Title: The syntactical relationship of *Tout’ Estin Tes Sarkos Autou* and its theological implications in Hebrews 10:19-20

Author: Edwin S. Payet

Date Completed: 2004

Granting Institution: Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIIAS)

Description: Unpublished Thesis (M.A.) ; 78 pages

Abstract:

This study seeks to understand: what are the syntactical and theological relationships between the phrase “that is, of his flesh” and the rest of the subordinate clause (10:20)? Many exegetes hold that *tout’ estin tes sarkos autou*, “that is, of his flesh” is understood in apposition to *dia tou katapetasmatos*, “through the veil.”

It means that Jesus inaugurated a new and living way through the veil, that is (through) the flesh. This view has some theological problems. (1) How can Jesus’ flesh be a veil that hinders Him from God and then inaugurate a new and living way to God’s presence? (2) How could Jesus lose his humanity, and then present Himself with His humanity in God’s presence to intercede for the believers? While some exegetes have tried to explain the theological problems, some others have preferred to look for another possibility of connecting the phrase “that is of His flesh.” Some prefer to connect *tout’ estin tes sarkos autou*, “that is, of his flesh” as descriptive, dependent on *hodos* “way.” Several others favor *tout’ estin tes sarkos autou*, “that is, of his flesh” to explain the preceding sentence as a whole.

A syntactical study of the expression *tout’ estin*, “that is,” in the NT, especially the Epistle to the Hebrews, has revealed that (1) *tout’ estin*, consistently introduces an appositional phrase; (2) it generally connects the appositional phrase to a preceding
noun, adjective, or phrase with the same case; (3) it does not always relate the immediate neighboring substantives. *Tout’ estin tes sarkos autou*, “that is of His flesh” should therefore be in apposition to “veil.”

To answer the two main theological problems: (1) Jesus inaugurated a new and living way through his flesh, in the strictly limited sense of His humanity under His earthly existential limitations of temptations and sufferings and especially sacrificial death. (2) it is precisely these limitations that Jesus parted on the cross. It has been further demonstrated that *tout’ estin tes sarkos autou*, “that is of His flesh” is the means of the new and living way to the presence of God. The clause then means that Jesus inaugurated a new and living way to the immediate presence of God by the suppression of the barrier (veil) between the believers and God.