Section II
Christological Perspectives On Anthropology

The next three chapters in turn looks at humankind from a Christological perspective. The person and work of Christ and how it relates to humankind is the main focus of these chapters.

The concrete physical meaning of Christ becoming human is the focus of Chapter 3, *The Flesh became Word: Judges 19*. The Levite who pushed out his concubine to be gang-raped in his place is related to the Word becoming flesh. The confession that He conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary takes on a critical character when it is related to the suffering of the concubine. Flesh is sin and weakness in Scriptures. Christ becoming flesh is Christ becoming sin (2 Cor 5). Christ’s suffering comes close to humankind when one realises that the Levite “writes” to all Israel with the broken body of the concubine, while the Word is written with the body and blood of Christ. The Spirit is involved in making the Word Flesh in Christ becoming human. The Spirit also reveals Christ in the words about the concubine as he does with the terrible events written in the newspaper.

Chapter 4, *Trinity in the temptation narrative and the interpretation of Noordmans, Dostoyevski, and Mbeki*, investigates “temptation” in Scripture with special emphasis on the narrative in Luke 4. It proposes a trinitarian structure and critically assesses the anthropological deductions often made from this passage. This chapter proposes that one can only escape anthropological reductions by looking at the temptation narrative firstly from a Christological and only then from a Pneumatological perspective. From a Christological perspective Christ is tempted to do or correct the work of the Creator by making bread. In relation to this He is also tempted to create His own Messianic Kingdom. Finally He is tempted to follow the whisperings of his own spirit rather than that of the Holy Spirit. Pneumatologically speaking humanity is tempted to have power over creation, over humanity and power of proof of faith. Where Noordmans elucidates the Christological
aspects of the temptations, Dostoyevski provides the Pneumatological aspects whereby humankind is tempted to take over the work of Christ. Mbeki takes elements from the context of the temptation narrative and applies it to a political situation, which leads to an anthropological reduction of the temptations. This chapter elucidates some aspects of the suffering (under Pontius Pilate) of Christ as it is confessed in the Apostles Creed.

Chapter 5, *The Suffering Servant*, looks at the atonement of humankind through the work of the Servant of the Lord. The relation between the *Stellvertretung* of the Servant and that of Christ, opens up a different perspective on humanity and its relation to Christ and its responsibility in this world. The crucial element in the place-taking of the Servant is the fact that the people thought he deserved to be punished in this way by God. This element of the place-taking of Christ refers to the exclusive nature of His work, whereby the people saw themselves as excluded from what they saw. The place-taking of another’s existence (*Existenzstellvertretung*), which is incomprehensible and even disgusting to most modern commentators, is exactly what the Servant did by taking on their sickness\(^{185}\). Dostoyevski and Noordmans point out that place-taking is in a sense the culmination of what it means to be human. This chapter focusses on the work of Christ, that he was crucified, died and was buried, he descended to the dead, on the third day he rose again as it features in the confession.

\(^{185}\) See chapter 6 for the expiatory suffering of the seven sons of Saul for the guilt of Saul and the whole nation.
Chapter 3
The Flesh became Word: Judges 19

Abstract

The Flesh became Word: Judges 19. This chapter is engaged in an inter-textual dialogue with the Old Testament, New Testament as well as the visual arts and its feminist interpretation. The question of the relation between word and flesh, which arises from this dialogue, is further explored and related to the present day violence in South Africa and the role of the church therein.

Sawed apart corpse not yet identified

“The upper-body – without arms, legs and head – of a teenage girl, which was found by a wood cutter on Tuesday in a shallow grave near Atlantis, has not yet been identified. The Police suspect that an electric saw, similar to that used at a butchery, was probably used to saw apart the body of the girl. At this stage it is almost impossible to identify the corpse, because the rest of the body has not been found yet …”

A Stranger in Ephraim, a Levite, took a concubine from Bethlehem. They got into an argument and she went back to her father in Bethlehem. The Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia proposes that she left because she had been sexually unfaithful to him, while the LXX proposes that she left because she was angry at him. The commentators disagree on this point. Exum finds it ...

186 This chapter was published as an article in the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif 42, no. 3, 4 (2001): 406-415.
187 “Opgesaagde meisie se lyk nog nie geëien: Die bolyf – sonder arms, bene en kop – van 'n tienermeisie wat Dinsdag deur 'n houtkapper in 'n vlak graf naby Atlantis gevind is, is nog nie geëien nie. Volgens die Polisie word vermoed dat 'n elektriese saag, soortgelyk aan dié in slaghuise, moontlik gebruik is om die meisie op te saag. In die stadium is dit feitlik onmoontlik om die lyk te identifiseer, omdat die res van die liggaam nog nie opgespoor is nie ... ” (Rapport, Sunday 23 July 2000).
188 Further BHS.
incomprehensible that the man would go after her to “speak to her heart” if she had been the guilty party. Cundall proposes that this is itself a rather suggestive term. The Olson shows how Shechem “spoke to heart” of Dinah after he had raped her, while Trible points out that this construction is also used when Yahweh speaks to the untrue Israel in Hs 2:13 [16]. Thus God also asks that Israel must be comforted by “speaking to her heart” that her guilt has been paid for in Is 40:2. Also Joseph speaks in this manner to comfort his brothers, when they fear that he will revenge himself for the evil they did to him (Gn 50:21).

The Levite took his servant and his two donkeys and went to “speak to her heart.” He was well received in his father-in-law’s house. His father-in-law persuaded (חָזַק) him to stay and they ate and drank and had a feast for three days. The Levite wanted to depart on the fourth day, but the girl’s father offered him a piece of bread (Bethlehem is not for nothing the “house of bread”), “to fortify his heart” (סָעַד לֵב) before he departs, just as Abraham, the intercessor for Sodom does to his visitors in Gen. 18:5. Once again the two of them eat and drink together. The girl’s father asks him yet again to stay the night and “to make merry his heart” (literally to “make his heart good”: לֵביָטַב). The man, however, prepared to leave, but the father again persuaded him to stay, which he did.

On the fifth day the man prepared to leave early, but the girl’s father said to him again: “Fortify your heart (סָעַד לֵב) and stay here until the afternoon, after which they ate again. By the afternoon the man wanted to leave, upon which the father-in-law, the girl’s father told him that it is already late and that he must stay over make

189 Exum, J C. Was sagt das Richterbuch den Frauen? (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1997b), 58.
merry his heart (לֵבָביתְבַּי). This time, however, the man did leave. It remains a question whether the concubine was as keen to go with the Levite as Rebecca was to go with Abraham’s servant in Gn. 24, seeing as she was not even consulted on the matter.

Three days of feasting and a further two days make the father-in-law’s hospitality seem somewhat excessive. The repetitive persuasive effort and the continual attempts to fortify his heart and to be glad, probably had the man at the end of his tether. Like Peter (Jn 21:15-17) he would feel that he has by this time expressed his loyalty enough. Here the question is not “do you love me”? but rather “do you love her”? Many commentators attempt to see these repetitions as the result of a redactional fusion of two stories. This episode seems somewhat too much and almost humoristic, but in light of what is to come, it is of great importance.

Since they only managed to leave late that day, the question of where they were going to stay that night was a burning problem. The man, who was still probably congratulating himself on getting back his concubine and managing to get out of the uncomfortable situation at his in-laws, makes a stand against his servant, that they must not stay over with non-Israelites in Jebus (later Jerusalem), but rather in Gibeah of Ramah with their fellow Israelites. While it grows dark on the town square in Gibeah (the hill) and nobody extends the customary hospitality towards them, he would probably have rued his insistence to stay over in Gibeah.

An old man, a stranger, comes to their aid and takes them in for the night. The fact that a stranger and sojourner extended the customary hospitality towards them, highlights the unacceptable behaviour of the Benjaminite townspeople, whose duty it was to provide them shelter. The questions that the old man asks are also not fitting within the customs of hospitality.¹⁹² The desperation of the Levite to find shelter is emphasised by the fact that he hints at his position of Levite (because he is on his way to the house of the

The Flesh became Word: Judges 19

Lord) and further transgresses the customary law by declaring his self sufficiency: he is able to provide fodder for the donkeys and food and wine for his own party and his host’s household. His servile attitude in offering himself and his concubine as the old man’s servants (v 19) is also a subtle form of manipulation, which becomes true later in the story in a way he could never have intended.

Even though it took some bargaining, they were finally inside by the warm fire of hospitality and the door shut out the dark night against which the old man warned. After the long wait in the town square in the dark, the Levite probably more than once longed for the over-exaggerated hospitality of the father-in-law. After the donkeys were fed and their feet were washed, they again ate and drank and made their hearts merry like they did in the house of the father-in-law (לֵביָטַב).

While they had their feast, bad men surrounded the house and hammered on the door. They ordered the old man to hand over the man he took in so they could “know” him. They asked the old man to hand over his guest for homosexual gang rape.

Ironically the host pleads with the band of men to let the Levite stay in his house, just like the father-in-law pleaded with the Levite to stay in his house. There is, however, nothing humorous about this pleading.

The Levite who feasted a whole week at his father-in-law’s house, whose heart was “fortified” twice and twice “made merry” and once again in the house of the old man, grabbed (חָזַק) his concubine and pushed her outside to the band of men.

In the Hebrew it is only stated that “the man” pushed her outside. It is not clear whether this is a reference to the Levite or to

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193 The hitpael form of the verb indicates the intensiveness and the violence of the knocking on the door (Cundall, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, Judges 1968, 196).
194 סָעַד לֵב in verse 5,8 and לֵביָטַב in verse 6,9,22.
the old man. It could well have been either. If it were the old man, it still does not exonerate the Levite who has offered them all to the old man as their servants (v 19). This event has parallels in the lives of Abraham and Isaac who offered their wives up for their own safety (Gn 12 and 26). The Levite would now effectively offer her up again by allowing the old man to push her out. He has now provided for himself as he so bravely bargained for with the old man.

They raped her all night until the morning and let her go at dawn. This was done by Benjaminite brothers who were circumcised as a sign of God’s covenant.

At daybreak the woman fell at the door of the man’s house until it became light. Take note that the Levite is now called her ‘lord’ and no longer ‘the man’. ‘Her lord’ rose in the morning. Could he really have slept during such a night? He opened the door, which meant the cruelest of humiliating a few hours earlier, and wanted to go on his way. Would he not even go and look for her? It is as if he fell over her body before he saw her, lying there on with her hands on the threshold.

Then he said: “Stand up and let us go,” but there was no answer. It is never specified when she dies. Mieke Bal proposes that she died many times or rather never stopped dying, since the text never says when she dies. Her condition remains ambiguous and thus to the detriment of the Levite. If she was still alive, he is the murderer and if she is already dead, he defiles himself as a Levite for touching a corpse.\(^{195}\)

He then put her on his donkey and set out for home. Having reached his home he took a knife, grabbed (חָזַק;) his concubine and cut her up in twelve pieces. This grabbing is the same as the the grabbing when she was pushed out to the band of men. This is

also the word used for the way the father-in-law retained them for three days (v 4). Interestingly the insistence on hospitality of the father-in-law is the same as the insistence to violence of the Levite against his concubine. The force of the father’s care, the Levites fear for the band of men and the Levite’s revenge are expressed identically.

The word for the knife that the Levite uses (מַאֲכֶלֶת), refers to a cultic offering knife and is used in only two other places in the Old Testament. The other place of note is in Gn 22 where Abraham offers Isaac to God. The Levite also left his house with his donkey and his servant, like Abraham, but was unaware of the offering that awaited him and that he would provide the lam for the offering himself.

He cut her up into twelve pieces like Saul would later cut up a cow to call the people to war (1 Sm 11). He sent a piece to all twelve tribes of Israel, which had to include Benjamin. The verb (שָׁלַח) used for the sending of her body through Israel is the same word used to described how the band of men sent the concubine back home after the gang rape.

The fact that Benjamin did not respond to the call, meant that they identified themselves with their brothers in Gibeah. In their silence they brought a judgment over themselves, because this shameful deed says: “Take it to heart – Speak”!

**Flesh is sin and weakness**

This is probably one of the most disturbing stories in the Bible. If one did not know where it came from, one would most likely not have guessed that it could have come from the Bible of all places. It sounds more like a thriller.

196 This term for knife (מַאֲכֶלֶת) only occurs in Gn 22:6, 10; in Pr 30:14 and here in Jdg 19:29.

Seeing as it is written in the Bible one would be tempted to look for a lesson in it. Someone to whom such a thing happened would must have done something terrible. In asking students in Madagascar who the guilty person was, they quickly came to the conclusion that the woman’s sin against her husband was the cause of all the violence. It was the punishment she deserved. A person’s sins does not go unpunished and this would be a good illustration of this commonly held opinion. Her inhospitality towards her husband was the cause of these men’s inhospitality towards her. She got her just desserts as one often says about girls who stay out late at night and are raped or about the people sleeping in the streets or the street children who sniff glue.\(^{198}\) It is so easy for us to blame the persons who become the victims of violence. One could try to exonerate the woman by reading the LXX,\(^{199}\) but would only make the story less true to life. The text says that she committed adultery. She is not innocent. How would one judge her in a just way?

One could say that this sinner belonged within the circle of bad people which closed around her. One would then not like to think of the circle of ‘good people’ which close around the sinful woman in Jn 8, because through our judgment we would count among them. If, however, we allow ourselves to read further, we would eventually come to a circle of ‘good people’ who close around a ‘bad man’ in Gethsemane.

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\(^{198}\) This is a common problem in South Africa. The street children sniff the glue as a cheap form of drug.

\(^{199}\) Niditch (and other feminist theologians) chose the LXX variant that reads that she became angry at her husband (\(\omega\rho\gamma\iota\sigma\theta\eta\)), Niditch, S. "The "Sodomite" Theme in Judges 19-20: Family, Community, and Social Disintegration." Catholic Biblical Quarterly 44 (1982): 366. I follow the MT (\(\nu\tau\zeta\eta\nu\nu\)) and the other LXX variant (\(\epsilon\pi\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\upsilon\theta\eta\)).
We would then probably quickly feel compelled to make some distinctions. He was no adulterer like these women; but Paul says that he was “made sin” for us (2 Cor 5:21). He walked into our sin when He walked into the Jordan river just like that woman walked into the night. The ‘good people’ surrounded him as a sinner on that hill, just as we do with the Levite’s concubine and a raped girl, even when we would say that He had no sin. The stones we throw on the woman hit Him.

Rembrandt made sketches of both Jdg 19 and Jn 8 – the woman on the threshold of the house after the ordeal and the woman on the threshold of the temple surrounded by the ‘good people’. Both adulteresses plead for grace from the temple goers, plead for a home from their masters, because they do not have the material or the moral ability to afford it like the Levite and the Pharisees.

This is well portrayed in the movie, The General's Daughter. The general’s daughter is gang raped by her fellow male trainees in the military. Her father, the general, visits her in the hospital that terrible night. Being aware of the diplomatic night-mare and damage this would cause the image of military, he tells her to keep it quiet. This is the moment of the greatest violence in the whole story. “What is worse than rape – betrayal.” She prostitutes herself in the camp and commits the most violent sexual activities, but is powerless to break the silence.200

She is not innocent, just like the Levite’s concubine. How would we justly judge her? All too easily we find ourselves in the circle of ‘good people’ around the woman in Jn 8, who are in truth more pitiless than the circle of ‘bad people’ around the woman in Jdg 19. More cruel than the rape of the concubine is the Levite sleeping in the house. More cruel than the violence is the thought that you deserve it.

200 The general's daughter, by the director Simon West of Paramount Pictures (USA 1999), is based on the book by Demille Nelson.
All hospitality was taken away from her. She, who had the right to the hospitality from the people of the covenant had to extend absolute hospitality to them as a stranger.

This is portrayed in the movie by Lars von Trier: *Breaking the waves,*\(^{201}\) It tells the story of a mentally challenged girl, Bess, who falls in love with a man working on an oil rig in Scotland. They get married. When he stays away on the rig too long, she prays that God would send him back home to her. He is seriously injured in an accident and does come back as she asked, but he is unable to walk after brain surgery.

Since, he can no longer sleep with her and under influence of medication, he asks her to have sex with other men and to come tell him about it. At first, she refuses, but because of her feelings of guilt and love for him she does it. Her sister and doctor both try to dissuade her, but she continues until she is banned from the church as a prostitute and is killed by violent men. When she dies, the man is healed.

It is a disturbing movie. The blind fatal love of one who loves up to the cross, who becomes another’s sin in the most concrete of her body, that is holy. One would like to dissuade her with the doctor or punish her like the church goers, but then one might ask oneself how is this different from Peter trying to dissuade Jesus from going the way of the cross or the Pharisees who want to murder him with it.

In light of these stories, when we try to spiritualise Rm 12:1, which demands the offering of our bodies,\(^ {202}\) we would end up with a corpse on our donkey, which will start speaking if we continue to keep quite. Even when we would dare translating the giving of our

\(^{201}\) This movie is loosely based on the book by Selma Lägerlof *Herr Arne’s Horde.*

\(^{202}\) The Afrikaans New Translation leaves out the ‘bodies’ (σώμα), translating “Give yourselves to God as living and holy sacrifices…” (“Gee julleself aan God as lewende en heilige offers…”)).
‘bodies’, who would be able to honestly say that such a thing is humanly possible?

What distinguishes both the mentally challenged Bess and Jesus Christ from the concubine is the fact that they offered their bodies. The concubine did not offer her body, it was offered. It was raped. This is the offering that violence demands, it does not afford any choices. In this case it seems to us that Jesus Christ cannot follow us, because he could still choose. On second thought, did he have a choice in Gethsemane? Did the Father not leave him no choice like the Levite did to his concubine? Did the Father not push Him out into the night amongst the violent ones? One would have to say that Jesus did submit to the will of God and laid down his life. Then the concubine and the girl from Atlantis remain unaccounted for. They are not Jesus Christ, because they did not lay down their lives.

What removes Jesus Christ even further from us and excludes the possibility of seeing Him as a moral example or hero, is the fact that he did not offer his body for one person, but for all people. Where the choice at offering one’s body for others could be imitated in the most extreme cases, the content and depth of it is inimitable. Even Bess’s choice to offer herself, she saw as a form of punishment. In her prayers she says: “I am a bad, bad girl,” for the fact that she wanted him with her. Also her choice was the choice of a sinner.

Both from the moral side (Jesus’ innocence) and the material side (the depth of his offering) Jesus Christ is inaccessible to sinners who undergo violence. He does not experience it as a sinner and never has to ask the all-destructive question of whether he might possibly deserve the violence. The broad scope of his offering reduces its concreteness.

Still his offering remains reduced to a spiritualised inaccessible Word.

**The flesh became Word**

Peggy Kamuf in her article “Author of a crime” refers to Jean Jeacques Rousseau’s work *Le Levite d’Ephraïm*. This is a short
work of prose, which he wrote between 10 and 12 June 1762 after the parliament of Paris banned his work *Emile*. He had to flee to prevent capture, but did not want to compromise his patrons. However, he felt betrayed and identified himself with the story in Judges. His flight at night in a borrowed carriage, left to the mercy of others and betrayed by his friends, brought this story to life for him. Kamuf is of the opinion that he uses the concubine like the Levite to vent his feelings of vengeance. Both their vengeance becomes literature. The deed of the Levite is actually a publication of her body. Not only does he write about the violence done to her body, in fact he repeats the violence done to her by cutting her body into pieces. He does not write about her to the Israelites, but with her. He is the author of the crime and he writes a message to the Israelites. The words are body parts.

The noteworthy film, *The Pillow Book*, by P. Greenaway provides the possibility for the development of this thought. It portrays the relation between word and body. When a girl, Nagiko, writes her messages on people’s bodies. The person becomes in essence a book, which she sends to her publisher. Her lover also becomes a book, but the publisher takes him as a lover. When the broken love between them cause her lover to drink ink and die the

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203 As referred to earlier the grabbing (חָזַק) of her body by the men and the Levites grabbing of her body is described similarly.

204 This film is based on thirteen poems by Sei Shonagon, a lady-in-waiting of the court in the Japanese Heian Dynasty at the end of the 10th century.

205 “I want to describe the body as a book and a book as a body. And this body and this book will be the first volume of thirteen volumes.

Ribcage: The first bulk of the book is in the torso,

Seat of the lungs
That fan the wind that dries the ink.

Seat of the heart
That pumps the ink
That is always red

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publisher steals the man’s body and cuts off his skin to make a book, on which is written:

Body and book are open,
face and page,
body and page,
blood and ink.

On another ‘book’s’ eyelids are written: “Blind eyes cannot read,” and between the fingers: “a hand cannot write on itself.” When the “Book of silence” arrives at the publisher, then he shouts at the man as in anger at the author for not producing a proper book, because he does not find any writing on the man. When the ‘book’ turns to leave, he turns around and puts out his tongue at the publisher on which is written: “Whispering can be a rest from a noisy world of words.”

If one attempts to read the ‘book’ of the woman on the threshold, you will not find the writing. Her cries are muffled on her tongue and her “why’s” are written between her fingers. With their pens they wrote words of violence in her body as their pens wrote in His hands and his side. From this perspective one could maybe understand the violence of the request of the doubter in Jn 20. The concubine had to drink the ink and became the book. The flesh became word.

The Word became flesh

With reference to a sketch by Rembrandt of the Levite finding his concubine before the door. Bal proposes that language is insufficient to express death, since death is instantaneous and incommunicable. Our discomfort with death pushes us towards literature. Even worse, our guilt of betrayal drives us to literature. We spiritualise, mystify and ignore the reality to hide the truth.

If we think we can make literature of the Bible, we must take care that we do not end up with the sawn-apart body of the girl in

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Atlantis in our hands. While we make words of the flesh the Spirit makes flesh of the Word. We spiritualise, the Spirit concretises.

People wrote the word with bodies. The Word was written with His body. The Word is His body. Through the Spirit the Word becomes flesh. Maybe the Word has never become more flesh than in Jdg 19. This points to the work of the Spirit. If we still want to spiritualise the cross, then the Spirit will reveal to us the concubine like Paul revealed Christ (Gl 3:1) as if she was crawling too our own threshold. In our ears the Spirit writes the Word with blood and in our hands the white bread becomes the brown girl in Atlantis.

The early Christians were suspected of cannibalism. How shocking is it for us to say: “This is My body, take, eat, think on it and believe”? Our lack of shock reveals our complete spiritualisation of his body. The mystery of the Lord’s Supper is not vague. It consists in relating the Spirit of Christ to the flesh – the concrete sinner. The Word becomes flesh - as the moral and material bankruptcy (i.e. the sin and the death) of the concubine. The Sword of the Spirit cuts the body of Christ – the Word of God – and hands it around to sinners. If we take the Word of God in hand we must be aware that we are holding the body of Jesus Christ. The bread and wine is the sign and seal of this. Even if our exegesis would not connect the body of the concubine to the body on the cross and these again with the body of the girl in Atlantis, then the Spirit would even include the body of Granny Lee[207] and the naughty girl who was raped in Stellenbosch and the prisoner and the drunk person in the Cape Flats with cancer. The Spirit might even connect all these to our own bodies. The connection of Christ’s body with sinners is what seems offensive – but that is the offence of the Word becoming flesh.

This is the one body of Christ. It is not a spiritualisation of either bodies or guilt, but it is the Spirit giving to sinners the personal

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[207] This was a well-known Drag-queen in South Africa, who died in a car accident.
bodily comfort of Jesus Christ. Attempts to spiritualise this truth of faith would leave us standing like the Levite over the broken body of the adulteress from Bethlehem or like the Pharisees over the broken heart of the sinful woman in Jn 8 with the sacrificial knife and the stones in our own hands. With Luther we may believe that his body brings comfort to the sinful body of the concubine and with Calvin we may believe that He personally comforts her sinful heart.208

Those who we have passed out, are lying before our church door, the sinful woman in Jn 8, the person cleaning our toilets, the destitute person, the gay person and the jobless people. That finger that we like pointing at them becomes Nathan’s finger (2 Sm 12:7) pointing at us.

The Spirit relates His words “Behold, I stand at the door and knock” and “inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me,” to the concubine with her hands on the threshold. How cruel is that door that only opens when it is safe? Must we as church-goers then first fall over the bodies before we shall see?

There was another ‘girl’ from Bethlehem who was pushed out to the violent group on that hill. They were also repeatedly asked to fortify their hearts, but slept in Gethsemane. They were often fed by Him and saw His abundant hospitality in feeding the crowds and in making the wine flow freely on the wedding banquet. They are like the Levite and like those who are sleeping in drunken stupor and push out and keep quiet.

Scripture calls on humanity not to grieve the Holy Spirit, but to listen when He makes flesh of the Word. Tomorrow when violence

208 Luther emphasizes the flesh and blood of Christ in the Lord’s Supper, while Calvin places emphasis on the personal presence of Christ, Berkouwer, G C. De Sacramenten (Kampen: Kok, 1954), 305. Within a dualistic framework these two perspectives seem irreconcilable. The Spirit’s hidden work consists in doing the impossible to make flesh from the Word, which surpassed the body-spirit dualism.
hits, the Spirit’s merciless judgment of words is His merciful comfort for the flesh.

The Spirit reveals Christ in the concubine lying before the one who reads Scripture, while the newspaper still writes about the cut-up body of the girl in Atlantis. More cruel than the violence against the women is the betrayal of the friendly feast behind the safe doors of the church. The offering God demands the church is not the giving up of sinful deeds, but the submission of its silent holiness.

Still the words remain, “Consider it, take counsel, and speak”.

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209 Like this author writes about Christ.