

Le Nouvel Esprit:
A Video Series on the Theology of
the Body

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The Prophetic Tradition Continued

- The prophets denounced Israel's abandonment of God by comparing it to adultery
- Hosea
 - Israel's betrayal of God is like betrayal of marriage
 - Israel acts as an adulteress and prostitute
 - Israel is the unfaithful Bride
 - God is the Bridegroom who does not stop looking for His Bride and calls for the conversion of the Bride

Ezekiel 16:5-8,12-15,30-32

- “Like a repugnant object you were thrown out in the open field on the day you were born. I passed near you while you were flailing about in your blood, and I said to you, “Live in your blood and grow up like a plant of the field.” You grew up and became tall and arrived at the flower of youth: your breasts blossomed, and you reached puberty, but you were naked and bare. I passed near you again and looked on you, and covered your nakedness: I swore a covenant with you, says the Lord God, and you became mine... I put a ring on your nose, earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown on your head. You were adorned with gold and silver, while your clothing was of fine linen, rich fabric, and embroidered cloth... Your fame spread among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect due to the glory I placed in you... But you, infatuated with your beauty and profiting from your fame, played the whore and lavished your favors on any passer-by... How degraded is your heart, says the Lord God, that you did all these things, the deeds of a shameless whore. Building your high place in every square, you were not like a prostitute in search of payment, but like an adulterous wife, who instead of her husband receives strangers!”

Adultery and Idolatry

- There is an analogy within the prophetic tradition between adultery and idolatry
 - The point of likeness here is the covenant of love
- God's love lead to the establishment of a covenant with Israel, by which God became Husband and Bridegroom
- God is betrayed many times through history by Israel through idolatry, which is compared with adultery
 - This was done as a choice by Israel as the Bride

The Sinfulness of Adultery

- Adultery is a sin because it is the breaking of the covenant between man and woman in marriage
- The legalization of polygamy in the Old Testament does not change this ethical fact
- Since polygamy and idolatry go hand-in-hand, only monogamy is the correct analogy for monotheism in terms of covenant
 - Covenant signifies a particular faithfulness and trust in God
- Adultery is the antithesis of the spousal relation and opposite to marriage
- Within marriage, the conjugal union is the *right* of the husband and wife, something that is exclusive between the two spouses, and is a *sign* of the communion of persons
 - Adultery violates this *right* and falsifies the *sign*

Sin of the Body

- Adultery is a sin of the body, a moral evil, because it is antithetical to the moral good of conjugal faithfulness
- Conjugal faithfulness can only be realized in the spousal relationship between one man and one woman
 - This relationship is proper to spousal love
 - This communion of persons has normative content that gives marriage as a covenant its essential meaning
- Adultery is a sin because it is antithetical to the marital covenant
- Adultery is the forming of a one flesh union between a man and woman who are not married
 - The sin of the body is defined in reference to the relationship between the persons
 - The moral status here depends upon
 - 1) Whether the relationship makes this conjugal union true or not
 - 2) Whether the conjugal union has the character of a truthful sign
- Adultery is judged to be a moral evil based upon its objective content

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