

In 1954, the scholarly world began associating the theology of the New Testament with the historical context in which it was written. Saint Paul wrote his letters before the Evangelists wrote the four Gospels. Scholars estimate that he wrote his canonical (Bible) letter to the Ephesians from Rome, about 62 AD.¹ The Gospel according to John, used this Sunday, was probably the last written book of the New Testament, about 96 AD. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia,² the Prologue was written as late as 200 AD.

What this means theologically is that John knew of the experience of Paul at Ephesus, which was the most important Greco-Roman city of Asia at that time. John wrote the Gospel for this Easter Sunday to parallel the experience of Paul in Ephesus. The life of Jesus only makes sense through the sure reality of the Resurrection, celebrated this Sunday.

The relationship between the Gospel this Easter Sunday and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is striking. John wrote his Gospel to mean that what Paul experienced in Ephesus, the Faithful experience at Mass. The Gospel of John means that each Mass was an unbloody reproduction in Ephesus, then, and throughout the Orthodox and Catholic world, now, of what happened to Jesus in Jerusalem. Easter, therefore, is not only a celebration of the Resurrection, but also of the Divine Eucharistic Presence at Mass.

=====

Annotated Bibliography

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 interesting details scholars and others are presenting.

Scriptural references to the Lectionary follow. Since the main purpose of these Notes is annotating the scriptural references in the index at www.western-civilization.com, references pertinent, but not fitting the flow imposed above, are included below. I do not assume that the reader is following the readings cited either in the Lectionary or in the Bible. Like the footnotes, the citations are for reference purposes for anyone interested. The large, bold letters facilitate locating exactly what the Lectionary presents for these Notes. After one more inclusion, I intend to move this paragraph to the Appendix.

¹ http://www.experiencefestival.com/a/Epistle_to_the_Ephesians_-_Place_date_and_purpose_of_the_writing_of_the_letter/id/1366132 080304.

² <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08438a.htm> 080304.

First Reading: Acts 10:34a, 37-43

Acts 10:38

Richard J. Dillon, review of Scott Shauf, Theology as History, History as Theology: Paul in Ephesus in Acts 19³

The comments above the double line primarily depend on this article. I found the review difficult to understand, because Dillon, in a convoluted way, seems to think that Shauf is only repeating what Hans Conzelmann wrote in German in 1954. Conzelmann was a student of Rudolf Bultmann. Both Conzelmann and Bultmann are important scholars in Twentieth Century Bible Study.

Acts 10:39

The Lectionary has it that *They put him to death by hanging him on a tree*. Since that sounds like something done by the Ku Klux Klan. I checked the Greek. In this instance, the Greek word means a post, cross, gibbet. In Luke 23:31, it does mean *tree*, but not here, in Acts 10:39. On Palm Sunday, the Lectionary translates the same Greek word in Luke 23:31 as *wood, if these things [unheard of disasters] are done when the wood is green*. Again, the point is not to become overly self-righteous over what we know.

Acts 10:40

In the standard eclectic Greek version I consult, *raised on the third day* does not appear in all of the early manuscripts.⁴ Even that eclectic Greek version changes from edition to edition, without explanation.⁵ While I do not know what to make of these facts, nonetheless, these facts make me want to be more humble and less self-righteous.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 118, 1-2, 16-17, 22-23 (24)

³ Theological Studies, Vol. 68, No. 3 (September 2007) 685.

⁴ Nestle-Aland, : Novum Testamentum: Graece et Latine: Textum Graecum post Eberhard et Erwin Nestle communiter ediderunt Barbara et Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger: Textus Latinus Novae Vulgatae Bibliorum Sacrorum Editioni debetur: Utriusque textus apparatus criticum recensuerunt et editionem novis curis elaboraverunt Barbara et Kurt Aland una cum Instituto Studiorum Textus Novi Testamenti Monasterii Westphaliae (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 1999) Editio XXVII. 352.

⁵ David Holly, Comparative Studies in Recent Greek New Testament Texts: Nestle-Aland's 25th and 26th Editions (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1983) 29.

Psalm 118:22

Charles L. Quarles, "The Use of the *Gospel of Thomas* in the Research on the Historical Jesus of John Dominic Crossan"⁶

This article is examining what Crossan and his associates are willing to attribute directly to the historical Jesus. I regard the exercise as a waste of energy. The problem here is with the parable of the owner of the vineyard and the reference to the building stone, which the builders rejected. Crossan wants to know whether Jesus himself or a later redactor made that building-stone reference. Quarles does not see why not attribute the saying directly to Jesus.

Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-4 (alternate A)

Alleluia: cf. 1 Corinthians 5:7b-8a

Margaret Barker, The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy⁷

Barker writes,

Even though Paul knew Christ as the paschal lamb (1 Cor. 5:7 [here]), he had also been taught that his death was 'for our sins in accordance with the scriptures' (1 Cor. 15:3). This indicates that the earliest interpretation of the death of Jesus was based on the fourth Servant Song which in the form known at Qumran, depicts a suffering Messiah figure who bears the sins of others ..."

This is something to celebrate at Easter.

⁸Barker is also exercised over the institution of the Eucharist.

The Eucharist has frequently been linked to the Passover, because the Last Supper is linked to that festival, John set the crucifixion at the time of the Passover sacrifices, and Paul wrote to the Corinthian church that 'Christ our Passover has been sacrificed' (1 Cor 5:7). But there are immediate and obvious problems trying to link the Eucharist with Passover as we recognize it: *the Passover was the only sacrifice not offered by a priest* (... Exod. 12:6), and the essential element was that the offering was whole (Exod. 12:46), whereas the descriptions of the Last Supper in their various forms emphasize that the bread was

⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 3 (July 2007) 528, 531, 532.

⁷ London: T & T Clark International: *A Continuum imprint*, 2003 57, 75-76.

⁸ a

broken. Further, the cup at the Last Supper is linked to the covenant (except the Western text of Luke), and the Letter to the Hebrews links the death of Jesus to the covenant renewed on the day of Atonement (Heb. 9:11-15). ... The early liturgies do not use the Passover/Exodus imagery of being the chosen people and being liberated from slavery.

As with so much of Barker, I do not know what to make of what she is writing.

Gospel: John 20:1-9

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

Technical Vocabulary, as presented last week, seems inappropriate for these Personal Notes. I no longer intend, therefore, to repeat or update that list.