

The context of the medieval hermeneutic theology religion essay



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To try an reading of the Theodulf apsis mosaic it will be necessary to see how some early Christian authors viewed marks and images. Make to this the ideas and plants of Augustine, Gregory the Great and Bede will be addressed in this paper. Their train of idea will be predicated on cognition of Bible so transitions from the Bible will be highlighted when relevant. The extended work of these three Christian minds can non all be referenced here accordingly works that are relevant to specific countries of this research be utilized for the undertaking in manus. The old work by Freeman and Meyvaert, on explicating the thought behind the apsis ' s image will be cardinal to the overall paper and will be relied on extensively to confirm any findings.

With the triumph of Constantine in the fourth-century, Christianity emerged from the shadow of imperial persecutions. The new found freedom experienced by Christians, under emperors who were now favorable to them, encouraged Christians to get down an intense period of scholarly contemplation on the foundations and nature of their faith.[1]Augustine of Hippo was leading amongst these bookmans and was responsible for a significant principal of theological work, including, On the Trinity, Confessions, City of God and On Christian Teaching. Considered one of the most intelligent of theologists his ideas on a broad scope of Christian thoughts remained influential for centuries. Augustine ' s thoughts would hold an influence on of import figures in Christianity, including, Pope Gregory the Great and the Venerable Bede. Christianity ' s strong belief of its individuality and topographic point in history along with concerns of worship were merely some of the chief issues addressed by these three of import

figures from the early medieval universe. Christian religion from the beginning was seen by its followings as a continuance of the antediluvian relationship between God and world. The relationship between God and Israel was a historical compact of Providence,[2]dependent on the kids of Israel acting right in adhering to promises made by their sires.

God had shown his Providence toward Israel and its kids through assorted Acts of the Apostles of redemption ; they in bend were to adhere to his commandments and follow the Law. In making as they were commanded God ' s benevolence was guaranteed, nevertheless infidelity could convey about godly requital, such as the inundation or the captivity in Babylon. The promise of a savior, who would one time more unite world with God, was for Judaic people, portion of God ' s promise to them for continuing the historical record of the commandments received by Moses.[3]The ensuing rejection of Christ as the Jesus, by the Judaic people, was for Christians, a rejection of the godly history and prognostication contained in the testament which detailed God ' s interaction with his chosen people. Augustine ' s sentiment on books of Bible and their topographic point in Christianity is relevant on these points and can be discerned from his commentary on Genesis, where he states, ' In all the Holy Books it is necessary to see what ageless things are announced, what workss are narrated, what future things are foretold, and what things are enjoined or admonished to be done. '[4]The familial nexus of Christianity and the Old Testament to Jesus Christ is besides emphasized in Matthew, sketching a genealogical nexus from Jesus back through the past to David and go oning back to Abraham.[5]To Christians, before and after Augustine, the old compacts between God and the Judaic

people, were seen as precursors to the birth of Christ, signaling a concluding transportation of God ' s Providence through Christ, to them, and therefore to all world. In rejecting Christ the Jews are believed to hold renounced any nexus to Holy Scripture, a point that is made in New Testament Hagiographas such as Corinthians where the Old Testament can be claimed to be replaced by the new.[6]In neglecting to recognize Christ as the Jesus promised in Bible the Jews have failed to understand what was presented in the Old Testament and hence can non avail of the " utile " marks it contains, marks that outline God ' s great program for all world.[7]Augustine is inexorable that an reading of marks is the key to larning[8]and a complete cognition of godly Bible is necessary before look intoing them for these marks. To get down to seek and accomplish this, a changeless reading of Bible needed to be accompanied with cognition of any old determinations made by the Catholic Churches, including statement made by those individuals deemed to hold the right authorization to make up one's mind on inquiries of Bible. Augustine farther emphasizes the grounds why construing written books can be hard, turn toing the differences in how a texts significance can be hidden by unknown or equivocal marks. Actual marks can be interpreted by their usage for mundane topics, in this instance the usage of the word ox for a farm animate being. However, he highlights the instance of an equivocal mark with mention to the symbolic image of the revivalist Luke and the usage of the word bovem alternatively of ox.[9]

The message in Holy Scripture could therefore merely be genuinely understood when cognition of its different significances was understood by the reader. In the proceeding transitions of book two and three Augustine

examines the nature of biblical linguistic communication and the proper methods of scriptural enquiry. An apprehension of linguistic communications is, he says, an of import assistance to construe the text, but, the most valuable tool to any Christian was the development of specializer cognition to construe the unknown marks. The scriptural text could incorporate different significances, so cognition of them could merely get down to be known through repeated survey of the Old and New Testaments. Knowing what the text was about was cardinal to any apprehension of scriptural text, while at the same clip staying witting that everything was communicated by marks. The linguistic communication itself could be poetic, metaphorical or allegorical and this excessively had to be determined by the reader.

[10]Markus provinces, how the universe of Biblical marks was cardinal to Augustine ' s thought, with the Old Testament being the most of import because of its " most interesting and richest scope of possible significances " .[11]Augustine ' s lineation, of the presence of marks in text, particularly Holy Scripture, presents a baseline on which to continue farther in outlying how Theodulf ' s apsis mosaic might get down to be interpreted below. The go oning usage of the Old Testament and its reading within a Christian paradigm offers farther aid in our undertaking.

Gregory the Great could see no ambiguities in construing the Old Testament marks proclaiming Christ as the Jesus. For Gregory the embodiment, birth, passion, Resurrection and Ascension to heaven are the clearest marks that Christ had fulfilled the prognostications that the Jews refused to acknowledge.[12]A closer scrutiny of Scripture, in Gregory ' s idea, besides had the power to help a individual through contemplation, leting the reader

to accomplish a higher brotherhood with God. In his Homily on Ezekiel, Gregory states how Bible can change over the reader from “ earthly desires to encompassing the higher Lord ” . He farther praises the value of Bible to dispute the mind for those who can understand the vague expressions, while the plainness of the text “ pleases the weaker ” .[13]On noticing on ‘ the pack of Prophetss ‘ in an infusion from 1 Kings, Gregory extols the Prophetss as portion of the Holy Church whose mission was to uncover the concealed deepnesss of Bible and to prophesize what is to come. They non merely “ convey the concealed significances of the Scripture to general cognition ” but besides foretell all joys which are to come.[14]Gregory ‘ s thought procedure on Bible can be seen to be really similar to that of Augustine as outlined above. A Christian, in the eyes of Gregory has the capacity to see all marks contained in Scripture because they have accepted Christ as the Jesus but the Judaic individual is blind to these marks. The Jews in rejecting Christ can non see beyond the marks in Old Testament, even these marks are misread by them as they refuse to acknowledge the beginnings of Christianity within them. The Old Testament connexions announcing the birth of Christianity through Christ have been sought by and understood by Augustine and Gregory. The manner both have been presented in respect to the usage of images is of farther value to us at this point. Markus has drawn comparings between the two on this respect. Augustine, in his position sees an image as being a self-contained experience with no farther value gained by its presentation doing it excess at best. Gregory on the other manus sees the value an image can convey and compare it about in a textual manner.

Infusions from how both Augustine and Gregory described images can assist to explicate these opposite positions. An image to Augustine is at that place to be appreciated and nil else whilst with letters they are non merely looked at but one is " bidden besides to read them " . Gregory in contrast can see beyond the image as a thing to be merely apprehended and acknowledge the components of its make-up. In his brooding manner Gregory can see an image is both a aggregation of colorss and a representation of a thing or event. Not acknowledging this relationship to image and its word picture is like disregarding the message contained in spoken words. " Person who looks at the colors of a image merely to disregard the things depicted is extremely stupid ; so, if we hear the words externally said and ignore their significance, we are similar people who stick to looking at the colors without cognizing what is depicted by the image. "[15]It could surely be claimed that a combination of both Augustine and Gregory ' s positions on marks are prevailing in Theodulf ' s apsis mosaic. While Augustine was in all facets against the usage of marks in spiritual instruction, Gregory can be seen to at least see their value. In a missive to Senerus Bishop of Marseilles, Gregory praising the actions of Senerus in halting hand-made objects being adored in his metropolis Gregory goes on to explicate why images are used in the church with the followers. " For pictural representation is made usage of in Churches for this ground ; that such as are nescient of letters may at least read by looking at the walls what they can non read in books. "[16]That is non to state they could of all time excel the value placed on Bible, images possessed no sanctity in comparing to the Holy Scriptures and would therefore remain common semisynthetic objects of man-made topic to the depredations of clip, unlike the word of God which was considered ageless.

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With the thoughts and way of Augustine and Gregory the apsis mosaic of Theodulf of Orleans can now be addressed.

Ann Freeman has outlined the historical events environing the period before the creative activity of Theodulf ' s apsis mosaic. The two eastern synods that contradicted each other on the abolishment and worship of images were cardinal to Theodulf ' s place against the usage of images as is described in the Libri Carolini.[17]Theodulf, like Augustine before him, saw Bible as a hoarded wealth to be mined and as the lone true way to redemption. His antipathy to images we are told extended to his Bibles, with birds the lone life animals depicted along with forms and non figurative motives.[18]The pick of ornament for his mosaic, the Ark of the Covenant, can be seen to follow a centuries old subject within Christianity. Christians from the really get downing based their religion on events which were considered to hold happened in a historical timeframe stretching back through the ages and recounted in the Old Testament. God ' s go oning Providence towards his chosen people, through his of Acts of the Apostless of redemption, were a precursor to a new beginning that for Christians was " brought to consummation in Jesus Christ. "[19]Harmonizing to Augustine, history if it had any usage at all in Christianity did so, on the provision that it was used to decode messages in Bible.[20]The Ark of the Covenant and the Cherubim must be viewed in this model in seeking to explicate its image of pick. To make so it is deserving discoursing a short history of its topographic point in the Old Testament. The Ark was the most holy object the Hebrewss possessed and was built on God ' s instructions to Moses at Mount Sinai. [21]The Cherubim were placed on either terminal of the propitiatory facing

towards it and each other.[22]The Ark was portion of the Israelite mind after the new compact with Moses, and accompanied them on their journey to the Promised Land. Its power, as a symbol of the compact with God, is reflected in the fear and swear the Hebrews placed upon it. Its going power to help the Hebrews in their clip of demand confirmed to them that God was still providentially stepping in on behalf of his chosen people.

[23]Under the counsel of David foremost and so Solomon it is placed in a place of fear and is finally housed in the Holy of Holies in the Temple at Jerusalem. The contents of the Ark: the Ten Commandments: the manna from Heaven and the rod of Aaron so acted as farther physical reminders, to the Israelites, of their compact with God. In Christian exegesis the manna was seen as a prefiguring of the Eucharist. The manna from Eden was given to the Israelite to last the journey in the desert.[24]Paul uses this event in 1 Cor 10: 3 to compare it as a prefiguring of the Christians who would observe the Eucharist as a religious nutrient to take them to ageless live. The contents of the Ark can all be seen to be points through which God revealed himself to the Israelites and manifested his power in favor of them. The Ark, its winged cherubim came to be hailed as the throne of God and a changeless reminder of the Israelite promise to populate harmonizing to the jurisprudence of the Ten Commandments.

The Ark and its topographic point in the history of Christianity, recurs throughout the work of Bede and is specifically dealt with in his preachment, On the Temple. Bede in his work of exegesis makes legion comparings to how the edifice of the temple was a prefiguring of the Christian church and its community. The temple in Jerusalem is correspondent with the

cosmopolitan church of Christianity through the journey of the Israelites in the desert,[25]the heathens helping its building, hence for Bede ; one demand merely understand the enigmas of the Old Testament to see the message of the New Testament contained within.[26]The design of Theodulf ' s apsis mosaic has harmonizing to Freeman " a literary beginning " in Bede ' s, On the Temple, and was inserted into the Opus Caroli ' s text by Theodulf.[27]The text evidently played a important function in Theodulf ' s thought and may hold been instrumental in his pick of the Ark as an image. The cherubim on the Ark are dealt in great item by Bede. Solomon has made a farther two cherubim to attach to those placed by Moses on the propitiatory, as mentioned above. This add-on by Solomon is for Bede a prefiguring of the Christian church under Christ where Jew and Gentile were unfastened to the word of God. The touching of the wings of the cherubim symbolizes the all embracing love of the in acknowledging both Jew and heathen as belonging to the Kingdom of Eden.[28]Furthermore, harmonizing to Bede the two cherubim could besides stand for the two testaments, the authors of the Old and New Testaments were all working under the counsel of God and both proclaim his glorification.[29]Bede may besides hold influenced Theodulf on why images could be used in the church. Although Freeman does detail Theodulf ' s work against images in the Opus Caroli, she does besides province that in his defence, one might more properly speak of " weariness towards images, no hostility, merely cautiousness " .[30]A similar attitude can be discerned by Bede refering figures such as the cherubim. The temple is described as being adorned with images and figures that are at that place to demo the good plants done in the name of God.[31]

Freeman and Meyvaert have besides posited a trip to the church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, by Theodulf, as playing a function in act uponing his pick of the Ark as a cardinal image.[32]The building of the original church and its inside may hold started in the 420s CE but it was most likely finished around 432 CE or during the pontificate of Sixtus III. The naming of the basilica is due to the success of the western church at the council of Ephesus in 431 CE when Mary was declared Theotokos, the Mother of God. There are over two twelve lasting mosaics along either side of the nave depiction scriptural scenes from the Old Testament. The first scene depicts the scriptural narrative of the autumn of Jericho with the Ark of the Covenant being paraded around the metropolis. The Ark contained the Ten Commandments, the cosmopolitan Torahs of civilisation handed down by God to Moses. The 2nd image shows the licking of the Amorites by Joshua with the manus of God shown unleashing a downpour of hailstones to help their triumph. Other scenes along the nave show Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Elijah and David. The cardinal subject in these mosaics is God step ining in earthly affairs to steer his chosen people and get the better of their enemies ; they are a ocular representation of God ' s compact with both Abraham and Moses. This thought of Gods continued benevolence and protection for his people, through Christ, is cardinal to the Christian ideal of the New Testament replacing the Old Testament. The mosaics depict these Hebraic phenomena and in one scene is seen run intoing with King Melchizedek. Additionally, a Christ-Logos is shown above them to demo the relationship Christ has to Abraham and the Priest King of Jerusalem, Melchizedek. This iconography can be seen to be of import in early Christian

religion to stand for the patriarchal transportation of religious power from Abraham to Jesus.[33]

The scene in Germigny was most likely intended to be seen by Theodulf and his close associates who would have understood the deep significance behind the image. The Ark had become associated with the presence of God in the Old Testament. In Isa 37: 16 the God of Israel is described as one who 'sitteth upon the cherubims', while in 2 Sa 6: 2 God is one time more described as sitting between the cherubim placed on the Ark. The Ark, its contents, the cherubim and the propitiatory all became associated with God's heaven-sent presence with his chosen people. The Ark and the cherubim hence served a double intent; "a depository for the Decalogue, and therefore a changeless reminder of the compact of Sinai".[34] For Theodulf the Ark and Cherubim took on those thoughts as had been expressed in the ideas of Augustine, Gregory the Great and Bede. The Ark was a representation of the historical actions of God when the Jews were his chosen people and received his Providence. However, it took on a new significance for Christians in moving as a precursor to the birth of Christ and the creative activity of a cosmopolitan church, a church that was unfastened to all, both Jew and heathen. Freeman has shown us how the image of the Ark and the cherubim along with its lettering were placed to animate supplication and non-worship.[35] As has been mentioned above the Ark was one of the most powerful symbols of the Old Testament but under Theodulf it encourages the spectator to pray and give thanks for the new compact, brought about by the birth, prophesying, death and Resurrection of Christ. Everything about how it was laid out on the apsis spoke in Christian

imagination and symbolism. In Christianity the Ark and cherubim had been seen as a symbol to prefigure Christ and his followings. Ann Freeman has articulately laid out the overall significance of the Apse ' s mosaic in Theodulf ' s thought. The Ark itself prefigured Christ and the church, and the manna kept in it the staff of life of the Eucharist ; the rod of Aaron was symbolic of Christ as King and priest and the tablets of the jurisprudence signified the two testaments ” .[36]In go forthing the Ark empty it can be concluded that Theodulf is stand foring Christianity as a whole. As the apogee of the events foretold in the Old Testament the reaching of Christianity has subsumed Judaism ; the Old Testament has been replaced by the New Testament. The compact between God and his chosen people has now transferred to all people who follow Christ intending the Ark and its contents are no longer peculiar to a choice few but alternatively universally available to all.