clear to the reader, that these three closely related Greek words, have no association with making medication, and they have no linguistic relationship to φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea” and the other closely related Greek words, that are used in the New Testament.

6.] WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT PHYSICIANS?

The word “physician” appears six times in our King James Bible. Below are all its occurrences in the Scriptures.

Jeremiah 8:22: - ***“Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?”***

Matthew 9:12: - ***“But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.”***

Mark 2:17: - ***“When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”***

Luke 5:31: - ***“And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.”***

Luke 4:23: - ***“And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.”***

Colossians 4:14: - ***“Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.”***

NOTE: - Luke who is called in this verse ***“the beloved physician”***, was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write two of the Books of the New Testament scriptures: - the Gospel of Luke, and the Book of Acts.

The word “physicians” appears five times in our King James Bible. Below are all its occurrences in the Scriptures.


Genesis 50:2: - ***“And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel.”***

2nd Chronicles 16:12: - ***“And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians.”***

Job 13:4: - ***“But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value.”***

Mark 5:26: - ***“And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse.”***

Luke 8:43: - ***“And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any.”***


 It is clear that the Bible does **NOT** contain a blanket or outright condemnation of physicians, or of consulting physicians.

CONCLUSION: -

After having undertaken a thorough linguistic examination of this issue, it has been documented beyond any reasonable doubt, that the belief that was listed on the first page of this Study Document, that is held by some sincere Christians concerning **φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea”**, with modern medicine and pharmaceuticals being labelled as modern sorcery, is **NOT** correct.

To briefly summarize: -

- Our modern English words “pharmacy”, “pharmaceutical” and “pharmacology” and the like, were derived from Greek, then into Latin, and then finally into English, over a period of many hundreds of years. The meanings of words even within one language do change over time. The **φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea”** condemned two thousand years ago in the ancient Greek, does not have the same meaning today in English.
- The root Greek word **φάρμακον – “phármakon”**, from which **φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea”** and the other closely related Greek New Testament words were derived from, has a range of meanings, including Poison; Magic potion, charm; or, Medicine, remedy, drug.
- The **φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea”** that is listed in the Greek **LXX** and New Testament texts, is rarely associated with the making of medications. It is more often than not associated with the occult arts.
- Examining the surrounding context of **φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea”** and the other closely related Greek words that are used in the New Testament, makes it clear that they are associated with actions or practices that are clear violations of God’s Moral Law.
- The other occurrences of “sorcery” or “sorcerers” in the Book of Acts, has no linguistic link to the making of medications, or to **φαρμακεία – “pharmakiea”**.
- The Bible does **NOT** contain a blanket or outright condemnation of physicians. As we have previously found out, Luke is called **“the beloved physician”**, and was not condemned for his profession.

 In conclusion, I would point out though, that the compiler does not have a blind reverence or faith in all physicians, or in all physician’s practises or procedures. He is also well aware that most pharmaceutical medication can have unpleasant, and in some cases, serious, life threatening side-effects, and the least amount of prescribed medication a person takes, the better off they are. The following old saying may be a good place to end this Study Document on –

God heals, but the doctor sends his bill!¹⁵

¹⁵ I should also point out, that the findings of this Study Document are not to be taken as opposing the use of natural therapies in the treatment of disease. For example, the use of herbs, pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power, all have proven medicinal value concerning the treatment of disease. But the judicial use of these natural therapies has **NOT** been the subject of this Study Document’s research. Hence, I have not touched on that issue within my field of research.