

Personal Notes

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, 79A, February 20, 2011

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Readings

First Reading:	Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 103:1-2, 3-4, 8, 10, 12-13 (8a)
Second Reading:	1 Corinthians 3:16-23
Alleluia:	John 2:5
Gospel:	Matthew 5:38-48

Commentary

These readings help understand suffering. Understanding begins after one realizes that God became human, suffered, died, and rose from the dead. That understanding sends a message that when bad things happen to the Faithful, God grieves with the Faithful but does not cause the evil. In dealing with the problem of suffering and death during the Yuletide, Raymond Arroyo is finally doing something right. On Thursday, December 16, he had Jeni Stepanek, Ph.D., on his program again.¹

Jeni and her children suffer from a rare form of multiple sclerosis whereby body tissues slowly and painfully waste away from lack of oxygen. The family demonstrates that the way to cope is to be more concerned with the plight of others, than one's own situation. The attitude toward God, that God is grieving with those who suffer but is not causing the suffering, gives peace in the midst of woe.

In an unauthenticated apparition at Holy Love Ministries in Elyria, Ohio, December 14, Saint Thomas Aquinas explained that temporal sequence does not apply in the afterlife. The point is not whether Saint Thomas appeared, but whether the commentary has insight. I think what is attributed to Saint Thomas does offer useful insight.

You have been asking in your heart how it is the Blessed Mother could be sad in Heaven over the sins in the world. Remember, there is no element of time in Heaven. Therefore, emotions are not confined or dictated by a timeframe.

Take, for instance, this little flower. [He is now holding a small, little flower.] When you see it, you appreciate its beauty; yet in your heart you realize it is not long until it will wither and die. So, in the same moment, you enjoy the flower but realize its beauty is brief, and so you have a little sadness in your heart, too. That is as closely as I can relate to you how Our Blessed Mother can feel the joys of Heaven and still weep for the sins of mankind all at once.

¹ Raymond Arroyo, on ETWN, "The World Over," Thursday, December 16, 2010. I do not own the technology required to record this program, and accept the risk associated therewith.

You cannot fully realize what it is like to exist outside of time in this life.²

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Annotated Bibliography

Material above the double line draws from material below the double line. Those uninterested in scholarly and tangential details should stop reading here. If they do, however, they may miss some interesting details.

Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18

Lev 17—29

C. Clifton Black, review of George Keerankeri, S.J., The Love Commandment in Mark: An Exegetico-Theological Study of Mk 12, 28-34³

Black makes some interesting observations: "... by its expression in caring deeds for the neighbor—understood not only as the resident alien but even as the enemy—Lev 19:18 is 'a crowning conclusion' (p. 46) to the Holiness Code (Leviticus 17—26)." I have been under the impression that love of enemies was particularly Christian rather than something already in the First Testament.

Leviticus 17-26

Richard J. Sklba, "'Until the Spirit from on High is Poured out on Us' (Isa 32:15): Reflections on the Role of the Spirit in the Exile"⁴

Sklba explains the meaning of Leviticus.

With the destruction of the temple and the cessation of sacrificial ritual, exiled priests and Levites experienced a certain degree of nostalgia. Memories were selectively preserved and the beauty of temple worship became bigger than life at times. As a guide for the cultic and ethical life of the restoration, the Holiness Code (Leviticus 17—26) was assembled, and a final section was added to the Book of Ezekiel (chaps. 40—48).

² Email from Holy Love Ministries messages=holylove.org@mail264.us2.mcsv.net, December 14, 2010. Subject: Holy Love Messages: December 14, 2010.

³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 4 (October 2005) 716.

⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 46, No. 1 (January 1984) 15.

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Leviticus 19:1

Edwin C. Hostetter, review of Ephraim Radner, Leviticus⁵

This is an evangelical Anglican view of Leviticus. In a parenthetical expression, Hostetter notes,

(In contrast [to Radner] The Pontifical Biblical Commission's The Jewish People and their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible (Vatican City: Liberia Editrice Vaticana, 2002) offers this perspective: "The Old Testament in itself has great value as the Word of God. To read the Old Testament as Christians then does not mean wishing to find everywhere direct reference to Jesus and to Christian realities" (IIA6)).

Lev 19:2

Dino Dozzi, "'Thus Says the Lord' The Gospel in the Writings of Saint Francis"⁶

Dozzi concludes with this description of how Francis read the Gospel.

And it is with tongs that the seraph of Isaiah 6 takes the flowing coal from the divine brazier to purify the prophet's lips and heart, thus enabling him to hear the voice, see the presence and make known the will of the thrice-holy God. God wishes to create a holy people: "Be holy, for I am holy" (Lev 19:2 [used here]). It is the meaning of the covenant offered by God to Israel: "I will take you as my own people, and you shall have me as your God" (Ex 6:7). The use of the two personal adjectives "my" and "your" is significant and powerful. The radical difference between God and humans is overcome by the offer and possibility of mutual belonging. Holiness no longer describes only the divine world, but also the world of human beings who accept the divine.

Lev 19:11-18

Luke Timothy Johnson, "The Mirror of Remembrance (James 1:22-25)"⁷

In section "III. Models for Imitation," Johnson argues,

In another place [a 1982 article in the Journal of Biblical Literature] I tried to show how seriously James reads torah and uses it to shape his moral exhortation. His close reading of Lev 19:11-18 [17-18 are used here] enables him to use that

⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 2 (April 2009) 390.

⁶ Greyfriars Review, Vol. 18, Supplement (2004) 115. Also cf. below at Mathew 5:39.

⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 50, No. 4 (October 1988) 641-642.

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segment of the law as a guide to explicating “love your neighbor as yourself” (2:8) in order truly to do it “according to the Scripture.” By proposing “the perfect law of freedom” (1:25) as a mirror, I suggest, James also prepares his readers to find in it models of moral behavior for imitation. He displays four such models: Abraham and Rahab, Job, and Elijah. Each shows how faith is “perfected” (or “finished”) by appropriate action.

Lev 19:15-18

Louise Joy Lawrence, "'For truly, I tell you, they have received their reward' (Matt 6:2): Investigating Honor Precedence and Honor Virtue"⁸

The reason for the lengthy quote is that, for me, this significantly develops my previous understanding. Fifty years ago, Catholic scholars focused more than they do now on *differences* between Judaism and Catholicism. Scholars today are more focused than before on *similarities* between the two. Lawrence explains,

Other affiliative and altruistic concerns that stand in direct contrast to a self-seeking, competitive attitude include loving one's neighbor and the practice of justice (Lev 19:15-18). To say, therefore, that this passage represents a Christian law of love in opposition to all other known ways of gaining honor is to ignore the Jewish “ecology” of the sermon. Rejection of violent retribution is firmly attested in the scriptural tradition (Lev 169:18; Prov 24:29; Deut 32:35), and Jesus proclaims, accordingly, that the true intention of the Torah is to eliminate violence and to establish justice within all social relationships.

...

G. Stemberger has illustrated how the principle of moral intention is central in prophetic literature (Isa 29:13) and in Mosaic legislation (Exod 20:17; Deut 5:21; Lev 19:17) and how a legitimate conjunction of moral and ritual elements is promoted thereby. In light of this it would be totally hypocritical for anyone in the Jewish tradition to espouse values for self-glorification rather than for the glory of God. This is confirmed intratextually by the rejection in Matthew 23 of the self-glorification exhibited by the religious leaders. This discourse presents the social reversal of the greatest to the servant and the exalted to the humble (23:11-12). The Pharisees display their worldly status and hunger for honor precedence; and they are reproached accordingly by Jesus.

Lev 19:17, 18b

Denise Dombkowski Hopkins, review of Patrick D. Miller, The Ten Commandments⁹

⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 4 (October 2002) 698-699, 701-702.

⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 72, No. 4 (October 2010) 806.

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Hopkins reports,

Leviticus 19:17, “You shall not hate in your heart your brother/sister,” internalizes the commandment against killing by targeting emotions (cf. Matt 5:21-26). M. reminds us that ‘protection of life involves the heart as well as the hand’ (p. 263); the cultivation of love of neighbor (Lev 19:18b) shows what the commandment requires as well as forbids.

In contrast, the comparable Lectionary translation of Leviticus 19:17 is “You shall not bear hatred for your brother or sister in your heart.” The difference is in the word *bear*. Hopkins has simply, *hate*, whereas the Lectionary has *bear* hatred. The difference is between the verb *bear* and the verb *hate*. The Lectionary seems to condemn bearing hatred, rather than hatred itself.

Lev 19:18

Jacqueline E. Lapsley, “Feeling Our Way: Love for God in Deuteronomy”¹⁰

Lapsley argues as follows.

Actions have moral weight, but emotions do not. In an extreme example, the word “love” has been removed from Abraham Malamut’s translation of Lev 19:18 (...): “Be useful to your neighbor as to yourself.” Malamut cites approvingly Yehezkel Kaufmann’s interpretation: “What is meant by this is not mere state of mind, but its actualization in deeds of generosity and kindness.”

Lev 19:18

Terence L. Donaldson, “The Law That Hangs (Matthew 22:40): Rabbinic Formulation and Matthean Social World”¹¹

Donaldson argues,

In several places, for example, a tradition is recorded in which R. Aqiba and R. Ben Azzai differ on the question of whether Lev 19:18 (cf. Matt 22:39) or Gen 5:1 is the greater ... in the Torah (*Sipra* on Lev 19:18; *Gen. Rab.* 24.7). Elsewhere, a contemporary of R. Aqiba, R. Eleazar from Modiim, finds in Exod 15:26 a ... “in which the whole Torah is contained” (*Mek.* on Exod 15:26). Similar opinions can be expressed without resorting to this quasi-technical terminology; R. Hillel does

¹⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 3 (July 2003) 366-367, 369.

¹¹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 57, No. 4 (October 1995) 691, 692.

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so in his famous dictum “Whatever is unpleasant to you, do not do to your neighbor. This is the whole Torah; the rest is its interpretation” (b. *Sabb.* 31a).

Lev 19:18

Bernard O. Ukwuegbu, "Paraenesis, Identity-defining Norms, or Both? Galatians 5:13—6:10 in the Light of Social Identity Theory"¹²

Ukwuegbu explains,

Nevertheless, although Paul reads the passage as a summary of the entire law in line with other Jewish traditions, his usage runs directly contrary to Jewish expectations. The spin that Paul puts on the emphasis in Lev 19:18 shatters the rigid boundaries of Judaism that were created by the ritual of circumcision and behind which Jews retreated to form their identity as the unique, special, chosen people of God. Although the majority of Paul’s Jewish contemporaries would agree with him that the law could be said to be fulfilled in love, it would have sounded strange to them to claim that loving behavior replaces the need to obey the law.

Lev 19:18

Mark E. Taylor and George H. Guthrie, "The Structure of James"¹³

Taylor and Guthrie argue,

Nevertheless, close analysis reveals that a balanced and symmetrical strategy seems to be at work in the [James] letter. First, thematic essays on rich and poor appear just before the opening and just after the closing of the *inclusio* in 2:12-13/4:11-12. James 2:1-11 addresses the topic of favoritism to the rich, a violation of the royal law (2:8; cf. Lev 19:18), and in 4:13—5:6 the author condemns arrogant presumption and oppression on behalf of the rich.

Lev 19:18

Jeremy Corley, "The Pauline Authorship of 1 Corinthians 13"¹⁴

Corley argues,

¹² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 3 (July 2008) 547.

¹³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 4 (October 2006) 692.

¹⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 2 (April 2004) 258, cf. p. 266, 273.

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[1 Corinthians] 13:13: *meizon de touton he agape* (“but the greatest of these is love”): in its comparative sense, the exact phrase *meizon touton* (“greater than these”) occurs in Mark 12:31, where Jesus says of the two great commandments on life (Deut 6:4-5 and Lev 19:18 [used here]), “No other command is greater than these.” If Mark 12:31 belongs to the early tradition of Jesus’ teaching on love (abbreviated in Matthew and Luke), then Paul’s phrase *meizon touton* may be an echo of the dominical tradition. However, with rhetorical skill Paul plays on the meaning of the Greek phrase, taking it in its superlative sense (“the greatest of these”).

Dominical means given by or closely associated with Jesus Christ as Lord.¹⁵

Psalm 103:1-2, 3-4, 8, 10, 12-13 (8a)

Psalm 103

Jeremy Corley, “A Numerical Structure in Sirach 44:1—50:24”¹⁶

Corley notes, “It is less widely recognized that the same tally of lines often appears when there is no alphabetic pattern. Several poems of twenty-two lines exist, including Lamentations 5; Psalms 33; 38; and 103 [used here] ...”

Psalm 103

Gerhard Langer, review of Christoph Dohmen, Exodus 19—40¹⁷

Langer reports,

In his treatment of Exodus 32—34, D. shows how the text’s presentation of the mercy of God and of the meaning of Moses as mediator influenced Psalm 103, the thirteen middot in Judaism, Islamic and Christian mysticism, and the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas.

The commentary is highly recommended for both scholars and students.

Psalm 103:8-9

Sue Gillingham, “From Liturgy to Prophecy: The Use of Psalmody in Second Temple Judaism”¹⁸

¹⁵ <http://unabridged.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/unabridged?va=dominical&x=0&y=0> (accessed December 15, 2301).

¹⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 1 (January 2007) 51.

¹⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 3 (July 2006) 509.

¹⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 3 (July 2002) 471.

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Gillingham argues, "Imitations of cultic forms are found in ... Mic 7:18/Ps 130:8-9 (God does not keep his anger for ever and delights in steadfast love)." One part of Sacred Scripture reflects another part of Sacred Scripture, ultimately to be reflected in the lives of the Faithful.

Psalm 103:13

John W. Miller, "Depatriarchalizing God in Biblical Interpretation: A Critique"¹⁹

Miller argues,

But if it is misleading to suggest that biblical authors ever thought of God as above or beyond gender, are there not certain texts that "temper" the dominance of the masculine-patriarchal image of God, thereby suggesting that he could, on occasion at least, be thought of as female or mother?

As noted, two types of evidence have been put forward in defense of this thesis: (1) texts which purportedly ascribe feminine characteristics or emotions to God; (2) terms characterizing God whose root meanings are feminine. In this latter category are two terms in particular: the Hebrew adjective *raham* (meaning "compassionate"), which [Phyllis] Trible points out is based on the Hebrew root *rehem* (meaning "womb"), and *sadday*, which Trible, following F. M. Cross, believes originally meant "breasts." "Used only of deity," Trible writes, "*raham* is not language for a father who creates by begetting but for a mother who creates by nourishing in the womb." Bearing this in mind, Trible translates the verb *raham* as "mother compassion" in Jer 31:20, where God is quoted as saying of Ephraim: "For as often as I speak of him, I do remember him still. Therefore my inner parts yearn for him; I will surely have mother compassion on him. ..."

Were this translation correct, why would it be inappropriate for Yahweh as father to say that he yearns for his children with motherly compassion? Cannot fathers also experience "motherly compassion"? As a matter of fact, *raham* occurs frequently in Canaanite texts as a characterization of the Canaanite father deity *El*. In Ps 103:13 [used here], as Trible herself has noted, it is said quite explicitly that "as a father pities (or has compassion for) his children, so Yahweh pities (or has compassion for) those who fear him."

Psalm 103:6-18

John T. Willis, review of Samantha Joo, Provocation and Punishment: The Anger of God in the Book of Jeremiah and Deuteronomistic Theology²⁰

¹⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 48, No. 4 (October 1986) 613.

Willis reports, “biblical texts typically connect God’s anger and mercy in the same pericope or context, (e.g. ... 103:6-18 ...). Therefore, a study of God’s anger evokes a study of God’s mercy (and vice versa) for balance.”

1 Corinthians 3:16-23

For recurring themes in Sacred Scripture, see the following. The exclamation point (!) indicates where a principal reference list of passages related by a common theme or expression is found in the Greek. *Italics* indicates a special relevance.²¹ With this material, I am trying to lay a foundation for developing Biblical themes the next time through the Cycles.

Through Reading 70A, January 30, 2011, I designed these notes on the availability of manuscripts to make the point that uncertainty exists as to exactly what Greek to use for the purposes of translation. At that point, I began also offering manuscript availability to lay background for examining Translating the New Testament: Text, Translation, Theology,²² which I purchased based on the review in the Catholic Biblical Quarterly.²³ I do not anticipate using Translating for several months.

Verse 16	1 Corinthians 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Romans 8:9.
Verse 17	Ephesians 2:21; Psalm 65:5 (LXX), Psalm 70:1
Verse 18	1 Corinthians 1:20-25; 2:6, 4:10.
Verse 19	<i>Job 5:12 f.</i>
Verse 20	<i>Psalm 93:11 [LXX].</i>
Verse 21	Romans 3:27!
Verse 22	1 Corinthians 1:12!, Romans 8:38.
Verse 23	Romans 14:8; Galatians 3:29; Mark 9:41; 1 Corinthians 5:28; Luke 3:38.

²⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 3 (July 2007) 552.

²¹ 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, 14*, 34*, 37*.

²² Translating the New Testament: Text, Translation, Theology, Stanley E. Porter and Mark J. Boda (eds.), (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009).

²³ Robert Hodgson, Jr. review of Translating the New Testament: Text, Translation, Theology, Stanley E. Porter and Mark J. Boda (eds.), the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 72, No. 4 (April 2009) 877-878.

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1 Corinthians 3:16-23

Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism, 2nd ed., Erroll F. Rhodes, tr.²⁴

A Fifth Century parchment with 1 Cor 3:20 is at St. Catharine's Monastery in Sinai.

1 Corinthians 1—4

Benjamin Fiore, S.J., "'Covert Allusion' in 1 Corinthians 1—4"²⁵

Fiore argues, "The statements of wisdom and judgment, which appear in the application sections (3:16-23 [used here] and 4:15, have more in common with the apostolic preaching of the cross (1:18-15) and with the gifts of wisdom and discernment among the perfect (2:6-16)"—more in common with the abstract problem of wisdom and discernment than with the concrete problem of factions among the Corinthians.

1 Cor 3:1-23

Michael F. Hull, review of Carmelo Pellegrino, Paolo, Servo di Cristo e Padre dei Corinzi: Analisi retoricoletteraria de 1 Cor 4²⁶

Hull concludes,

In ascribing to Paul a "rhetoric of humility," P. says more about Paul's content than his form. It would seem that much of what P. says in the final chapter of his study could have been derived from a linear reading of 1 Corinthians 1—4. To be sure, what P. does say is well written, well organized, and a service to students of 1 Corinthians 4.

In other words, Pellegrino is not offering much for serious consideration.

1 Cor 3:5—4:5

Alan C. Mitchell, review of Chris VanLandingham, Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul²⁷

First, Mitchell reports,

²⁴ Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989, 97.

²⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 47, No. 1 (January 1985) 85-102.

²⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 1 (January 2008) 167.

²⁷ Theological Studies, Vol. 69, No. 3 (September 2008) 683.

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Regarding the last judgment, 1 Corinthians 3:5—4:5; 5:1-5; 6; 10; and 11:27-34 indicate that believers could be condemned for their moral failures. Furthermore, these texts indicate that the relevance of “justification by faith” to the notion of the last judgment in Paul is not clear; those who are justified are not necessarily those who are approved at the last judgment.

Then, Mitchell concludes, “Ultimately, the book fails to make a distinction between grace offered and grace accepted or rejected.” In other words, this book does not offer much.

1 Cor 3:9-17

Robert A. J. Gagnon, “Why the ‘Weak’ at Rome Cannot Be Non-Christian Jews”²⁸

Gagnon argues that the weak are Gentile Christians. Gagnon explains, “For Paul no structure is worth building on that is not laid on the foundation of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 3:9-17).”

1 Cor 3:10-17

William R. Herzog II, review of David R. Hall, The Unity of the Corinthian Correspondence²⁹

Herzog criticizes Hall for lack of academic rigor. Herzog concludes, “Hall’s study resurrects an old, pre-twentieth-century interpretation of Q and 2 Corinthians, but he provides arguments and evidence that have not formerly been marshaled to support this position.”

1 Cor 3:12-16

Joseph Plevnik S.J., “The Understanding of God at the Basis of Pauline Theology”³⁰

Plevnik explains, “Paul warns those who build on this foundation [Jesus] that they will have their work tested by fire (1 Cor 3:12-16).”

1 Cor 3:16-17

Gregory W. Dawes, “‘But if you can gain your freedom’ (1 Corinthians 7:17-24)”³¹

²⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 62, No. 1 (January 2000) 70 ff.

²⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 2 (April 2006) 331.

³⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 4 (October 2003) 561.

³¹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 52, No. 4 (October 1990) 687, 697.

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Dawes argues,

With vv 16-17 the nature of the building becomes clear: it [the body] is in fact a temple and therefore worthy of particular respect.

...

In a certain sense, then vv 17-24, which at first sight appear to be an interruption of the apostle's argumentation, dealing with apparently unrelated matters, are in fact the key with which one can unlock the meaning of this chapter. What seems to be a mere digression is in fact a true *digression*, in which each of the two illustrations [circumcision and slavery] chosen has a role to play. They indicate how carefully Paul deals with a delicate matter and the balance with which he seeks to insure [sic] that his converts live a life of undivided devotion to the Lord.

1 Cor 3:16-17

Carolyn Osiek, R.S.C.J., review of Jorunn Okland, Women in Their Place: Paul and the Corinthian Discourse of Gender and Sanctuary Space³²

Osiek reports,

In chap. 5, O[kland] takes up Pauline texts. She notes that 1 Corinthians has more cultic language than any other Pauline letter. Using ritual theory, she claims that for Paul, *ekklesia* is "space marked off and defined through ritual" (p. 132). It is sacred space because of the ritual, which makes it sacred. Therefore it is impossible to think of *ekklesia* without a sense of sacred space. Here O. draws on 1 Cor 3:16-17 and 9:13-14, which use the temple terms *naos* and *hieron* for the community and the Christian body, respectively. ... Nevertheless, O. has issued a significant challenge that every subsequent study of 1 Corinthians 11—14 must consider.

1 Cor 3:16

Nijay K. Gupta, "Which 'Body' Is a Temple (1 Corinthians 6:19)? Paul beyond the Individual/Communal Divide"³³

Gupta concludes,

Hence, the human body must be a temple of the Spirit that accepts the ownership and rule of God (1 Cor 6:19-20) in order to enable individuals to have victory over sin and death (15:56-57) and appropriate their particular gifts for the sake of the communal temple (3:16 [used here]). In the end, we must look to the

³² the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 3 (July 2006) 548.

³³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 72, No. 3 (July 2010) 523-525, 529, 535, 536.

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details of Paul's ostensibly convoluted discourses about how the person participates equally with the community in Christ and, in Paul's theology, find meaning that goes beyond an individual/communal divide.

1 Cor 3:18

F. Gerald Downing, "'Honor' among Exegetes"³⁴

Downing argues,

It is not simply a matter of alternative "courts of honor" or different "significant others." [S. M.] Pogoloff shows how readily someone like Paul can pick up elements of this critical appraisal of respect, of honor and shame, and expect his hearers to understand: "Paul employs this rhetoric to criticize those who are boasting on the typical grounds of culture, power and birth (1 Cor 1:26, 29; 3:18 [used here])."

1 Cor 3:19

Stanley B. Marrow, "*Κοσμος* in John"³⁵

Marrow purports,

Of course, one can hardly deny that these works contain, alongside a positive and neutral use of the term, severely negative usages. Not only does Paul say, for instance, that "the world did not know God through Wisdom" (1 Cor 1:21), but that God "made foolish" that very wisdom of the world (1:20; cf. 3:19 [used here])."

1 Cor 3:21-23

Paul M. Hoskins, "The Use of Biblical and Extra Biblical Parallels in the Interpretation of First Corinthians 6:2-3."³⁶

Hoskins concludes by arguing that "assisting Christ in the Last Judgment is one of the special privileges of the believer who belongs to him (cf. 1 Cor 3:21-23)."

1 Cor 3:21

Richard A. Horsley, "Consciousness and Freedom among the Corinthians: 1 Corinthians 8—10"³⁷

³⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 61, No. 1 (January 1999) 67.

³⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 1 (January 2002) 95.

³⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 63, No. 2 (April 2001) 297.

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Horsley concludes his argument as follows.

Through his *gnosis* the “wise” Corinthian also understood himself as “mature” (*teleios*) and believed that by virtue of his possession of divine Sophia “all things were his” (1 Cor 2:6 and 3:21 [used here]). Having thus transcended all conflict in his strong consciousness, he believed that “all things are possible” (1 Cor 6:12 and 10:23).

For the Corinthians, therefore, the eating of idol-meat and other matters were issues only in an internal personal sense, for one’s individual consciousness, and not in a truly ethical, i.e. relational, sense. For Paul, on the other hand, who does not approach the Corinthian situation with any concept of conscience, such issues are ethical, that is, matters of relationships between people, not of one’s own inner consciousness.

1 Cor 3:21-23

Jeremy Corley, "The Pauline Authorship of 1 Corinthians 13"³⁸

Corley identifies 1 Corinthians 21-23 as a “highly rhetorical passage.”

Corley also notes “that 1 Cor 3:20 quotes Ps 94 (93)11 ...,” which the Lectionary does not use.

1 Cor 3:22

William O. Walker, Jr., "Galatians 2:7b-8 as a Non-Pauline Interpolation"³⁹

Walker observes “the name Κηφας [Aramaic, rather than Greek, for Peter] occurs four times in 1 Corinthians (1 Cor 1:12; 3:22 [used here]; 9:5; 15:5) ...” Walker argues that Paul prefers the Aramaic to the Greek name for Peter.

The Aland-Nestle Greek apparatus shows no divergences in the manuscripts for 1 Corinthians 22, in other words, no one changed the Aramaic *Peter* to the Greek *Peter*.

1 Cor 3:22

Maria Pascuzzi, “Baptism-based Allegiance and the Divisions in Corinth: A Reexamination of 1 Corinthians 1:13-17”⁴⁰

³⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 4 (October 1978) 589.

³⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 2 (April 2004) 258, 263 fn. 23, 266, 273.

³⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 4 (October 2003) 575, 581.

⁴⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 4 (October 2009) 825, 827.

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Pascuzzi traces developments.

As honor accrued to those sophisticated enough to claim and boast about Apollos as their minister (cf. 3:21), dishonor by association must have placed the rest of the community, which was sympathetic to Paul, in a rather defensive position. This may explain why Paul, who could hardly recall baptizing Stephanus, later singles out him and his household for their service and urges the community to be subject to such persons (16:15-16).

John 2:5

Matthew 5:38-48

Matthew 5:40

The word for *cloak* in Latin is *pallium*. The pallium for the current hierarchy is a circular band of white wool with pendants of the same material in front and back worn in the Latin rite by a pope and conferred by him on archbishops as a symbol of office. I have never known an archbishop to give away his pallium. My point is that archbishops love the signs and symbols of their regal authority of coercion, when they might do better to love the signs and symbols of democratic authority of persuasion.

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- Verse 38 *Exodus 21:24 f.; Leviticus 24:20; Deuteronomy 10:21*
Verse 39 Romans 12:19-21; 1 Peter 2:23; 1 Thessalonians 5:15!; Proverbs 20:22;
24:29; Lamentations 3:30; Isaiah 50:6.
Verse 40 1 Corinthians 6:7; Luke 6:29 f.
Verse 41 Deuteronomy 15:7 f.
Verse 42 Matthew 22:39 [parallel]!; *Leviticus 19:18*.
Verse 43 Deuteronomy 23:4-7; 7:2.
Verse 44 Leviticus 19:34; Romans 12:14; Luke 23:34; 1 Corinthians 4:12; Acts 7:60;
1 Peter 3:9; Luke 6:35; Ephesians 5:1.
Verse 45 Matthew 22:10!
Verse 46
Verse 47 Deuteronomy 18:13; Leviticus 19:2.
Verse 48 Matthew 19:21; 1 Corinthians 14:20; Colossians 4:12; James 1:4.

Paul Moses, The Saint and The Sultan: The Crusades, Islam, and Francis of Assisi's Mission of Peace⁴¹

Moses argues,

In terms of his [Saint Francis's] emphasis on being a peacemaker, two passages stand out in his brief writings. He quoted Matthew 5:44—"love your enemies" [used here]—four times, twice in his *Admonitions*, and in each of the two known versions of the *Rule*. And he quoted the passage "blessed are the peacemakers" from Matthew 5:9 twice in *Admonitions*.

Matthew 5:44

Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism, 2nd ed., Erroll F. Rhodes, tr.⁴²

The Alands point to difficulties with Matthew 5:44: "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Consequently they [translations made from the Sixteenth to the late Nineteenth Century] have achieved a popular acceptance which continues into the twentieth century. In practically all the modern national languages there is a well-established versional tradition which is only now in our generation beginning to give way, as Bible readers realize they should not insist on keeping as part of their New Testaments the readings which have long been recognized by scholars

⁴¹ New York: Doubleday Religion, 2009, 212.

⁴² Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989, 306.

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as later additions to the text. We will give only a few examples taken exclusively from the major versions of today, where they are usually explained by a footnote. [There is no footnote in the Lectionary.]

In the gospel of Matthew the text of 5:44 used to read (with some variation): “Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” This is nothing more than an adaptation from the parallel text of Luke 6:27-28 [noted above]. The variety of forms in which this occurs in the manuscript tradition only underscores the secondary character of the expansion. It undoubtedly made for a more edifying text, but it was not in the original gospel of Matthew.

Admittedly the selection of Greek manuscripts preserving the original text is not very large ..., but they are supported by representatives of all the early versions. As in the ending of Mark and frequently elsewhere as well, the expanded text is more impressive and “better” than the original form, and few manuscripts have been able to withstand its momentum. Furthermore, the conclusive argument here (as in so many similar instances) is that if the expanded form were actually the original text, what would have been the motive for altering it? Accidental omission is hardly a plausible cause (although a scribe could certainly have omitted a phrase by sheer chance as described above, and his manuscript could then have been copied by other scribes; cf. pp. 285f.), [sic], because the shorter text is found in all parts of the early Church. Further, an important point for all similar examples is the variety of forms assumed by the expansion, which is an irrefutable argument for its secondary character.

Matt. 4:17—16:20

Jack Dean Kingsbury, "Observations on the "Miracle Chapters" of Matthew 8-9"⁴³

Kingsbury argues, “Hence, it is in his capacity as the Son of God that Jesus Messiah both delivers the Sermon on the Mount in chaps. 5-7 and undertakes in chaps. 8-9 his ministry of healing.”

Matt 4:17—7:27

Warren Carter, "Recalling the Lord's Prayer: The Authorial Audience and Matthew's Prayer as Familiar Liturgical Experience"⁴⁴

⁴³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 4 (October 1978) 565.

⁴⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 57, No. 3 (July 1995) 529.

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Carter explains, "The Sermon on the Mount requires this community to live according to Jesus' reinterpretation of conventional wisdom (5:17-48)."

Matt 5:17-20

Joel Marcus, "The Gates of Hades and the Keys of the Kingdom (Matt 16:18-19)"⁴⁵

Marcus argues,

Yet the third, fourth, and fifth antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount (5:31-42) show that the fulfilled torah of Jesus is one in which the letter of the law has been revoked. The most sensible way to understand this paradox, [J.P.] Meier shows, is to suppose that in Jesus' death and resurrection "all has been accomplished," and a transfiguration of the law has therefore taken place. Thus, while the Sermon on the Mount is situated within Jesus' ministry by Matthew's narrative, its commandments do not really take effect until after Jesus' death and resurrection.

Matt 5:21-48

Lev 19:18

Terence L. Donaldson, "The Law That Hangs (Matthew 22:40): Rabbinic Formulation and Matthean Social World"⁴⁶

Donaldson argues,

Matthew is dependent on tradition, perhaps even for the statement under examination (v 40 [about the tunic and the cloak]), but the freedom with which he recasts other aspects of the tradition—for example, his portrait of the disciples (cf. 14:33 with Mark 6:51-52, or 16:12 with Mark 8:21)—together with the fact that his redactional stamp appears on both strands of the tradition (e.g. in 5:17-20 *and* 5:21-48) means that more than the constraining influence of tradition needs to be invoked.

...

Redaction criticism operates on the assumption that a correlation exists between aspects of the text (e.g., thematic emphases conflicting statements) and aspects of the community to which it was addressed (e.g., pastoral needs; conflicting groups or viewpoints). The assumption is not implausible, but from several directions there is increasing critical opinion that traditional redaction criticism has been too hasty in acting on it.

Matt 5:38-48

⁴⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 50, No. 3 (July 1988) 453.

⁴⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 57, No. 4 (October 1995) 698-699.

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Karen A. Barta, review of Charles H. Talbert, Reading the Sermon on the Mount: Character Formation and Decision Making in Matthew 5—7⁴⁷

Barta reports,

T. strains to read the Beatitudes as directed by Jesus to his disciples for character formation (p. 58).

In chap. 7, the heart of the book, T. offers excellent material on the antitheses. His description of using a text as a “verbal icon” for personal transformation is particularly insightful (p. 77). But many will find his treatment of nonretaliation and love of enemies in Matt 5:38-48 (pp. 88-100) a diversion into personal piety and morals from the urgent communal challenge of peacemaking in a warring world. Accordingly, issues of social justice receive scant attention, although the state’s use of violence is ably defended (pp. 92-93).

Matt 5:38-42

Leroy Andrew Huizenga, “Obedience unto Death: The Matthean Gethsemane and Arrest Sequence and the Aqedah”⁴⁸

Huizenga argues,

One of those with Jesus, however, threatens to derail the divine plan, a disciple who has apparently ignored the Sermon on the Mount (5:38-48 [used here]) and the several passion predictions: stretching forth his hand ..., he grasps his sword ... and attacks the servant of the high priest (26:21). Whereas Abraham stretched forth his hand ... to take his knife ... to slay his son (Gen 22:10), this disciple does so to slay a hapless servant. Had the disciple paid attention to the passion prediction immediately *preceding* the transfiguration (Matt 16:21), the voice evoking the Aqedah at the transfiguration (17:5, “this is my beloved Son”), and Jesus’ words concerning his coming suffering *subsequent* to the transfiguration (17:12), he would have known that the beloved Son Jesus must endure sacrificial death like the beloved son Isaac. Hearing echoes of the Aqedah here in Matt 26:51 involves high irony: Abraham’s action would fulfill the will of God, while this disciple’s would thwart it.

Matt 5:39-40

Robert H. Gundry, “Mark 10:29: Order in the List”⁴⁹

⁴⁷ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 2 (April 2007) 377.

⁴⁸ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 3 (July 2009) 507, 524.

⁴⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 59, No. 3 (July 1997) 474.

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Grundy cites the movement from right cheek to tunic to cloak as part of a “familiar three-part ascensive form” that seems a little far-fetched to me.

Matt 5:39

Ian Christopher Levy, “John Wyclif: Christian Patience in a Time of War”⁵⁰

Levy presents some lengthy historical background,

At the outset of *Causa 23*, the section of the *Decretum* devoted to the Christian use of force, [the Twelfth Century]⁵¹ Gratian had raised the question whether war does not by definition violate the tenets of evangelical law. He will conclude that waging war is not a sin as long as it is not waged for the sake of plunder. Taking his cue from Augustine [354-430],⁵² Gratian argues that the patience counseled by Christ (Mathew 5:39) refers to the inner disposition of the combatant’s heart. Further on the *Decretum* Gratian commented that vindication must not be sought for the love of vindication itself, but out of zeal for justice; not so that hatred may be exercised, but that depravity be corrected. Wyclif [1328-1384]⁵³ would seem to be in line with this classic position, when insisting that we are bound under pain of mortal sin to keep the commandments of God and never persecute our brother unless out of fraternal love, thus loving him more than all goods of fortune. And yet when theory moves to practice, Wyclif is notably pessimistic, stating flatly that in the midst of war it is actually impossible to keep this commandment, which means that it is impossible to avoid sin in war, thereby rendering it unlawful for a Catholic to fight. Thus what is possible in principle proves all but impossible in practice, seeing as the combatant would have to maintain a consistently virtuous wrath.

Matt 5:39

Dino Dozzi, “Thus Says the Lord’ The Gospel in the Writings of Saint Francis”⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Theological Studies, Vol. 66, No. 2 (June 2005) 337.

⁵¹ <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06730a.htm> accessed December 16, 2010.

⁵² <http://www.google.com/search?q=augustine+of+hippo&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a> accessed December 16, 2010.

⁵³ <http://www.google.com/search?q=augustine+of+hippo&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a> accessed December 16, 2010.

⁵⁴ Greyfriars Review, Vol. 18, Supplement (2004) 58.

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Dozzi quotes Saint Francis:

Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Mt 5:3). There are many who, while insisting on prayers and obligations, inflict many abstinences and punishments upon their bodies. But they are immediately offended and disturbed about a single word which seems to be harmful to their bodies or about something which might be taken away from them. These people are not poor in spirit, for someone who is truly poor in spirit ... loves those who strike him on the cheek (see Mt 5:39).

Matt 5:40

Carolyn Osiek, R.S.C.J., “When You Pray, Go into Your *ταμειον*’ [room] (Mathew 6:6: But Why?”⁵⁵

Osiek observes,

The entire Sermon on the Mount is intended for a male audience. The potential murderer is angry with a brother (5:21-22); the potential adulterer looks at a woman with lust (5:28); the potential divorcé divorces his wife (5:31-32); the potential retaliator would give not only cloak but tunic, unthinkable for a woman (5:40); and so on. The verses on prayer are no exception. Thus, the exhortations about the secrecy of almsgiving, prayer, and fasting are quite countercultural. The male listener, lover of public recognition of his worth, is expected to forgo that reward. If his good works are known and he is praised for them, he has already received all the reward that is due him (6:1-2, 5, 16). So [Jerome H.] Neyrey is correct in assuming that these verses are part of the radical rewriting of honor that Christian preaching entailed. The honorable place to pray is the house, not the synagogue or public square. Jesus’ seeming preference for the house over public space is mirrored in the preferences given here.

⁵⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 4 (October 2009) 737.

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Matt 5:43

Angela Standhartinger, review of Uta Barbara Fink, Joseph und Aseneth: Revision des griechischen Textes und Edition der zweiten lateinischen Übersetzung⁵⁶

Standhartinger gets into technical difficulties with Fink, without explaining the significance of the Joseph und Aseneth text. Standhartinger reports,

F. omits τῶν πλησίων σου in 23:9; 28:5; 28:14 in the saying “do not repay evil for evil to your neighbor” because it suggests Matt 5:43 [used here] and the like (p. 163). It is plausible that Christian copyists inserted biblical phrases, but this practice was general.

Matt 5:44-45

Robert M. Doran, S.J., “The Nonviolent Cross: Lonergan and Girard on Redemption”⁵⁷

Doran argues,

It is the transformation of the world that arises when evil is transformed into good by a nonviolent response. Both thinkers [Lonergan and Girard] liberally quote Matthew 5:44-45 precisely in the context of articulating their understanding of the solution to the problem of evil, their understanding of redemption in history: “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust.”

...

For Lonergan ... the Law of the Cross is a perceptive determinant of events, and it is in the transformation that takes place in events through nonviolent response that redemption takes place in history.

Girard has done more than any other author I have read—more than Freud and Jung, who both influenced my original work in speaking of psychic conversion—to clarify the dynamics of both dramatic and group bias [he never mentions racism], both of which are predominantly psychic in origin and tone.

The more I read about Lonergan, the less I am impressed, because he seems afraid to deal with racism. As I read this article by Doran, I kept looking for psychiatric insight,

⁵⁶ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 3 (July 2009) 645.

⁵⁷ Theological Studies, Vol. 71, No. 1 (March 2010) 51, 59-60.

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which never appeared, but which does account for including his claim to Freud and Jung.

Matt 5:44

John E. Thiel, "Time, Judgment, and Competitive Spirituality: A Reading of the Development of the Doctrine of Purgatory"⁵⁸

The early Christians saw themselves in competition with the martyrs. Thiel explains,

Even though Matthew and Luke (75-85 CE) wove the Q material into larger gospel frameworks that tempered its apocalyptic fervor, they yet followed Q in making the judging expectations of Jesus the criterion of virtuous action for their Christian communities. These late first-century churches could aspire to ethical heights that required even the love of one's enemies (Mt 5:44 [used here]; Lk 6:27), believing as they did that such virtue was an obligation for those who lived in an already immanent kingdom of God.

Such high expectations required Purgatory for those not martyred.

Matt 5:44

Mark Allan Powell, "Matthew's Beatitudes: Reversals and Rewards of the Kingdom"⁵⁹

Powell argues,

A somewhat broader paradigm identifies peacemakers as those who seek reconciliation with the world at large. Under this interpretation, those who come to terms quickly with their accusers (5:25) and especially those who love their enemies (5:44 [used here]) would also be peacemakers, an application that is appealing, because Jesus describes those who love their enemies as "children of the Father in heaven," a phrase that recalls the apodosis to this beatitude. Any interpretation equating peacemaking with reconciliation, however, fails to take into account Jesus' claim that he has not come to bring peace in this sense of the word (10:34). The expectation, in fact, is that association with him will create divisions and evoke hostility (10:35-36; cp. 5:11-12; 10:21-22).

...

The blessing attributed to these people is that they will be called children of God. In Matthew's Gospel, people are identified as God's children when their conduct

⁵⁸ Theological Studies, Vol. 69, No. 4 (December 2008) 747.

⁵⁹ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 58, No. 3 (July 1996) 473, 474.

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is similar to God's own (5:48), just as people are identified as members of Jesus' family when they do God's will (12:50). The assumption seems to be that for those involved in bringing about what God wants, the acknowledgment that they have behaved as God's children and have done as God wished will be reward enough.

Maybe that sense of "reward enough" is why it seems unseemly for people to pray that God might grant them a yet further reward beyond that.

Matt 5:44b

Adele Reinhartz, review of John P. Meier, A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus, Vol. 4, Law and Love⁶⁰

Reinhartz reports,

On the basis of the criteria of discontinuity, M. concludes that the double command enjoining love of God and neighbor (Mark 12:28-34) and the wording of the Q statement "love your enemies" (Matt 5:44b [used here]/Luke 12:28-34) are original to Jesus. Love, for M,'s Jesus, is not primarily an emotion but a halakic imperative to will good and do good for others, friend or foe.

Halakah is the body of Jewish oral laws supplementing written law or both oral and written law together or any particular law or custom prescribed by the legal codices.⁶¹ Reinhartz uses the word *halakic* eight times in her review.

Matt 5:45

Sean Freyne, "The Galilean Jesus and a Contemporary Christology"⁶²

Freyne argues, "The care of this creator God transcends ethnic boundaries: 'He makes his sun to shine on the bad and the good and rains on the just and the unjust alike' (Mt 5:45 [used here]; Lk 6:35)."

Matt 5:46-47

Wendell E. Langlely, S.J., "The Parable of the Two Sons (Matthew 21:28-32) against its Semitic and Rabbinic Backdrop"⁶³

⁶⁰ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 72, No. 3 (July 2010), 603.

⁶¹ <http://unabridged.merriam-webster.com/cgi-bin/unabridged?book=Third&va=halakah> accessed December 17, 2010.

⁶² Theological Studies, Vol. 70, No. 2 (June 2009) 295.

⁶³ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 58, No. 2 (April 1996) 231.

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Based on Matt 5:46-47, pagans greeting only their friends, Langley characterizes “the Gentiles, sinners by definition.”

Matt 5:48

Jack Dean Kingsbury, "The Developing Conflict between Jesus and the Jewish Leaders in Matthew's Gospel: A Literary-Critical Study"⁶⁴

Kingsbury explains,

Hypocrisy to the implied author of Matthew is the opposite of being "perfect." To be perfect is to be "wholehearted," or "single-hearted," in the devotion with which one serves God (5:48; Deut 18:13). To be hypocritical is to be "divided" in one's fealty to God. Thus, hypocrisy is a form of inner incongruity,

See Bettye Collier-Thomas, below.

Matt 25:14-30

Barbara E. Reid, O.P., "Violent Endings in Matthew's Parables and Christian Nonviolence"⁶⁵

Reid sets out the problem.

Contemporary experiences of violence have made the topic of violence and how to respond to it a prominent theme in public discourse. For Christians, the answers are grounded in the praxis and teaching of Jesus as depicted in the gospels. Many turn to the Sermon on the Mount for guidance. There Jesus teaches his disciples to turn the other cheek, to love their enemies, and to pray for those who persecute them. Such actions, the Matthean Jesus asserts, imitate those of God, who offers boundless, gratuitous love to all—even to evildoers (5:44-48 [used here]). But this portrait of God clashes with the ones presented by eight Matthean parables ... that show God dealing violently with evildoers. This tension poses a dilemma for readers of Matthew's Gospel. If disciples of Jesus are children of God (5:45) who are supposed to emulate divine ways, which are they to imitate? Is Jesus' teaching on nonviolence in the Sermon on the Mount absolute? Or are there situations in which violence is a moral response?

⁶⁴ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 49, No. 1 (January 1987) 61.

⁶⁵ the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 66, No. 2 (April 2004), 237, 242-255.

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Matthew 5:44, 48

Bettye Collier-Thomas, Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and Their Sermons, 1580-1979⁶⁶

Julia A. J. Foote (1823-1901) “quotes Matt 5:48 in which Jesus admonishes his followers, ‘Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.’ She asserts that this text makes clear that focusing on Christian perfection is the ‘duty of a true preacher.’”

The following is what I have been looking for. In her sermon “Christian Perfection” Foote proclaims,

“I think the words of the text are the greatest words that the Lord Jesus ever uttered: ‘Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.’ I think we may (emphasize) the word ‘ye’; every Greek scholar knows that is the emphatic word, for where the pronouns are used emphasis is always meant.” I have not been able to substantiate that in Daniel B. Wallace.⁶⁷ Bettye Collier-Thomas describes the education of Foote, as “rudimentary.”

Florence Spearing Randolph (1866-1951) also preached on “Christian Perfection.” Collier-Thomas reports, “Referencing Matt. 5:48, as Foote did, (‘be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect’), Randolph argues that Christ would not have told his followers to be perfect if such a state were unattainable.” In her sermon, Randolph poses the following rhetorical question, “Did He [Jesus] utter these words [Matt 5:48] simply to be talking, knowing it would be impossible?”

Finally, Rosa Edwards she preached in 1934 as the assistant pastor at Bethel Holy Church in Harlem, New York. Little else is known about her.⁶⁸ Collier-Thomas notes,

While many mainline black preaching women stressed the importance of inner transformation through sanctification, black Holiness and Pentecostal preaching women often emphasized that sanctification be followed by signs of the Holy Ghost’s presence, such as speaking in tongues or healing. ... Edwards stresses the church’s emphasis on ‘Divine Healing,’ saying that if ministers are to be

⁶⁶ San Francisco, CA 94103-1741: A Wiley Imprint: 1998, 63, 66, 113, 130, 209.

⁶⁷ Daniel B. Wallace, With Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes: Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Michigan: Zondervan, 1996).

⁶⁸

<http://www.google.com/search?q=Rosa+Edwards+at+Bethel+Holy+Church+in+Harlem%2C+New+York&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a> accessed December 17, 2010.

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examples, they should `never be tempted to take medicine' when they are sick.' In her sermon `Ministers are Examples,' Edwards preached, `When we teach `Christ like love' (Matt 5:44)(,) `See that none render evil for evil unto any man, but ever follow that which is good both among yourselves, and to all men' (1 Thess.5:15).'

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