

## Readings

First Reading:	Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8
Responsorial Psalm:	Psalm 15:2-3, 3-4, 4-5
Second Reading:	James 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27
Alleluia:	James 1:18
Gospel:	Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

## Commentary

The readings are about purity of heart. James describes “religion that is pure.” Jesus continues on the same topic, raised by the Pharisees and scribes, who had traveled from Jerusalem to Galilee to confront Jesus. They observed, “They [some of the disciples] do not eat without purifying themselves.” Jesus says that it is not the body that needs to be pure, but the soul.

Once the soul is God-centered, then the law can be adapted to liberate from legal nonsense, along the guidelines of proportionate reason. The Lectionary leaves out the part in Deuteronomy where the Grandmother of Jesus, Ruth, implicitly adapts the law to her own purposes. Ruth reinterprets the law to mean that Boaz not only inherits her deceased husband’s land, but he inherits her as well. That came as news to Boaz.

I do worry that the Raymond Arroyo show presents Catholicism as more concerned with external physical aspects of religion than internal spiritual aspects of religion. I was pleased to see the Arroyo show give Professor Douglas W. Kmiec an opportunity to explain that pro-life Catholics could still support Obama.<sup>1</sup>

Arroyo invited his audience to judge whether Kmiec won the debate. Whether or not Kmiec won the debate, at least he presented a Democratic point of view that until now has seemed forbidden on that show. I still get to grumble that Arroyo puts lawyers on the show, to explain the law, rather than moral theologians, to explain the heart. The Gospel this Sunday is about finicky laws that act as a warning to the Faithful about setting their priorities. Moreover, I would add, especially about setting moral priorities for working with the Obama administration.

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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 material.

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<sup>1</sup> Raymond Arroyo, the Encore Presentation on ETWN, “The World Over,” Friday, July 4, 2009. I do not own the technology required to record this program, and accept the risk associated therewith.

## Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8

Deut 4:1

Paul Lawrence, The IVP Atlas of Bible History<sup>2</sup>

Lawrence observes that other nations, such as the Hittites, Babylonians, and Assyrians, had codes of law, not only the Israelites.

Deut 4:5-14

Matthew J. Lynch, "Zion's Warrior and the Nations: Isaiah 59:15b—63:6 in Isaiah's Zion Traditions"<sup>3</sup>

Lynch writes,

The emphasis in [Isaiah] 59:21 on the covenant being internalized for multiple generations, and then in 61:8-9 of it being known among the nations, recalls both the Abrahamic promise of a blessed progeny (Gen 12:3; 22:18) and its Deuteronomic recapitulation (Deut 4:5-14), in which Israel's witness to the nations is linked with the need to teach Yhwh's *words* to each generation."

These Personal Notes are an attempt to continue to teach the Word.

Deut 4:5-6

Irene Nowell, O.S.B., Jesus' Great-Grandmothers: Matthew's Four and More"<sup>4</sup>

Ruth fit the law to her own purposes, to the point that Boaz was surprised to find that he not only inherited the field that had belonged to her husband, but he inherited her as well.

The Lectionary omits verse 5 against which, with verse 6, Nowell writes, "The nearer relative appears surprised by the news that acquiring the field also implies acquiring the widow (4:5-6)." The omitted verse 5 is, "'Look: as Yahweh my God commanded me, I have taught you laws and customs, for you to observe in the country of which you are going to take possession."

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<sup>2</sup> Downers Grove, Illinois, *InterVarsity Press*, 2006, 39.

<sup>3</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 2 (April 2008) 255, 261.

<sup>4</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 1 (January 2008) 7.

## Psalm 15:2-3, 3-4, 4-5

Codex Sinaiticus<sup>5</sup>

The continuing point of the exercise reaching into the original manuscripts is to accept some doubt. From doubt results the search for truth as part of Christian life. The Church chose Sacred Scripture from many competing original manuscripts. Development of the words of Sacred Scripture is an historical reality. These Notes try to include this reality as an act of humility against the self-righteous pride required to lead a Christian life.

This is a red-letter day for the Codex Sinaiticus, because the following books are now available: Genesis, Leviticus, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, 1 Chronicles, 1 Chronicles (duplicate), 2 Esdras, Esther, Tobit, Judith, 1 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, Job, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, Hebrews, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Acts, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, Revelation, Barnabas, Shepherd of Hermes, and unidentified fragments. This means that it is now possible for me to check the First Testament Septuagint Greek, which would have been the Greek at the time of Jerome (347-420),<sup>6</sup> rather than the Greek of Erasmus (1466/1469-1556).<sup>7</sup> The Erasmus Greek is what scholars used from the time of the Protestant Revolt to the Twentieth Century. Currently, scholars use what I call the eclectic Greek, which takes into considerations all of the ancient manuscripts recently discovered.

What may be possible and what I am able to do are undoubtedly two different things. My intention is to print and store, in my study, the Codex for each Sunday, before delving into it. That printing will take three years beginning now. Because scholars tell the Faithful that the Psalms are such a quandary for the Lectionary, I intend to keep ensuring that I have the numbering correct. I also intend to back away from the more careful examination I have been giving in favor of printing the new texts, now available.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.codex-sinaiticus.net/print.aspx?manuscript=true&imageType=standard&translation=true&transcription=true&transcriptionType=verse&phd=true&lg=en&quireNo=59&folioNo=3&side=v> (accessed July 5, 2009). Psalm 15 in the Lectionary is Psalm 14 in the Codex.

<sup>6</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerome> (accessed July 5, 2009).

<sup>7</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desiderius\\_Erasmus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desiderius_Erasmus) (accessed July 5, 2009).

## **James 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27**

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.<sup>8</sup>

The Bibliotheque Nationale et Universitaire in Strasbourg has a Fourth Century Coptic papyrus. The Biblioteca Laurenziana has a Fifth Century parchment. This may be the only place I found the Aland index inaccurate. I did not find the reference to pages 101 and 126 in the index on page 344 of the Aland book.

James 1:22

The eclectic Greek for *hearers only* may also be transposed as *only hearers*. The Sinaiticus uses *hearers only*.

James 1:2-27

Mark E. Taylor and George H. Guthrie, "The Structure of James"<sup>9</sup>

By dividing the reading, the Lectionary makes this difficult. The readings cross over two internal introductions to James. The focus for the introductions and the letter is purity of heart.

James 1:19-21, 26-27

Timothy B. Cargal, review of Darian R. Lockett, Purity and Worldview in the Epistle of James<sup>10</sup>

Lockett defines purity as "separation from the world."

## **James 1:18**

## **Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23**

Mark 7:4

The Greek for *purify* is difficult. One of the words is to wash, from which *baptism* is derived; the other word is to *sprinkle*. The Sinaiticus uses *sprinkle* for *purifying* oneself and *wash* for *purification* of things.

The Greek for *beds* is difficult. The Sinaiticus includes *beds*. That much I can tell. Other manuscripts omit *beds*.

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<sup>8</sup> Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989, 96, 124, 126.

<sup>9</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 68, No. 4 (October 2006) 683, 686-692.

<sup>10</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 2 (April 2009) 408.

Mark 7:1-30

John Clabeaux, review of David Buttrick, Speaking Conflict: Stories of a Controversial Jesus<sup>11</sup>

In the conflict stories, the protagonists ask Jesus a question, to which Jesus replies with another question. Buttrick examines the question Jesus returns to his antagonistic interlocutors. That question exposes real problems that continue through the ages, until even now. This section of Mark is one of those conflict stories, though I do not find the riposte from Jesus. Buttrick is a master preacher.

Mark 7:1-23

David B. Gowler, review of James G. Crossley, Why Christianity Happened: A Sociohistorical Account of Christian Origins (6—50 CE)<sup>12</sup>

Crossley argues that the first Jewish Christians followed the Jewish law, but that the later Gentile Christians let the law go. Gowler is not fully satisfied with the argument.

Mark 7:1-23

C. Clifton Black, "Mark as Historian of God's Kingdom"<sup>13</sup>

Mark is about the coming of the Kingdom of God, where the readings point. Black writes, "It should be further noted that, for reasons baffling exegetes to this day, Mark also admits into his narrative things that are *atypical* of his own portrait of Jesus, such as the ethnic or religious chauvinism (7:24-30) that flies in the face of his own purported dietary and missionary liberality (7:1-23 [used here]; 13:10)."

Mark 7:1

Sean Freyne, "The Galilean Jesus and a Contemporary Christology"<sup>14</sup>

Freyne observes that the scribes and Pharisees traveled to Galilee to demean the craftsman, Jesus.

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<sup>11</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 3 (July 2008) 594.

<sup>12</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 69, No. 4 (October 2007) 815.

<sup>13</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 1 (January 2009) 68, 78.

<sup>14</sup> Theological Studies, Vol. 70, No. 2 (June 2009) 294.

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Mark 7:8-9

James W. Aageson, review of Benjamin Fiore, S.J., The Pastoral Epistles: First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus<sup>15</sup>

These pastoral epistles are about exhorting the Faithful to remain Faithful. As Aageson words it, "their main purpose is to exhort rather than teach."

Mark 7:21-23

Jonathan Klawans, review of L. William Countryman, Dirt, Greed, and Sex: Sexual Ethics in the New Testament and Their Implications for Today<sup>16</sup>

Klawans is unimpressed with the search Countryman makes for sexual ethics in the New Testament. The focus is on purity of heart.

Mark 7:21-22

Dino Dozzi, "'Thus Says the Lord' The Gospel in the Writings of Saint Francis"<sup>17</sup>

Saint Francis is about purity of heart, rather than externals. Saint Francis expects purity of heart to set priorities, especially including political priorities.

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

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<sup>15</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 71, No. 1 (January 2009) 169.

<sup>16</sup> the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 70, No. 4 (October 2008) 830.

<sup>17</sup> Greyfriars Review, Vol. 18, Supplement (2004) 22.