

## **Summary: Text 36 – ‘Godforsaken?’**

### **Background and question**

The text takes as its starting point the Flemish television series of the same name, ‘*Godforsaken*’ (VRT, September 2023), about the sexual abuse of children by members of religious orders. For years, the victims’ stories were not believed, while the church authorities minimized the facts and sometimes transferred perpetrators to other parishes. Why does this abuse occur so frequently, persist for so long and remain almost unpunished in religious circles? What is wrong with the Church as an institution? How can both the victims and the guilty priests be offered some form of redress? We see two groups of ‘godforsaken’ people: on the one hand, believers who feel forgotten by the biblical God, and on the other, priests who themselves have forgotten that this God exists.

### **The salt of the earth**

Maria Trips speaks of the ‘power of salt’ from the Gospel. Matthew 5:13 refers to the supernatural powers that priests receive at their ordination. If they neglect or deny these powers, the salt gradually loses its strength. The popular faith that existed for centuries has now lost much of its influence; churches are emptying and faith threatens to degenerate into folklore.

### **Nature, extra-natural and supernatural reality**

Reality is understood as having three dimensions: nature, which is perceptible to everyone; the supernatural realm (the Trinity, Mary, angels and saints); and, finally, extra-natural, the paranormal domain of fallen angels, apparitions and the spirits of non-biblical religions. In this text, the emphasis lies on the supernatural realm.

### **The covenant with all peoples**

According to the Bible, God establishes an everlasting covenant with all peoples, not only with Israel: even pagans who do not know the Bible but live according to their conscience share in God’s life force. The decisive axiom is given in Genesis 6:3: whoever lives without conscience cuts himself off from that higher life force.

The story of King Ahab and his four hundred seers (1 Kings 22) illustrates the danger of the ‘spirit of lies’: only the prophet Micaiah, who is in friendship with God, reveals the truth. The other four hundred seers allow themselves to be deceived. Yet the Bible foresees an emancipation of believers: ultimately, everyone would be able to experience God directly in their own soul, without remaining dependent on prophets, seers and other mediators.

The central point of the text is this: stealing the life force of another human being – rape being the strongest example – is a ‘sin that cries out for vengeance’, which is not simply forgiven but must be atoned for. According to the text, the perpetrator comes under demonic influence and is, from a supernatural perspective, ‘dead’, meaning that this person no longer possesses God’s life force (1 John 5:16), with all the consequences that entails.

### **Clairvoyance, subtle matter and reincarnation**

Contact between human beings and God takes place through the conscience, inner guidance and clairvoyant mediators. The text discusses the existence of 'subtle matter': a finer form of matter from which the human aura or subtle body, as well as subtle beings, are composed (this is referred to as 'hylic pluralism', the existence of a multiplicity of kinds of subtle matter).

The human being is indeed a 'citizen of two worlds: alongside the personality of each incarnation, there is an 'individuality' or 'occult status', a thread running through his many lives. For every genuine seer, reincarnation is a fact. Although this is not explicitly stated by the Church as an institution, the Bible contains a number of passages that can be interpreted in this sense.

Subtle energy can be given or stolen. A biblical example tells how Abishag, with her strongly radiating aura, strengthens the waning energy of the aged King David. 'They shared the bed but did not know each other', which in biblical language means that they did not have sexual intercourse. The physical presence of Abishag's beneficial aura was sufficient for the king. Through this additional supply, whereby energy flows from what is more highly charged to what is less highly charged, David was able to resume his royal duties properly.

In another example, a magician describes how he helps a dairy farm plagued by illness and death. He advises the farmer to mix every morning the energy-charged first urine of his wife with the water given to the animals to drink. It is the woman's powerful occult radiance – her so-called 'occult status' – that, through her urine, allows the animals to share in her strong energy and thus greatly reduces the number of deaths among them. The similarity with the story of Abishag is obvious. The farmer might just as well have rinsed his wife's clothes in the animals' drinking water. Those clothes, too, contain her life force.

Jesus' clothes likewise share in his immense life force. We are referred to the woman who had suffered from bleeding for years and touched Jesus' garment. His power, together with her faith, brought about her healing.

The Witch of Endor in the biblical story also possesses considerable energy. She succeeds in summoning the deceased prophet Samuel from the underworld. Or consider a shaman who, in a state of ecstasy and with the help of spirits, likewise heals people.

Non-biblical beings, however, are subject to the 'harmony of opposites': such beings do both good and evil. They do not possess a conscience in the same way that we humans do. In this context, the Bible repeatedly warns us to exercise 'discernment of spirits'.

The Bible recounts that the prophets Elijah and Elisha raise the dead through the transmission of divine life force. In this context, they illustrate the

opposite of what 'godforsaken priests' do. They give energy instead of stealing it.

### **Jesus, the apostles and priests**

Jesus possesses life force in overwhelming abundance. His thirty-two miracles are historical events, and each illustrates the transmission of subtle energy. Such healings require both power and faith. Faith without power achieves little. Power without faith causes the non-believer to close himself off from this energetic action. The power is then lost and disperses around him without effect. Jesus passes this power on to his apostles and to priests at their ordination.

One testimony describes how a healer frees a woman from years of sciatica during a visit to the pilgrimage site of Our Lady of Kortrijk, taking on her ailment and experiencing it himself for some time.

### **The sacraments**

Sacraments are actions charged with power that strengthen the human being's 'occult status' in a beneficial way. A 'godforsaken' priest can no longer use the sacraments effectively and beneficially.

The text describes a child who, after being baptized, cries continuously at night and is, according to a seer, tormented by evil spirits; after a magical exorcising ritual, the child sleeps peacefully again. Experts regard the Church's removal of the exorcism formula from baptism as a secularizing tendency that diminishes the power of the baptismal ritual.

The seer Gizella Weigl describes luminous auras around church buildings during a Eucharistic celebration on a day of Pentecost.

### **Non-biblical religions**

Examples from Santería, Macumba and Vodou, among others, show that other religions resolve illnesses, relationship problems and difficulties in life. Offerings, trance and sexual rituals are used to generate the required life force. Here too, the qualification of the 'harmony of opposites' remains applicable.

That qualification is unnecessary when one appeals to the Trinitarian power of a dynamically understood Christianity. The biblical God does not ask his believers for energy; rather, he is the giver of it. He does, however, expect them to live according to his Decalogue.

### **Science and subtle matter**

Western natural science is a partial science: it deals mainly with what can be perceived through the senses. Anyone who uses its axioms to pass judgment on extra-natural and the supernatural realm lapses into an ideology.

The higher does not arise accidentally and automatically from the lower. In the world of subtle matter, the higher is already present in an initial form

and, during a very long evolution, gradually manifests itself – indeed, ‘materializes’ itself – in the lower.

### **God’s judgment**

God respects the freedom of his creation, but allows his judgment to prevail when boundaries are transgressed, if necessary, already during earthly life, or at the individual judgment immediately after death. Someone who does not recover despite medical, psychological and alternative treatment may possibly first have to rectify a personal fault from a previous life.

Definitive healing requires atonement as well as forgiveness by the victim. Yet people can also suffer through no fault of their own. Think, for example, of the workings of black magic, of casting an evil spell. Reality is infinitely complex, and many factors – known and unknown, conscious and unconscious – may play a role. We should therefore refrain from judging too hastily.

Pedophilic practices within the Church are interpreted as the theft of life force from occultly extremely vulnerable children; both perpetrators and an authority that conceals the facts risk divine judgment.

Many thinkers advocate independent thought in religious matters. ‘Blind obedience’ likewise seems to amount to surrendering oneself to the ‘harmony of opposites’.

Finally, prayer can never replace medical treatment. Medical science has repeatedly demonstrated its value and continues to do so every day. Science deals primarily with the biological body, while biblical religion deals with the subtle dimension. The two can perfectly well complement each other.

### **A mediator speaks**

A number of anonymous testimonies about healings and initiations teach us that such workings of power are still possible today. Stories about memories of previous lives support the idea that the results of earlier good, but also bad, deeds continue to have an effect. At the same time, God’s mercy remains present: recovery and further spiritual growth remain possible even after death.

### **Conclusion: does the salt still have power?**

We see a contradiction: the Bible is full of paranormal healings, yet those who proclaim it are themselves skeptical of extra-natural and supernatural experiences. Priest training is almost exclusively intellectual, whereas shamans, marabouts and lamas undergo years of paranormal initiation and do address practical problems of life; that is why many believers in, for example, Latin America and Africa continue to practice their traditional religions alongside attending Mass. Some experts also connect environmental destruction with damage to the subtle foundations of nature.

A life without religion is not an option: without supernatural protection, human beings remain exposed to demonic influences – according to the poet Baudelaire, the devil's greatest victory is to make people believe that evil does not exist.

Only a dynamic, biblical Christianity with Trinitarian energies can protect human beings and lead them towards deification. The Church remains the rock upon which Christ built it; what is needed is an 'upgrading': a Church that corrects its shortcomings, takes supernatural gifts seriously and responds to the suffering of victims with genuine service.

The text ends with a call to pray for priests, to cherish the whole of creation with love, and finally with the reassuring reference from Luke 12 addressed to the godforsaken victims: 'you are worth more than a flock of sparrows – God never forgets you.'