

Bible Workshop: Readers' comments

Regarding John 8:7 (see [Jan. 2005, p. 8](#)), a reader has pointed out that, when Jesus challenges the accusers of the woman taken in adultery by saying, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her", the phrase "without sin" is the Greek word *anamatētos*. This occurs only here in the New Testament, and it occurs just once in the Septuagint Old Testament, in the following passage:

"And it shall be if one shall hear the words of this curse, and shall flatter himself in his heart, saying, Let good happen to me, for I

will walk in the error of my heart, lest the sinner destroy the guiltless [*anamatētos*] with him: God shall by no means be willing to pardon him, but then the wrath of the Lord and His jealousy shall flame out against that man: and all the curses of this covenant shall attach themselves to him, which are written in this book, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven" (Deut. 29:19,20).

The suggestion is that Jesus wrote out Deuteronomy 29:19 in Greek, saying, 'If any of you be *anamatētos* let him throw the first stone', then wrote out verse 20 with its reference to the curses.

The elders would have been reminded of the terrible curses of Deuteronomy 28 and would have quailed before them.—*T.B.*