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Veritas Scripturae

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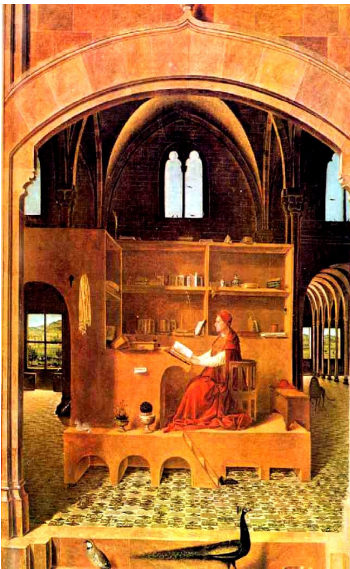


A publication that focuses upon the doctrines
of Biblical inspiration and inerrancy —
via Tradition and the Magisterium of the Catholic Church

“Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth” (Jn 17:17)



From the Director: The Neglected Books of the Bible



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There are some books of Holy Writ that seem to be more popular than others. Within the New Testament, many of us are more at home with the Gospel of Matthew than with the Epistle of Jude. For the Old Testament, we know Exodus, but have overlooked Nahum. However, Jude and Nahum are not any less inspired or inerrant than Matthew and Exodus.

The Church Militant should rectify the disparity. Begin with this fact: the Catholic Church recognizes a Biblical canon of 73 books. Some may not be personal favorites. Some may not hold our attention. Some may be difficult to grasp and apply. Whatever the case may be, the entire canon is part of our Catholic Faith.

Look at the bold claim from the Psalmist: “For ever, O LORD, thy word is firmly fixed in the heavens” (Ps 119:89). Ponder the Divine Son’s clear declaration: “But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one dot of the law to become void” (Lk 16:17). No doubt, those verses apply to the Sacred Writings from the older dispensation. Nonetheless, the principle remains — every utterance from God deserves to be treated with respect and devotion.

Prayerfully go through a neglected book each Sunday after the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The possible graces will be worth the labor.

Godspeed,
Salvatore J. Ciresi

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St. Jerome (A.D. 343-420) says:

“Read assiduously and learn as much as you can. Let sleep find you holding your Bible, and when your head nods let it be resting on the sacred page” (*Letter* 22.17.2; A.D. 384).

“Constantly read the Bible; in fact, have it always in your hands. Learn what you have got to teach” (*Letter* 52.7.1; A.D. 394).

“Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ” (*Commentary on Isaiah* bk. 18, prologue; A.D. 408-410).

“Love the Bible and wisdom will love you...” (*Letter* 130.20; A.D. 414).

Scripture Memorization and Exegesis:

Joshua 24:14-15

“Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve Him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. And if you be unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Josh 24:14-15).

This pericope takes place at Shechem; a locale in the Ephraimite hill country about 35 miles north of Jerusalem.

Joshua gives his last address, and his actions “place a final stamp on the past (the exodus and conquest) and signal a future in which the people will settle in the Promised Land” (J. Walton, et al., *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, pp. 240-241). The episode is a typical covenant renewal: a gathering before God (Josh 24:1), a rehearsal of past history (Josh 24:2-13), a rejection of false gods and an urging of loyalty to Yahweh (Josh 24:14-15), a pledge of obedience (Josh 24:16-18), a warning about rebellion (Josh 24:19-20), and a vow of service (Josh 24:21-24). The renewal ceremony then follows in Joshua 24:25-28 (cf. E. Merrill’s *Kingdom of Priests*, p. 139).

The grave exhortation of Joshua 24:14-15, spoken thousands of years ago, challenges the Catholic here and now: Will I follow Christ or the world, the flesh, and the devil?



The phrase “fear the Lord” (Heb., *yē’û ’eth-yēhwāh*) has earlier usage (Ex 9:30; Dt 6:2, 13; 10:20; 31:12; Josh 4:24). The saying refers to the awe and reverence one should have before God’s splendor and holiness. Think of St. Francis de Sales’ classic *Introduction to the Devout Life*, with its refrain “His Majesty.”

The term “choose” (Heb., *bachrû*) has both a doctrinal and philosophical significance as a testimony to free will. Man is a responsible creature and is granted the power of deliberation. This truth is implied in texts such as Psalm 1:1-6. Verse 1 states in part, “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,” with verse 6 ending, “for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.”

The directive to “serve the LORD” (Heb., *na’āvōdh ’eth-yēhwāh*) is not a mere outward profession. The charge entails words as well as deeds (i.e., actions).

Note the fact that Joshua includes his “house” (Heb., *ûvêthî*). This underscores salvation is not only an individual matter, but also a corporate and familial one (cf. Acts 16:30-31).

One commentary sums up the incident: “Joshua was calling Israel to honesty and commitment. He wanted them to show singleness of heart” (F. Gæbelein, gen. ed., *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* III:368).

This column will continue the study of *De Inspiratione Sacrae Scripturae* by Fr. Christian Pesch, by way of a précis of its dogmatic section (nos. 373-636), in L. Schökel's *The Inspired Word: Scripture in the Light of Language and Literature*. Pesch's opus provides a valuable template for a detailed inquiry into the doctrine of Biblical inspiration. Last issue considered this teaching with the Old Testament as the starting point. This issue will end with the New Testament.

Below is an adapted excerpt from the précis (pp. 388-402). The Chapter and Article titles have been retained:

Chapter I: The Existence of Inspiration
Article I. The Testimony of Scripture
2. The New Testament

- The New Testament considers the sacred books of the Old Testament to be prophetic (Mt 1:22; 2:5-23; Lk 24:44)
- A collection of sacred books, known as "Scripture" or "Scriptures," were in existence (Jn 2:22; 5:39; 7:42; 10:35; Gal 3:22; 1 Pet 2:6)
- This collection is divided into "the Law," "the Prophets," and "the Psalms" (Mt 5:17; Lk 24:44; Jn 10:34; 12:34; 1 Cor 14:21)
- The collection also calls individual passages "Scripture" (Mk 12:10; Lk 4:21; Jn 19:36; Acts 8:35)
- This Scripture is invested with great authority (Mt 4:14; Jn 10:34; Acts 15:15; Rom 1:17; 1 Pet 2:6)

"Pesch's opus provides a valuable template for a detailed inquiry into the doctrine of Biblical inspiration."

- Individual passages also possess this high authority (Mt 5:18; Lk 24:44; Jn 10:35; Acts 1:16; Gal 3:16; Heb 8:8-13)
- Such authority rests on the fact that God spoke through the sacred writers as through the prophets (Mt 1:22; 2:15-17; Acts 1:16; Gal 3:8; Heb 4:4-7; 10:15-17)
- Inspiration is taught explicitly (2 Tim 3:14-17; 2 Pet 1:19-21).

The large number of passages from God's Word given in the last column may now be joined to the extracts listed in this column. This offers a fine survey of Divine Revelation from both Testaments. This is perhaps the best way to study the doctrine of inspiration, and the teaching on inerrancy that follows.

Fr. Pesch had a great mastery of the topic of Biblical inspiration. Consider this assessment from a generation ago: "His manual has been replaced by others in most lecture rooms, but this is unfortunate. No one had or has at his disposal the wealth of information, scriptural, patristic, and theological, that he had; and this not only in the historical section, but also in the systematic analysis" (L. Schökel, p. 387).

It would be a tremendous service to Holy Mother Church if a publisher brought back into print *De Inspiratione Sacrae Scripturae*. An accurate and readable English translation would be a gain for the Christian faithful. As well, seminaries could use a tome of this high caliber.

The Church Fathers and Scripture:

Observations from St. Ambrose

St. Ambrose of Milan (A.D. 340-397) was born at Treves in Gaul. Trained in rhetoric and law, he eventually was consecrated bishop for Milan in A.D. 374. Ambrose was a model for this sacred office, both in public and private life. His best work is his moral and ascetical tomes. The man is renowned via “Ambrosian Chant,” connected with the Milanese (or Ambrosian) Rite of the Sacred Liturgy.

This Doctor of the Church writes in one of his commentaries:

“Do you think that this wisdom was wanting to the Evangelists? Although they are filled with various kinds [of wisdom], none the less each excels in his own kind. For in fact there is natural wisdom in the book of the Gospel that was written by John. For no one else, I venture to say, has seen God’s majesty and preserved it for us in his own words with such sublime wisdom. He went beyond the clouds, he went beyond the powers of heaven, he went beyond the angels and discovered the Word ‘in the beginning’ and saw the Word ‘with God’ (John 1:1).

And who pursued particular things with greater morality, for the sake of human beings, than Saint Matthew, who published for us the precepts of life?

What is more rational than Saint Mark’s idea that right at the beginning [of his gospel] there should be placed, in that marvelous conjunction: ‘Behold, I am sending my messenger’ (Mark 1:2) and: ‘The voice of one crying in the desert’ (Mark 1:3)? In this way he evoked our admiration and taught man that he must be pleasing by humility, abstinence and faith, just as the great Saint John the Baptist mounted to immortality by these steps — by his garb, his food and his message (cf. Mark 1:6-8).

But Saint Luke maintained as it were a certain historical order and revealed to us more of the Lord’s wondrous deeds — yet in such a way that the history in this Gospel embraces the qualities of wisdom in its entirety” (*Commentary on the Gospel according to Luke*, prologue 3-4; A.D. 377—389).

The citation, reformatted slightly, is taken from Fr. Boniface Ramsey’s *The Early Church Fathers: Ambrose* (p. 162). As an aside, this patristic series, *The Early Church Fathers* (Routledge Press), although expensive, is a great addition to one’s library. The volumes contain many previously inaccessible works that are a boon to the student of Scripture.



Let us return to the Ambrosian citation. Here are two observations from the quote. Firstly, St. Ambrose takes it for granted that the actual writers of the four Gospels were the Apostles (Ss. Matthew and John) or apostolic men (Ss. Mark and Luke). The bishop knew nothing of some obscure “early faith community,” which allegedly patched together some ecclesiastical writings over several generations, and after frequent layers of literary redaction.

Secondly, the overseer of Milan speaks about the lofty subject matter disclosed by the Evangelists. The sacred hagiographers were bestowed great graces to be passed down to mankind. This heavenly wisdom is the very sayings and feats of the Only Begotten Son recorded in the four Gospels. This treasure surpasses the true, the good, and the beautiful found even in the best and noblest of secular compositions.

St. Thomas Aquinas and Revelation:

Commentary on Titus 2:7-8

The *Douay-Rheims Bible* renders Titus 2:7-8 as follows: “In all things shew thyself an example of good works, in doctrine, in integrity, in gravity, The sound word that can not be blamed: that he, who is on the contrary part, may be afraid, having no evil to say of us.”

With this section before us, St. Thomas Aquinas now comments (in part) on St. Paul’s words to his son in the faith, Titus:

“Since you are young in age, ‘In all things shew thyself an example of good works.’ For a prelate ought to be as it were an example for his disciples. 1 Cor 11:1: ‘Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ.’ Jn 13:15: ‘For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also.’

Then when he says, ‘in doctrine,’ he posits the specific things in which he ought to show himself an example.

First, he shows what should be his action, namely, teaching; hence he says, ‘in doctrine.’ For this is proper to a prelate. Jer 3:15: ‘And I will give you pastors according to My own heart, and they shall feed you with knowledge and doctrine.’ And this is most befitting to him who has other bishops under him, as is said above 1:5, ‘Thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and shouldest establish presbyters in every city.’ And so by teaching others he should give them the example of teaching. 1 Tim 4:16: ‘Take heed to thyself and to doctrine: be earnest in



them. For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.’ Likewise, he admonishes him regarding his way of living. First, he ought to turn aside from evil. Is 1:16: ‘Wash yourselves, be clean, take away the evil of your devices from My eyes: cease to do perversely.’ And so he says, ‘in integrity,’ through incorruptibility. For just as a body destroys integrity through the corruption of its members, so also the soul through the corruption of sin. Now, in a prelate there is integrity of the mind through prudence, of the affections through charity, and of the body through chastity. 1 Thess 5:23: ‘And may the God of peace Himself sanctify you in all things; that your whole spirit, and soul, and body, may be preserved blameless in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.’ Second, that he be grave with respect to those goods which come with charity. Now, being grave has two things: one is that it descends, and according to this it is censured. Ps 4:3: ‘O ye sons of men, how long will you be grave of heart?’ The other is that it is stable and firm, and so they are called grave who are not easily moved from the good. It is thus here when he says, ‘in gravity,’ and this is commendable. Ps 34:18: ‘I will praise thee in a grave people.’”

The quotation, reformatted slightly, is from C. Baer’s *Thomas Aquinas: Commentaries on St. Paul’s Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon* (pp. 177-8).

The Magisterium Speaks:

The Pontificate of St. Pius X and Modernistic Exegesis

Pope St. Pius X (r. 1903—1914) dealt with the Modernist crisis in the early Twentieth Century. At that time, the Holy Roman and Universal Inquisition (i.e., the Holy Office) under this Pontiff, paid attention to the field of Biblical Studies. They would eventually issue 1907's *Lamentabili Sane* (Syllabus Condemning the Errors of the Modernists). Pius was not afraid of progress in academia — what he did fear was the undermining of the Catholic Faith through the guise of “new knowledge.” There is a necessary and legitimate place for research, but not at the cost of truth. Thus, the sainted and learned Vicar of Christ warns, via *Lamentabili*, about the following condemned errors that attack the Sacred Page:



“1. The ecclesiastical law which prescribes that books concerning the Divine Scriptures are subject to previous examination does not apply to critical scholars and students of scientific exegesis of the Old and New Testament.

2. The Church's interpretation of the Sacred Books is by no means to be rejected; nevertheless, it is subject to the more accurate judgment and correction of the exegetes.

3. From the ecclesiastical judgments and censures passed against free and more scientific exegesis, one can conclude that the Faith the Church proposes contradicts history and that Catholic teaching cannot really be reconciled with the true origins of the Christian religion.

4. Even by dogmatic definitions the Church's magisterium cannot determine the genuine sense of the Sacred Scriptures.

12. If he wishes to apply himself usefully to Biblical studies, the exegete must first put aside all preconceived opinions about the supernatural origin of Sacred Scripture and interpret it the same as any other merely human document.

19. Heterodox exegetes have expressed the true sense of the Scriptures more faithfully than Catholic exegetes.

24. The exegete who constructs premises from which it follows that dogmas are historically false or doubtful is not to be reproved as long as he does not directly deny the dogmas themselves.

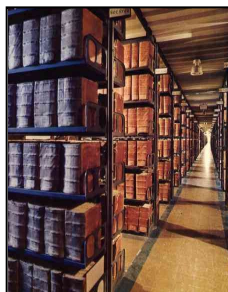
61. It may be said without paradox that there is no chapter of Scripture, from the first of Genesis to the last of the Apocalypse, which contains a doctrine absolutely identical with that which the Church teaches on the same matter. For the same reason, therefore, no chapter of Scripture has the same sense for the critic and the theologian.”

The labors of those who devote their lives to the study of God's Word should be appreciated by all. Such intellectual endeavors may reap benefits for the Church Militant. But the highly trained scholar, as well as the simple layman in the pew, must heed the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.

The Modernism of the last century was never expunged completely. For this reason, the 1907 Holy Office decree should be read in its entirety.

This issue will continue to examine the Biblical Commission's 1908 text, *On the Character of the Book of Isaiah and Its Author*. The first three parts of the five-part response (given in full in the last issue) covers not only authorship, but also some generalities of the office of prophet. Therefore, it will be helpful to discuss some basics.

Consider two instructive remarks on the prophet's task in Sacred History. Fr. J.M. Simon writes: ["Reproaching the evil-doer, threatening the obstinate, exhorting the negligent, arousing the dormant, consoling the afflicted, — all these are comprised in the prophet's work. His role is quiet district from that of the priest. The latter is chiefly concerned with the ordinary routine of life, which largely treads the road of precedent. The prophet, on the other hand, deals rather with emergencies, acute evils or dangers, critical situations; and his message, rooted in attendant circumstances, is generally novel, startling, always forceful"](#) (*A Scripture Manual* I:319-320). Fr. Hugh Pope states: ["Familiarity with the well-known Prophets from the eighth century onwards whose writings have come down to us should not blind us to the fact that the prophetic gift is represented as at least as old as the Hebrew race. Thus Abraham is called a 'Prophet,' and is therefore depicted as 'praying' for those who offend God; similarly Moses prophecies, and a 'Prophet' is sent to the children of Israel in the days of the judges, and he claims to speak in the name of the Lord"](#) (*The Catholic Student's "Aids" to the Study of the Bible* II:272).



The English term "prophet" has roots to the underlying Hebrew word *nābî'*. The term has over 300 appearances in the Old Testament. One could render the word as "spokesman" or "speaker." In the New Testament, the Greek word employed is *prophētēs* (cf. William D. Mounce, gen. ed., *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, pp. 544-545, 990, 1260).

Looking at the Old Testament, one sees the prophets were heralds of the divine will (Ex 4:12). It was the one, true God who called men to this special office (Amos 7:15). The prophet, in this calling, was especially equipped by God for such a unique mission (Jer 20:9). At times, during this ministry, the miraculous would accompany such men (2 Ki 4:1-7). Naturally, as conveyors of divine truths, the prophets often pointed to future events (Joel 2:28-29). So vital was the trade of prophets that there were clear tests to detect false ones from those who were true (Dt 13:1-3; 18:21-22). A survey of the lives of the divine seers testifies that they suffered greatly, and often bore little fruits from their heroic labors (cf. P. Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament*, pp. 18-22).

The actions and writings of the prophets are not mere ancient events from days past. These men convey a message from God that transcends both time and space (cf. R. Chisholm Jr., *Handbook on the Prophets*, p. 9). With this background, our next column will address particulars on authorship for the inspired tome of Isaiah.

Addressing Bible Difficulties:

Mark 2:23-28, Part II

Last issue asserted the prepositional phrase *epi Abiathar archiereōs* in Mark 2:26 refers to a time period — not a tenure of office. One witness (among many) to such an exegesis is *A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, p. 911, n. 789f (B. Orchard, gen. ed.). It is interesting that a translation tied to Messianic Judaism, *A Messianic Jewish Version of the New Covenant Scriptures*, agrees with this sense and renders the clause “in the days of Abiathar the high priest.”

The respected Evangelical scholar, Dr. Craig Blomberg, offers another interpretation:

“The preposition *epi* usually means ‘upon’, but in this context it makes no sense to translate ‘upon Abiathar the high priest’. Nevertheless, since in eighteen of the twenty-one places Mark uses this preposition with the genitive case it does refer to location rather than time, the translation ‘when’ is not very likely. John Wenham notices a close parallel in Mark 12:26 where Jesus cites the story of God appearing to Moses at the burning bush, in which he translates *epi tou batou* with the explanatory paraphrase ‘in the passage of Scripture concerning (or, entitled) the Bush’. Similarly, Mark 2:26 makes good sense if translated ‘at the passage of Scripture concerning (or, entitled) Abiathar the High Priest’, for the passage referred to comes in the chapter (1 Sam. 1:21) which immediately precedes the record of the first exploits of Abiathar. Since Abiathar is the more noteworthy of the two priests throughout the larger context of 1 Samuel, as the man who first brought the priesthood to David’s side in his struggle against Saul, it would not be unnatural to refer to several chapters under his name. Wenham’s translation thus preserves the more common use of the preposition *epi* as referring to location, even if the specific location in view is a passage of Scripture rather than a place on the globe” (*The Historical Reliability of the Gospels*, p. 193). In other words, the expression *epi Abiathar archiereōs* may be likened to a modern chapter division.



A recent work, Dr. M. Healy's *Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture: The Gospel of Mark* (p. 65, n. 3), mentions this possible interpretation elaborated above.

Let us recap. The clause deals either with a time period (i.e., an epoch), or with a location in Scripture (i.e., a chapter division). Neither reading is a strain upon reason.

Besides the linguistical clarifications, other proposals help explain Mark 2:26. Here is Fr. Cornelius a Lapide: “You will object that 1 Kings 21:6 says that this was done under Ahimelech, the father of Abiathar. I answer, first, that Abiathar was even then the pontiff together with his father, because when his father was absent, or sick, or otherwise engaged, he discharged the high priest’s office; and he was shortly to succeed his father, at his death in the pontificate. Listen to Bede: That the Lord calls Abiathar the high priest instead of Ahimelech involves no discrepancy, for both were on the spot when David came and asked for and received the loaves. And when Ahimelech was slain by Saul, Abiathar fled to David, and became his companion through the whole of his exile. Afterward, when David was king, he received the rank of the high priesthood; and continuing in the pontificate during the whole of David’s reign, he became much more celebrated than his father, and so was more worthy to be called high priest by the Lord, even during his father’s lifetime.

Second, and better: It is clear from scripture that both father and son bore both names, and were called sometimes *Abiathar*, sometimes *Ahimelech*. This appears from 2 Kings 8:17, 1 Paralipomenon 18:6 [typographical error, should be v. 16] and 24:6. Thus Jansen, Toletus, Salmeron, Franz Lucas, and others” (T. Mossman, et al., *The Great Commentary of Cornelius a Lapide: The Holy Gospel According to Saint Mark*, p. 17).

Next issue: final discussion on Mark 2:23-28.

The Sect of the Sadducees

Veritas Scripturae 4.2 examined the Pharisees. It is fitting to now look at their co-religionists, the Sadducees. Henri Daniel-Rops starts us off: “At the time of Christ, it appears that the Sadducees drew their members chiefly from the well-to-do class, the higher officials, wealthy merchants, land-owners and priests. They were in possession of the Temple and they controlled the Temple worship and the sacrifices; at the same time they were in command of the tithes and therefore of the financial system. It was from among the Sadducees that the statesmen and the diplomats were chosen — the men who maintained the essential relationships with the occupying authorities, relationships without which the country could not have carried on” (*Daily Life in the Time of Jesus*, pp. 388-389).

On a linguistic note, the plural Greek term *Saddoukaïos* may be derived from the Hebrew *saddiq* (“righteous”). There may also be a connection to the name Zadok, the high priest from the period of David. The Biblical dictionaries and encyclopedias debate this point.

Within the New Testament, the word “Sadducees” appears fourteen times. We find this sect at odds with John the Baptizer (Mt 3:4-12), the Savior (Mk 12:18-27), Ss. Peter and John (Acts 4:1-4), and St. Paul (Acts 23:1-10). Opposition between the Sadducees and the Good News is palpable.



The following are some of the main beliefs of the Sadducees:

- Accepted the Torah (the five books of Moses) alone as the Word of God, and interpreted it more literally than the Pharisees.
- Attributed all to free will, instead of free will and divine sovereignty working together.
- Rejected a belief in both angels and demons.
- Denied the resurrection and afterlife.
- Firm adherents to Levitical purity (cf. R. Thomas, *Charts on the Gospels and the Life of Christ*, pp. 72-73).

John Bright’s popular text, *A History of Israel*, speaks of the Sadducees this way: “It is probable that their foremost concern was that the Temple cult should be prosecuted and the law, especially its ritual and sacrificial features, carried out under the supervision of the constituted priesthood. Whatever they may have thought God’s ultimate purpose for Israel to be, their aim in the present was to see to it that this *status quo* was maintained. Being practical men of the world, they were willing to go to considerable lengths of compromise in order to do it, readily cooperating with the secular rulers, whether worldly-minded Hasmonaean priest-kings (who were of their stripe) or Roman procurators, and fearing above all things any disturbance that might upset the balance — which is why they found Jesus dangerous” (p. 461).

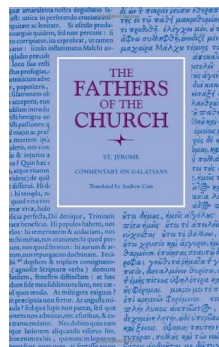
Book Recommendation:

The Fathers of the Church, Vol. 121: St. Jerome — Commentary on Galatians

Andrew Cain, trans. *The Fathers of the Church, Vol. 121: St. Jerome — Commentary on Galatians*. Washington, DC: Catholic University, 2010, 283 pages.

St. Jerome is the “Father of Biblical Studies,” and ranks among the celebrated exegetes within the Catholic Church. In spite of this fact, many of his commentaries are scarce in our era. One notable work that fills the void is Andrew Cain’s *The Fathers of the Church, Vol. 121: St. Jerome — Commentary on Galatians*.

The introduction, p. 49, says: “Jerome was the greatest Biblical scholar of the ancient Latin church. His *Commentary on Galatians* represents his first substantial attempt at systematic Biblical interpretation. Since he articulated in it the hermeneutical methodology that would come to dominate his later exegetical work, it stands as a key witness to a formative stage in his intellectual development. When compared with the other five extant Latin commentaries on Galatians from the fourth and early fifth centuries, Jerome’s *Commentary* stands out for the rigor of its Biblical textual criticism, the breadth of its classical and patristic erudition, and its research-intensiveness and expository thoroughness (it is two-thirds longer than any of the other five commentaries)”. This section covers many facets of St. Jerome’s interesting life. The remainder of the intro is well done, with a variety of useful material. This section throws light on the rest of the work.



The heart of the book is its exegesis. As it should be, here one finds in St. Jerome’s opus the theological and the practical wedded together. The later is seen in this snippet on Galatians 6:14: “The only person who can boast in the Cross of Christ is he who takes up his cross and follows the Savior, who has crucified his own flesh with its vices and sinful desires, who has died to the world, and who does not fix his eyes on what is seen but on what is unseen. For he sees the world crucified and its present form passing away. The world, then, is crucified to the righteous man. The Savior speaks of it when he says, ‘I have overcome the world,’ and, ‘Do not love the world,’ and, ‘You have not received the spirit of the world’” (p. 263). The former is read in this bit for Galatians 6:18: “*Amen* is a Hebrew word. The Septuagint translators render it as ‘let it be,’ while Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotus translate it as ‘faithfully’ or ‘truly.’ In the Old Testament God ratifies his own words with a conventional oath, saying, ‘As surely as I live, declares the Lord,’ and he also swears through his saints, ‘As surely as your soul lives.’ Likewise, in the Gospel our Savior uses the word *amen* to confirm that the words he utters are true. *Amen* signifies the hearer’s consent and is a sign of truthfulness” (p. 268).

Cain’s bibliography offers a plethora of sources for consultation. Among the indices are those for Scripture, and Hebrew and Greek words and phrases. One may quibble over some comments by the author. Nonetheless, this is a worthy volume for study and prayer.

A.M.D.G.

J.M.J.

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Mt 22:37).

"Jesus said to them, 'Is not this why you are wrong, that you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God?'" (Mk 12:24).

"And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He [Christ] interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Lk 24:27).

"Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (Jn 20:30-31).

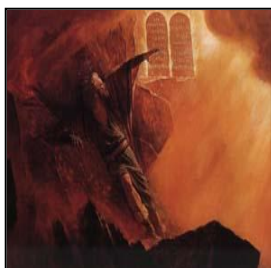
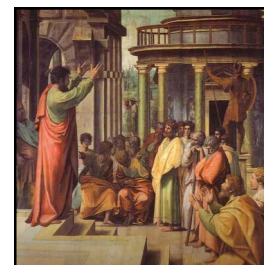
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