

Episode One Hundred Nineteen - Letter to Herodotus 08 - More On Perception Through The Atoms

Post by "Don" of April 30, 2022 at 11:24 PM

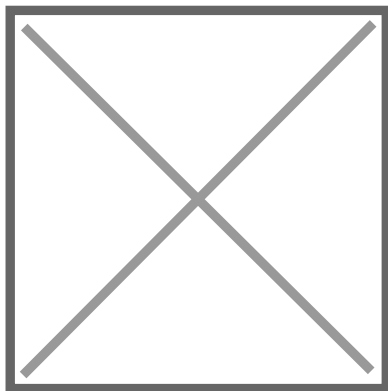
Galatians 4:9



[G4747 - stoicheion - Strong's Greek Lexicon \(kjv\)](#)

G4747 - στοιχεῖον stoicheîon, stoy-khi'-on; neuter of a presumed derivative of the base of ; something orderly in arrangement, i.e. (by implication) a serial...
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The word translated as "elements" is στοιχεῖα. These can be elements as in chemical elements or "dirt" as [Cassius](#) paraphrased. But These are also elements or principles or "steps" as in the letter to Menoikeus. I've posted the link to Strong's concordance for Galatians. Here is the link to the KJV interlinear:



[Galatians 4 :: King James Version \(KJV\)](#)

Galatians 4 - But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again...
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(Click on Tools at 4:9)

Interestingly, στοιχεῖα *is* the exact word Epicurus used in the letter to Menoikeus to talk about the "elements of a blessed life." But they can also be atoms.

Hmm... Am I going down Dewitt's path of seeing Epicurus around every Pauline corner? Not necessarily. BUT per LSJ, one of the definitions of στοιχεῖα *can* be "in Physics, στοιχεῖα were the components into which matter is ultimately divisible, elements, reduced to four by Empedocles, who called them ῥιζώματα, the word στοιχεῖα being first used...ἄτομας. Epicur.Ep.2p.36U.; equivalent to ἀρχαί"

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, στοιχεῖον](#)

So, was Paul referring to returning to believed in the atoms espoused by Epicureanism? Unfortunately, I don't think so. Here's a compilation of biblical commentary:

[Galatians 4:9 Commentaries: But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?](#)

It seems to me that an Occam's razor approach is more likely the στοιχεῖα definition of steps or "one in a series" sense of the word. In which case, it is the sense used in Menoikeus but need not have any connection to Epicurus's "elements of the blessed life." Especially since the same word is used a few verses earlier in Galatians 4:3:

"To the weak and beggarly elements - To the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law, imposing a servitude really not less severe than the customs of paganism. On the word elements, see the note at Galatians 4:3."

[Galatians 4:3 So also, when we were children, we were enslaved under the basic principles of the world.](#)