

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

TOB 64, General Audience of Nov. 11, 1981

“After a rather long pause...”

- Audience 63 was on May 6; one week later, May 13, Mehmet Ali Ağca attempted to assassinate John Paul II
- JPII is shot four times
- JPII in 1983 visited Mehmet Ali Ağca in Rebibbia Prison and forgave him
 - The two developed a friendship
- Mehmet Ali Ağca is pardoned by the Italian president in June 2000 at the request of JPII
- Fatima
 - May 13 is the anniversary of the first Fatima apparition
 - JPII credited to Our Lady of Fatima for saving his life

Introductory Remarks

- TOB 64 begins chapter 3;
 - The first part of section one is on the Synoptic Gospels and the resurrection of the body
 - Matthew, Mark, and Luke are the Synoptic Gospels
- Christ's appeal to the resurrection is critical for understanding the Christian meaning of marriage and continence for the Kingdom of Heaven
- The Old Testament casuistic tradition which led the Pharisees to question the indissolubility of marriage also led the Sadducees to question Jesus about Levirate marriage
 - Levirate marriage:
 - Comes from Deuteronomy 25:7-10
 - If a man died without leaving children, his brother had the duty to take the man's wife as his own
 - The child born from this marriage is recognized as the deadman's descendant
 - This preserved bloodlines
 - Cf. fn. 66, (p. 380)

The Sadducees' Argument

- The Sadducees wanted to argue against the resurrection of the body
- They argued as followed:
 - If there is a resurrection, then in the situation of a Levirate marriage, the same woman would have two husbands in the afterlife
 - Polyandry, however, is contrary to God's law
 - Polyandry: “polygamy in which a woman has more than one husband.” Oxford Dictionary
 - Therefore, there is no resurrection of the body

Christ's Reply to the Sadducees

- “Is not this the reason you are wrong, that you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they take neither wife nor husband, but are like angels in heaven” Mark 12:24-25
- “And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the story about the bush, how God said to him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?’ He is not God of the dead, but of the living” Mark 12:26-27
- “You are quite wrong” Mark 12:27

Jewish Groups During the Time of Jesus

- Pharisees
 - Emphasis on ritual purity to separate Jews from Gentiles (especially the Roman occupiers) which led to the establishment of many of their own traditions; popular with the masses
- Sadducees
 - literal interpretation of Scripture; accepted only the first five books of the Bible; believed that the soul died with the body; rejected the afterlife; wiped out as a group in 70 AD; associated with aristocracy and the priestly class; worked to maintain relations between Israel and the Romans
- Zealots
 - Jewish nationalist revolutionaries who wanted to overthrow the Roman occupation of the country; this culminated with the Jewish War in 66 AD and ended in 70 AD with the Roman destruction of Jerusalem and razing of the Temple

More Jewish Groups During the Time of Jesus

- Essenes
 - Lived along the Dead Sea; the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran was their library; lived a strict ascetic life; monastic communities; wiped out in 70 AD
- Diaspora Jews
 - Collective name for Jews who lived outside of Palestine; this began with the Assyrian conquest of Israel in the 8th century BC, followed by the Babylonian conquest in 586 BC; target of Gentile resentment due to their affluence as merchants and businessmen; after 70 AD they had the responsibility of continuing the Jewish religion

The Jewish War

- According to Josephus, over 1 million Jews died in the war
- Jerusalem and the Temple was destroyed; the entire city was torched
- The Roman general Titus built a trench and wall around the city of Jerusalem; the wall being as tall as those of the city
- Any person who was not a Roman soldier and caught outside the city walls was crucified

Quote from Josephus

- “...after they had fought, they thought it too late to make any supplications for mercy; so they were first whipped, and then tormented with all sorts of tortures before they died, and were then crucified before the wall of the city. This miserable procedure made Titus greatly to pity them, while they caught every day five hundred Jews; nay, some days they caught more; yet did it not appear to be safe for him to let those that were taken by force go their way; and to set a guard over so many, he saw would be to make such as guarded them useless to him. The main reason why he did not forbid that cruelty was this, that he hoped the Jews might yield at that sight, out of fear lest they might themselves afterwards be liable to the same cruel treatment. So the soldiers out of wrath and hatred they bore the Jews, nailed those they caught, one after another, and another after another, to the crosses, by way of jest; when their multitude was so great, that room was wanting for crosses, and crosses wanting for bodies.” *The Wars of the Jews*, 5:449-451

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