

The book review of Ordained Women in the Early Church: A Documentary History causes pause. The reviewer, Maureen A. Tilley writes,¹

... the question of women's ordination erupted among Catholics at a popular level especially after 1974, when Episcopalians ordained women, and after 1976, when the Pontifical Biblical Commission concluded that, although there was no biblical evidence for the ordination of women, the historical record did not preclude ordination in the present. ...

This work [Ordained Women] will make the more technical volumes advocating women's ordination more accessible to a popular audience. It makes the blanket assertions of the Congregation for the Defense of the Faith in *Inter Insigniores* (1976) and John Paul II in *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* (1994), that the Catholic Church never ordained women less and less credible, even for a popular audience.

Tilley, the reviewer is from a well-respected Catholic University, Fordham. The publisher, Johns Hopkins University Press, is also well-respected. This is not an academic matter about which to trifle.

These Notes, therefore, pause to consider the roles of women like Sarah in the context of the readings. No women appear in the Lectionary reading.

Material above the double line draws from material below the double line. Those uninterested in scholarly details should stop reading here. If they do, however, they may miss some of the fun stuff scholars are digging up.

Genesis 12:1-4a

Gen 12:1-3

Russell Morton, review of Ulrich Heckel, Der Segen im Neuen Testament: Begriff, Formeln, Gesten²

Heckel notes that, with Saint Paul, Christians explain the blessing of the land to the heir of Abraham to Jesus as that heir. Heckel is examining various nuances of blessings in the New Testament.

¹ Maureen A. Tilley, Fordham University, review of Kevin Madigan and Carolyn Osiek (eds.), Ordained Women in the Early Church: A Documentary History (Baltimore/London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003) Pp. xiii + 220. \$48.

² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 3 (July 2006) 544.

Gen 12:1, 4

Paul Lawrence, The IVP Atlas of Bible History³

The map traces the route of Abraham from Ur at the Persian Gulf to southern Turkey, into Egypt, back into the Holy Land, Canaan. Abraham began his journey at seventy-five years of age. In Egypt, Sarah, the wife of Abraham, aroused the interest of the Pharaoh himself. The role of Sarah is decidedly missing from the Lectionary. Because Abraham was not at her side when she died, scholars wonder how happy their marriage was.

Genesis 12:1

Deirdre Good, review of Halvor Moxnes, Putting Jesus in His Place: A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom⁴

By extending the concept of family outside of blood lines, beyond *your father's house*, in Genesis 1:1, Moxnes explains "... Jesus placed himself outside traditional household structures. Consequently ... he had no recognition or honor in his household or village." Jewish men were expected to marry, have children, and raise a household.

Gen 12:2

Paul Niskanen, "Yhwh as Father, Redeemer, and Potter in Isaiah 63:7—64:11"⁵

Niskanen observes that the Prophet Isaiah echoes Genesis 12:2 to proclaim that the Father abdicates his title and refuses to recognize the unfaithful children of Israel as his own.

Gen 12:3

Scott W. Hahn, "Covenant, Oath, and the Aqedah: Διαθηκη in Galatians 3:15-18"⁶

Hahn observes that Genesis 12:3 is one of the verses from which Galatians 3:16 draws, for "Now the promises were addressed to Abraham *and to his progeny*. The words were not *and to his progenies* in the plural, but in the singular, *and to your progeny*, which means Christ." In other words, Paul is not quoting Scripture directly. While there can be no progeny without women, Paul skips over that aspect of reality. Paul not only changes Sacred Scripture to suit his presentation,

³ Downers Grove, Illinois, *InterVarsity Press*, 2006 24, 25.

⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 1 (January 2006) 157.

⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 3 (July 2006) 400.

⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 1 (January 2005) 92, 96.

he also seems to ignore a certain amount of biological reality when it comes to recognizing the role of women in progeny. For years, apparently, the Church has followed suit, as exemplified in the Lectionary.

Genesis 12:3

David M. Carr, review of Carol M. Kaminsky, From Noah to Israel: Realization of the Primateval Blessing after the Flood⁷

Carr calls Kaminsky to task about whether the blessing is better translated *in* or *by* Abraham. The Lectionary uses *in*. Using the technical language of scholarship, Carr explains, "... persuasive arguments since Rashi that the middle sense makes more sense here—other clans of the earth 'blessing themselves *by* Abraham' (i.e., wishing a blessing on themselves like the exemplary blessing he enjoys)."

Gen 12:3

Kenton L. Sparks, "Gospel as Conquest: Mosaic Typology in Matthew 28:16-20"⁸

When God says to Abraham, "All the communities of the earth shall find blessing in you," God is promising to bless the Gentiles through Abraham. Sparks does not bring in Sarah.

Genesis 12:4

Irene Nowell, O.S.B., review of Tammi J. Schneider, Sarah: Mother of Nations⁹

The major premise of Schneider is that "Sarah is as much chosen by the Deity as is Abraham." Schneider offers a different view of Sarah by paying more careful attention to intervening passages, where Sarah does not appear. Nowell writes that Schneider is making an important contribution by shifting perspective and directing attention to the overall context. I feel that such overall context necessarily involves women and, therefore, I miss the inclusion of women in the Lectionary readings for today. This review is another scholarly link to comments above the double line.

⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 1 (January 2006) 123.

⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 4 (October 2006) 653.

⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 2 (April 2006) 317.

Psalm 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22

Psalm 33

Jeremy Corley, "A Numerical Structure in Sirach 44:1—50:24"¹⁰

Corley observes that not every twenty-two line Psalm follows the alphabetic sequence to be an acrostic Psalm. This means that the human mind reaches out to God in different ways. The inspired writers of the Psalms thought for themselves, without the constraints of an overbearing Magisterium.

2 Timothy

2 Tim 1:8b

I looked at the Greek for what the Lectionary translates as *bear your share of hardship* and found that the Greek uses the imperative mood. This, therefore, is a command. The verb carries the notion *to suffer evils along with someone; to be enduringly adherent*. In explaining the word, William D. Mounce calls attention to this very verse.¹¹

2 Tim 1:10

David J. Downs, "'Early Catholicism' and Apocalypticism in the Pastoral Epistles"¹²

Downs uses the word *epiphanic* to show that Jesus is revealing himself to the Gentiles.

Cf. Matthew 17:5

Matthew 17:1-9

Matt 17:1-8

Paul Lawrence, The IVP Atlas of Bible History¹³

While the Transfiguration traditionally occurred on Mount Tabor, south of the Sea of Galilee, that tradition only began in the Fourth Century. More probably, the Transfiguration occurred on Mount Hermon, north of the Sea of Galilee and about sixty miles from Mount Tabor. Mount Tabor rises about two thousand feet (1,930) above sea level, whereas Mount Hermon rises about nine

¹⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 1 (January 2007) 51.

¹¹ William D. Mounce, Zondervan Greek Reference Series: The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House: A Division of HarperCollins Publishers, 1993) 426.

¹² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 4 (October 2005) 652, 659, 705.

¹³ Downers Grove, Illinois, *InterVarsity Press*, 2006, 144.

thousand feet (9,232). The preference for Mount Hermon, over Mount Tabor, is based on being the closest mountain to Caesarea Philippi, where they last were in the Gospel of Matthew.

Matt 17:5
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults¹⁴

The United States bishops use this verse to observe that

Jesus revealed God as *Father* in a new sense. God is Father in relation to his only Son. The Son is divine, as is the Father. The Father testified to the unique relationship of Jesus to him as his Son at the baptism in the Jordan and at the Transfiguration ... (Matt. 3:17, 17:5)."

The bishops also use the verses in Chapter 5, "I Believe in God" and in Chapter 7, "The Good News: God Has Sent His Son."¹⁵

Matt 17:9-13
Caryn A. Reeder, "Malachi 3:24 and the Eschatological Restoration of the `Family'"¹⁶

The Lectionary uses verse 9 last in the Transfiguration Gospel. In verse 9, Jesus tells his disciples to tell no one until he has risen from the dead. Jesus is developing a concept of family much broader than blood line.

For more on sources see the Appendix file. Personal Notes are on the web site at www.western-civilization.com/CBQ/Personal%20Notes.

After-action Report

In Readings 064A for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, January 20, 2008, there are two references to *Benedict*, meaning Pope Benedict XVI. Within the context of questioning the Teaching Magisterium of the Church, such

¹⁴ Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006 62.

¹⁵ Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006, 85.

¹⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 4 (October 2007) 705.

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familiarity might seem overly familiar and disrespectful. Any such disrespect was unintentional.

The Personal Notes for January 20 are designed to foster courage in the face of the unknown. Questioning papal authority from inside the Church does require courage. Such courage is the segue for calling attention to the role of the Pope at The Catholic University of America. The Notes observe that the Pope might give a reason for the Faith that is in him "... by demonstrating the courage required either to meet the generally established standards for the treatment of professors incurring administrative disapproval or challenging the standards as inadequate." This observation is intended to be helpful.