

The readings for this Sunday are about learning. This applies to both the Church in general and the Faithful in particular. Samuel begins by learning whom God wants to lead the Israelites. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalmist learns that God is the Good Shepherd, ignoring the fact that, ultimately, the shepherd kills his sheep. Ephesians admonishes the Faithful to keep on trying to learn what God wants. Finally, the Gospel is about the blind man learning to grow in Faith. As the readings show, God slowly reveals himself so that the Faithful learn what he wants of them. Many times, therefore, the Faithful become frustrated when the Church seems to refuse to learn from modern art and science. The Faithful can have difficulty when the Church assumes that everything worth knowing, it already knows.

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

Since the main purpose of these Notes is annotating the scriptural references in the index at [www.western-civilization.com](http://www.western-civilization.com), references pertinent, but not fitting the flow imposed above, are included. Personal Notes does not assume that the reader is following the readings cited either in the Lectionary or in the Bible. For that reason, snippets of Sacred Scripture are furnished. Like the footnotes, the Lectionary citations are for reference purposes for anyone interested. The large, bold letters facilitate locating exactly what the Lectionary presents for these Notes.

## **1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a**

1 Sam 16:13

Bill T. Arnol, "Necromancy and Cleromancy in 1 and 2 Samuel"<sup>1</sup>

Arnol uses 1 Samuel 16:13 for his argument that the literary genre of ancestor worship is found in ancient Israel. 1 Samuel contrasts David with Saul, meaning that understanding the Scripture requires the two should not be theoretically separated.

1 Sam 16—18

Ehud Ben Zvi, review of Raymond F. Person, Jr., The Deuteronomistic School: History, Social Setting, and Literature<sup>2</sup>

Person argues that 1 Samuel 16—18 reveals a difference in interpretation between the pre- and post-Zerubbabel periods.

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<sup>1</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 2 (April 2004) 208.

<sup>2</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 3 (July 2004) 456-458.

About 70 years after the destruction of the Temple of Solomon and the Jewish Exile into Babylon, the Jews built an entirely new Temple on Mount Moriah. A decree by the Persian King helped this new building, which Zerubbabel dedicated March 15, 515, B.C. Jews old enough to remember the Temple of Solomon felt the new Temple a poor imitation. The Prophet Haggai, however, predicted an even greater glory for the new Temple. The high priesthood of the new Temple lasted 350 years, in the family of Zadok.<sup>3</sup>

The scholar, Person, cites a bevy of Scripture verses to demonstrate his thesis that substantially different theological Deuteronomistic worldviews held sway. Before Zerubbabel, the Jews relied more on human activity, than they did later. After Zerubbabel, the Jews relied less on such institutions as the Temple and relied more on divine initiative. From history, the Jews learned how to trust their God.

1 Sam 16: 13

David A. Bosworth, "Evaluating King David: Old Problems and Recent Scholarship"<sup>4</sup>

Bosworth uses 1 Samuel 16:13 to help argue that David and Saul had much in common. In this instance, Samuel anointed both. Also, see 1 Samuel 10:1.

1 Sam 16:10-11

Jeremy Corley, "A Numerical Structure in Sirach 44:1—50:24"<sup>5</sup>

Corley presents some interesting numerology, writing, "David is the eighth of Jesse's eight sons, just as Sir 45:25 mentions David in connection with the eighth of eight covenants in 44:17—45:26." This article holds little interest outside of numerology.

## **Psalm 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6**

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.bible-history.com/jewishtemple/JEWISH\\_TEMPLEZerubbabels\\_Temple.htm](http://www.bible-history.com/jewishtemple/JEWISH_TEMPLEZerubbabels_Temple.htm) 080210.

<sup>4</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 2 (April 2006) 196.

<sup>5</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 1 (January 2007) 61.

Funerals uses Psalm 23 in four places,<sup>6</sup> Care for the Sick in an additional three.<sup>7</sup>

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Catechism for Adults<sup>8</sup>

The Bishops write, "The sick and the dying of every age have been consoled by the verses of the Shepherd Psalm (Ps 23)." The Bishops meditate on this, without regard for the fact that, ultimately, the shepherd kills the sheep.

Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy<sup>9</sup>

Barker mentions the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm on two pages. She is interested in God preparing a great table (23:5), which she compares to the table in the Temple. Barker is more interested in revealing the Temple roots of Christian liturgy and revealing how the Christian liturgy is designed as the main focus for catechizing the Faithful.

## **Ephesians 5:8-14**

Ephesians 8:14

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<sup>6</sup> N.a., International Commission on English in the Liturgy: A Joint Commission of Catholic Bishops' Conferences, The Roman Ritual: Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and published by Authority of Pope Paul IV: Order of Christian Funerals: Including Appendix 2: Cremation: Approved for use in the Dioceses of the United States of America by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and Confirmed by the Apostolic See (New Jersey: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1998) 143, 223, 253, 267.

<sup>7</sup> The Roman Ritual: Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and Published by Authority of Pope Paul VI: Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum: Approved for use in the dioceses of the United States of America by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and Confirmed by the Apostolic See: Prepared by International Commission on English in the Liturgy: a Joint Commission of Catholic Bishops' Conferences (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co. 1983) 171, 188, 323.

<sup>8</sup> Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006, 258-259.

<sup>9</sup> London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003, 90, 243, 248.

The Lectionary reads, ... *it says* ... the Latin marginalia to the Greek asks “where?”<sup>10</sup>

Ephesians 5:10

The Greek for *try to learn* in Ephesians 5:10 connotes to test, assay metals, to prove, try, examine, scrutinize, to put to the proof, tempt, to approve after trial, judge worthy, choose, to decide upon after examination, judge of, distinguish, discern. In other words, *to think*. Ephesians is directing the Faithful to *try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord*. Ephesians is not mentioning the Magisterium, as helpful as the Magisterium can be.

Ephesians 5:8, 14

Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy<sup>11</sup>

Barker uses Ephesians 5:14 to refer to Christians as “the children of light,” so called because they are resurrected. Barker goes on, “This is temple imagery, because the holy of holies was the place of eternal life, and those who passed into it were transformed into the life of eternity. They were also ‘called out of darkness into his marvelous light’ (1 Pet. 2:9) ...”

## John 8:12

## John 9:1-41

John 9:1-12

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<sup>10</sup> Nestle-Aland: Greek-English New Testament: Greek text Novum Testamentum Graece, in the tradition of Eberhard Nestle and Erwin Nestle edited by Barbara and Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger. English text 2nd Edition of the Revised Standard Version The Critical Apparatuses prepared and edited together with the Institute for New Testament Textual Research, Munster/Westphalia by Barbara and Kurt Aland (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 1998) Editio XXVII. 511 and Nestle-Aland: Greek-English New Testament: Greek text Novum Testamentum Graece, in the tradition of Eberhard Nestle and Erwin Nestle edited by Barbara and Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger. English text 2nd Edition of the Revised Standard Version The Critical Apparatuses prepared and edited together with the Institute for New Testament Textual Research, Munster/Westphalia by Barbara and Kurt Aland (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 1998) Editio XXVII. 511.

<sup>11</sup> London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003, 186.

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Dennis M. Sweetland, review of Wai-yee Ng, Water Symbolism in John: An Eschatological Interpretation<sup>12</sup>

The reviewer, Sweetland, concludes, “Those who are less convinced by her methodology, given the elusiveness of symbolism and her claims of implicit allusions, will likely find it [the book] less helpful.”

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<sup>12</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 1 (January 2003) 133-134.

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John 9:4

Jerome H. Neyrey, S.J., "I Am the Door' (John 10:7, 9): Jesus the Broker in the Fourth Gospel"<sup>13</sup>

"We have *to do the works* of the one *who sent me*," means that Jesus acts as a broker between God the Father and humanity.

John 9:7

Susan E. Hylan, review of Luc Devillers, La saga de Siloé: Jésus et la fête des Tentés (Jean 7,1-10,21)<sup>14</sup>

Verse 7 states that *Siloam* means *sent*. Hylan, the reviewer, uses this verse to indicate that the way Devillers looks for analogies to the festival of Booths in John is unrelated to this, the main thesis of Devillers, even though Devillers maintains it is. The festival of Booths is a harvest holiday, similar to Thanksgiving. The Festival of Booths begins on the fifth day of Yom Kippur, in September-October each year. See Leviticus 23:34, 42.<sup>15</sup>

John 9:22

Douglas R. A. Hare, "How Jewish Is the Gospel of Matthew?"<sup>16</sup>

Hare uses John 9:22, *expelled from the synagogue* to set up a straw man, namely, that Christians were later expelled from the synagogue. The problem is that Hare, the reviewer, has found no evidence for such an expulsion.

John 9:33-36

Kelli S. O'Brien, "Written That You May Believe: John 20 and Narrative Rhetoric"<sup>17</sup>

This is about learning Faith. O'Brien writes, "when Jesus asks him [the man born blind] if he believes in the Son of Man, he [the man born blind] must inquire further, 'Who is he, sir?'" Jesus is setting up the man born blind to grow in his Faith.

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<sup>13</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 2 (July 2007) 281.

<sup>14</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 4 (July 2006) 759.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.religionfacts.com/judaism/holidays/sukkot.htm> 080210.

<sup>16</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 62, No. 2 (April 2000) 267.

<sup>17</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 2 (April 2005) 291.

John 9:35-38

Debbie Hunn, "Who Are 'They' in John 8:33?"<sup>18</sup>

Hunn argues that Jesus does not immediately test the faith of the man born blind. Sometimes Jesus accepts the Faithful, as they are, not requiring that they grow in their Faith.

John 9:37

Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., "The Gospel of John as Scripture,"<sup>19</sup>

Moloney uses John 9:37, *the one speaking with you is he*, to argue that the Gospel of John regards itself as Holy Scripture. Moloney also uses John 9:1—10:21 to argue that this Gospel presents Faith as a living journey, constantly learning as it grows.

For more on sources see the Appendix file.

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### After-action Report

This is a general comment to associate with Reading 22A, February 10, 2008. While the material above the double line is personal to me, the material above the double line does draw from the citations below the double line. That statement may be too weak. *Is based upon* may be more accurate language. Were I simply drawing from my limited personal devotion, I would soon run out of ideas and my prayer-life would grind to a halt. What happens from week to week is that, generally, I have saved pertinent scholarly articles from the Catholic Biblical Quarterly to engage God in prayer. What appears, after personal prayer, above the double line, is a reflection of that original prayer. I intend to repeat this paragraph for the next three Sundays, before adding it to the red cover sheet where I write about dreaming to do this.

Personal Notes for Reading 22A, from the Catechism, about meditating on Sacred Scripture, is not technical, and may have been better above the double line. In the future, I intend to be more careful.

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<sup>18</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 3 (July 2004) 391, 392, 394.

<sup>19</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 3 (July 2005) 465.