

CYRIL OF JERUSALEM'S USE OF SCRIPTURE IN CATECHESIS

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WHILE MUCH of the renewal in theology in this century has drawn its inspiration from study of patristic sources, many who turn to these sources for the first time do not read very far. They are immediately frustrated by the way the authors make use of Scripture since, to those schooled in contemporary exegetical techniques, much patristic use of Scripture can seem arbitrary. At first glance, Cyril of Jerusalem's use of Scripture in his *Catechetical Homilies* seems no exception to this appearance of arbitrariness. Yet a closer look reveals that, far from being without method in his use of Scripture, Cyril in fact had a distinctive method which was determined by the task entrusted to him in initiatory preaching. The purpose of this essay is to explore Cyril's use of scriptural material in catechesis in order to consider how it was shaped by his understanding both of the nature of the conversion necessary to prepare his hearers for paschal baptism, and also of how the proclamation of Scripture in catechetical preaching could serve as vehicle through which this conversion could come about.¹

Since Cyril was a master preacher, the best way to discover what he was up to is, of course, to observe him in action. The greater part of this article is thus given to examination of what the bishop explicitly tells his hearers about how he understands his purpose in catechesis and how he is using Scripture to accomplish it, as well as listening to examples of what he actually does with Scripture. However, in order to appreciate Cyril's own words to full effect, it is necessary to have some knowledge of the context in which the *Catechetical Homilies* were delivered, and also of Cyril's understanding of Scripture as source for his preaching.

¹The editions employed in this study are W. C. Reischl and J. Rupp, eds., *Cyriti Hierosolymarum archiepiscopi opera quae supersunt omnia*, 2 vols. (Munich, 1848/1860), and A. Piédagnel, ed., *Cyritte de Jérusalem, Catéchèses mystagogiques*, Sources chrétiennes 126 (Paris: Cerf, 1966). English citations are taken from L. McCauley and A. Stephenson, *The Works of St. Cyril of Jerusalem*, 2 vols., Fathers of the Church 61, 64; (Washington, D.C.: Catholic Univ. of America, 1969, 1970). Cyril's works are cited here as follows: P refers to the *Procatechesis*; M refers to the *Mystagogical Catecheses*; a citation with no letter preceding refers to one of the eighteen prebaptismal homilies.

The Context of the Catechetical Homilies

First, it is useful to recall the liturgical setting in which these eighteen homilies were given (ca. 350)² and how their contents were organized. According to Cyril, after an initial session when those who are accepted for Easter baptism have their names enrolled in a register and are given a preliminary exhortation (the *Procatechesis*), these elect come during the “forty days of repentance” for catechesis (P 4). The catechetical sessions begin with individual exorcism, and the elect are instructed to pray as they await their turn (P 14); during the exorcism their faces are veiled to foster recollection (P 9). The exorcisms are understood to have divine power to purify the elect *because they are taken from Scripture*; when they are pronounced, the divine Spirit works through them, regenerating the soul and imparting salvation (P 9). After the exorcisms there is a reading from Scripture followed by a homily.³ Cyril expects both that his hearers are praying for his preaching, and that grace will work through their prayers to inspire his words so that they will evoke faith; he often ends his homilies with prayer that what he has preached will be fulfilled in his listeners, always ending with a final doxology and *Amen*.

At the end of the fifth homily the Creed is delivered to the elect, and homilies 6–18 are devoted to its exposition. Cyril stresses that the Creed is comprised of the most important teachings of Scripture; even as the tiny mustard seed holds within itself many branches to come, the Creed “embraces in a few words all the religious knowledge in both the Old and New Testament” (5.12). The Church makes this summary both to aid the unlearned and to provide for true interpretation of Scripture (5.12; 17.3); the Church delivers this summary only to those in the final stages of preparation for baptism, and the Scriptures then confirm it (5.12).⁴ Before he begins his article-by-article preaching on the Creed, however,

² For the dating of the homilies in 350, see W. Telfer, ed., *Cyril of Jerusalem and Nemesius of Emesa*, Library of Christian Classics 4 (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1955) 36–38; Sebastia Janeras, “A propos de la catéchèse XIV^e de Cyrille de Jérusalem,” *Ecclesia Orans* 3:3 (1986) 307–18.

³ For discussion of the specific scriptural texts read, see P. Jackson, “The Holy Spirit in the Catechesis and Mystagogy of Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose and John Chrysostom” (Ph.D. diss.; Yale, 1987) 11–12. See also A. Renoux, *Le Codex Arménien de Jérusalem* 121, *Patrologia orientalis* 35, 36 (Turnhout, 1969, 1971), which gives the stations and lessons for the Jerusalem liturgy ca. 417 to 439.

⁴ Note that while the Creed is thus drawn from Scripture, and explained and confirmed by Scripture, the canon of Scripture (as well as the content of the Creed) is determined by the Church (4.33); Cyril exhorts his hearers to study only those books which are proclaimed in church and not to read any others on their own (4.35, 36). Cyril’s canon consisted of the 22 books of the Septuagint (in 4.35 he lists them); although he does not name Revelation in his list of the accepted books of the New Testament (4.36), the rest of which coincides with the traditional canon, he does cite it in the lectures.

Cyril grounds it in a thorough discussion of sin, repentance, faith, and baptism, filled with exhortations that his listeners repent and believe (homilies 1-5). By thus beginning his catecheses with the heart of the human predicament and God's response to it, Cyril demonstrates that he wants to explain the Creed in view of the salvation attained through faith, repentance, and baptism; both the angle from which Cyril approaches his presentation of the scriptural truths of the Creed, and his manner of explanation are soteriological.

Cyril's catecheses, then, are not lectures about abstract concepts given in a classroom, but homilies preached after prayer and proclamation of Scripture in a liturgical setting. What Cyril says about Scripture and his use of it must therefore be understood in terms of his understanding of Scripture as Word of God living in its public proclamation, rather than as text exegeted apart from the community and its liturgy.

Cyril's Understanding of Scripture

Given this liturgical context for Cyril's catecheses, how does he approach the scriptural text from which he draws most of the content of his preaching? For Cyril, Scripture is the ultimate source of knowledge of reality, every aspect of the human condition, and God. Whatever the topic he is explaining, Cyril bases his teaching on Scripture as the authoritative source of information.⁵ Since Scripture contains everything that needs to be known about the mysteries of the faith, nothing should be said about them (e.g., the doctrines of the Creed) without Scripture. Points on which Scripture is silent do not need to be known, and Christians should not speculate about them.⁶

Scripture is spoken by the Spirit of God who makes it intelligible to those who hear it,⁷ and since it is vehicle of the Holy Spirit, Cyril believes it has the power when proclaimed to draw listeners to salvation.⁸ Cyril encourages his hearers to draw from Scripture nourishment to sustain them in their journey to salvation, and emphasizes its saving power as protection from the enemies of the gospel (both Satan and heretics) and as weapon against them.⁹

⁵ See, e.g., 1. (*passim*); 2.1; 7.12; 8.2; 9.1-2; 15.3, 15, 25-26; 16.13, 15; 17.24; 18.6, 13, 15, 30.

⁶ 11.12; 13.8; 16.2.

⁷ E.g., 4.16, 33-34; 13.8, 10, 13; 16.2, 3, 12; 17.1, 5; P 6.

⁸ For Cyril's depiction of how Scripture demonstrates this saving power when cited in the exorcisms which preceded each catechetical session, see P 9. Cyril speaks of Scripture as the well for the living water of the Spirit which springs up to everlasting life (16.11); he also urges his listeners to imitate the bee hovering over flowers to gather honey "that you also, by ranging over the sacred Scriptures, may lay hold of salvation for yourself (9.13)."

⁹ P 10.16; 1.6; 4.1, 37; 17.33; 18.10.

How, then, does Cyril make use of scriptural material in his homilies to the candidates for baptism? Cyril's method may be considered both (I) by examining his own explicit descriptions of how he understands his goal in initiatory preaching and how he uses Scripture to accomplish it, and (II) by observing some of the specific rhetorical techniques he employs in presenting Scriptural material.

CYRIL'S GOAL AND HIS USE OF SCRIPTURE

In his first address to the elect Cyril instructs them not to reveal the content of his homilies to the uninitiated, who are not able to understand the mysteries of faith contained in the Creed and will only be harmed by hearing them. He concludes, "*When you grasp by experience (tē peirā labēs) the sublimity of the doctrines, then you will understand that the catechumens are not worthy to hear them*" (P 12). What Cyril is seeking to inculcate in the elect is a kind of experiential knowledge which presupposes assent to what they already know of the Christian faith and will deepen their faith commitment sufficiently for it to be appropriately sealed with water and the Spirit.¹⁰ He thus sees his purpose in preaching on the Creed as not so much to impart information, as to enable his listeners to be so overwhelmed by the importance of what God has done in salvation history that they will want to give their lives to Him and become part of that history: "For we have come together now not to make a speculative exposition (*exēgēsīn theōrētikēn*) of the Scriptures, but rather to be convinced (*pistopoiēthēnai*) of what we already believe" (13.9; cf. 14.2). Cyril repeatedly insists that the kind of conviction his elect must have is not born of human reason:

[W]e must not be drawn aside merely by probabilities and artificial arguments. Do not believe even me merely because I tell you these things, unless you receive from the inspired Scriptures the proof of the assertions. For this saving faith of ours depends not on ingenious reasonings but on proof from the inspired Scriptures (4.17).

Rather, he sees himself as following the example of St. Paul:

"My speech and my preaching were not in the persuasive words of human wisdom" (1 Cor 2:4). No sophisticated artifices are being advanced, for sophistry is always unmasked: arguments and counter-arguments cancel out (13.8). . . . [W]e shall not employ human reasoning today for this is unprofitable, but we shall simply present the evidence from the sacred Scriptures. That is the safest course according to the blessed Apostle Paul, who says, "These things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in the learning of the Spirit, combining

¹⁰ See e.g., his remarks to the converts in one of the final homilies before their baptism, 17.35-37.

spiritual with spiritual" (1 Cor 2:13; 17.1).

If Cyril does not base his catechetical preaching on speculative exposition or arguments from reason, what does he base it on? In the sentence preceding one of his statements just cited, he provides the key to his method of calling forth saving faith in catechesis: "Therefore let us seek the testimonies (*martyriai*) to Christ's Passion. For we have come together now not to make a speculative exposition of the Scriptures, but rather to be convinced of what we already believe" (13.9). For Cyril, then, what elicits this saving conviction is hearing, not arguments, but the proclamation of Scriptural witnesses (*martyres*), testimony (*martyria*), proofs (*apodeixeis*) and types, which the catechist plants in his listeners: "We have sown, as we may say, a few seeds; may you receive them like rich soil, and increase and bring forth fruit" (18.17). Since these testimonies, etc., come from the "divinely-inspired (*theopneustoi*) Scripture" (4.3), and since Cyril presents them "by the Lord's grace, with the help of your prayers" (13.8),¹¹ he can hope that through their prayers God will "grant utterance to us who speak and faith to you who hear" (13.8).

Thus, Cyril's understanding of how faith comes through hearing the proclamation of the Word depends on a use of Scripture which is narrative rather than systematic. When Cyril lays the foundation for his later preaching on individual articles of the Creed with the preliminary homilies on sin and repentance, baptism and faith (1-5), each of these topics is presented not as an essay on a religious concept, but as a series of narrations: of those who sinned and repented, of those who received grace from God through water, of those who believed. When he gives a preliminary explanation of the Incarnation, Cyril describes how Jesus ate, and slept, and died, as well as working miracles and rising from the dead (4.9).¹² What is crucial for Cyril, then, is putting his listeners in aural contact with the stories of God's people in Scripture, expecting that (with grace) this will lead them to contact with God. E.g., "We present this story merely as a testimony (*martyrias*), for this is not the proper time for exposition" (*exēgēsēōs*, 16.31). Similarly, for Cyril's homiletic purpose the words of Jesus may be proclaimed in a collection of verses to prove a point rather than having to be analyzed individually

¹¹ Cf. 12.4; 16.1.

¹²As Antoine Paulin has commented, what gave patristic catechesis its power (as compared to that of later centuries) was the more immediate and deeper contact with the Word of God that it provided, and its awareness that it was presenting not a system of ideas but the account of how God had intervened in the world, which reached its climax in Christ. The catechist's speech was thus "vraiment concrète, imagée, historique, vivante, parce qu'elle était biblique" (*Saint Cyrille de Jérusalem, catéchète* [Lex Orandi 29; Paris: Cerf, 1959] 209; cf. 39).

at length: "I have read the very words of the Only-begotten, and so you need not pay attention to the words of men" (17.11).

Cyril intends this use of Scripture in his preaching to call forth a kind of faith which includes not only knowledge of the *martyriai* and assent,¹³ but also appropriate response to them. The elect must be constant in attending the catecheses and actively seek to have their faith deepened through his homilies:

For they are not delivered merely that you may listen to them, but that you may seal by faith (*dia tēs pisteōs epispfragistēs*) what you have heard. Banish from your mind all human concerns, for the race you are running is for your soul. You are forsaking completely the things of the world: little are the things you leave behind, great are those bestowed by the Lord. Lay aside things of the present and put your trust in things to come. You have passed through so many cycles of years in the service of the world: will you not spare forty days for the sake of your soul? "Desist! and confess that I am God," says Scripture (1.5).

After an explanatory section in 17, Cyril remarks, "Let us return in our discourse to what is of great moment, and profitable to you," and then urges his listeners to approach God with the right disposition of heart, which he describes for them (17.34 ff.).

What Cyril himself says of his goal in catechetical preaching and his use of Scripture to accomplish it may then be summarized as follows: he is proclaiming carefully organized testimonies from Scripture to the truth of God's saving plan, with the hope that through this proclamation God will draw his listeners into an experiential faith response of deeper assent, knowledge, and conversion of life.¹⁴ To help accomplish this, Cyril makes use of various rhetorical figures and devices,¹⁵ both to deepen his listeners' conviction that the scriptural account of salvation history culminating in Jesus Christ is true, and to lead them into the awareness that it is

¹³ Since for Cyril true knowledge of the Scripture is inseparable from faith, he can use the two terms interchangeably when describing what he seeks as a result of his catechesis (17.34). Saving knowledge includes understanding of how the teaching of Scripture may be used as protection against anything that could lead one astray on the journey of the Christian life (4.20, cf. 4.1); Cyril thus provides collections of verses for the practical purpose of fortifying his listeners against the wiles of both heretics (P 10; 12; 18) and the Antichrist (15.18).

¹⁴ See P 11, where Cyril explains how his catecheses are so constructed that his hearers must not miss a single one. For his urging the candidates to specific activities as part of their conversion, and his use of active metaphors to describe their progress, see Jackson 30–31.

¹⁵ For discussion of Christian use of the techniques of classical rhetorical tradition, see George A. Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors* (Princeton: Princeton Univ., 1983) 180–264, and *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina, 1980) 123–60.

true for them personally. Before analyzing Cyril's use of specific rhetorical devices toward each of these ends, it is helpful to consider his method of using scriptural imagery, which he employs both to reinforce his presentation of the facts of the gospel, and to draw his listeners into it.

CYRIL'S RHETORICAL TECHNIQUES IN PRESENTING SCRIPTURE

Imagery

Cyril's homilies are crammed with titles and images drawn from Scripture, which he uses to illustrate his message and render it more compelling. He also makes scenes from salvation history, such as Christ's harrowing of hell (14.19) or the Last Judgement (15.22 ff. etc.), come alive through the use of vivid descriptive language; sometimes he imitates scriptural use of personification, as when he speaks of Death as no longer being able to be mighty and devour the baptized (M 1.10).

Cyril also employs scriptural imagery to paint word pictures of the life of faith into which he seeks to draw his listeners, as is clearly seen in his use of metaphor throughout the *Procatechesis*, beginning with his first words to the newly elect:

Already, my dear candidates for Enlightenment, scents of Paradise are wafted towards you; already you are culling mystic blossoms for the weaving of heavenly garlands; already the fragrance of the Holy Spirit has blown about you. Already you have arrived at the outer court of the Palace: may the King lead you in! Now the blossom has appeared on the trees; God grant the fruit be duly harvested! Now you have enlisted, you have been called to the Colors. You have walked in procession with the tapers of brides in your hands and the desire of heavenly citizenship in your hearts . . . (P 1).

To these initial images of Paradise, new life in flower and fruit, introduction to the King, call to arms, and marriage, Cyril adds through the course of the *Procatechesis* alone, the further images of embarking on a journey, planting trees, constructing a building, entering a race, donning new clothes, attending a feast, and the purification of precious metal. Each image presents his listeners with powerful pictures of the life of faith and of themselves beginning to live it; as the vivid language leads them to identify with these pictures, they are beginning to see themselves in scriptural terms and from a Christian perspective, and thus being drawn into the deeper conversion Cyril seeks for them. Through portraying his hearers in terms of scriptural images, Cyril seeks to draw them into deeper contact with the reality behind the images; his use of imagery helps make his preaching living and concrete.¹⁶

¹⁶ For further examples and discussion of Cyril's use of Scriptural titles and imagery, see Jackson 33-35.

The Gospel Is True

This world of scriptural imagery which Cyril limns with words provides the backdrop for his dramatic presentation of the witnesses, testimonies, proofs, and types which he expects will deepen his listeners' faith in the truth of the gospel he proclaims. Cyril uses the noun *martyres* and the verb *martyreō* with varying shades of meaning. The people of Scripture, in whose midst God worked His mighty deeds, are witnesses to those deeds, as the Apostles are witnesses to the Resurrection (4.12),¹⁷ and as every created thing which was present when God acted is a witness. The place of the manger, the shepherds, the angels, the Temple, the turtle-doves, Simeon and Anna bear witness to the Incarnation (12.32); Cyril summons everything from the thirty pieces of silver to the sun in eclipse as witnesses to the Passion (13.38-40). Witnesses to the Resurrection are: the night, the full moon, the rock of the sepulchre, the stone rolled back, the angels, the women, the linen cloths, the soldiers and the money they received, the places of the Resurrection and Ascension, along with the cloud and the disciples present at the Ascension (14.22-23). A thing can also bear witness to a salvific event by being a result of it; thus Tabitha and the miraculous draught of fish (as well as the coals) all bear witness to the Resurrection (14.23). When the prophets foretell events in the life of Christ, Cyril portrays them as bearing witness to those events; thus Jeremiah bears witness to Jesus' being seized (13.7), and Isaiah to Jesus' Resurrection (4.31). Similarly, Cyril cites all that was present during any part of the life of Jesus as witness that he was indeed God-become-human and Christ.¹⁸ He also presents those who proclaim specific facts of the Gospel as witnesses: the palm-bearing children and the blind men are witnesses that Jesus is the Son of David (12.23), while Isaiah, Pilate and the Good Thief are witnesses that he was innocent (13.3). For Cyril, many Scriptures bear witness that the dead will be raised simply by describing examples of how God has done this in the past.

Cyril perceives the Scriptures as filled not only with witnesses (*martyres*) to the gospel he advocates, but also with testimonies (*martyriai*) to it of various kinds.¹⁹ Sometimes he uses the term as virtually synonymous to *martyres*, to indicate scriptural figures' statements of a doctrinal

¹⁷ See also 14.21-22; 13.39-40.

¹⁸ See 10.19; cf. 10.17; 14.19.

¹⁹ Patristic use of *martyria* to refer to a quick proof-text is fairly common. Cyprian even left three books of *Testimonia*, collections of verses from Scripture (listed without commentary) which may be used to prove various propositions. What makes Cyril's use of *martyria* worth noting is (1) the frequency with which he cites *martyria* combined with his use of *martyrs* and *martyreō*; (2) his use of *places* both as the background for his summoning of biblical personages to bear witness and calling upon the places as witnesses in their own

truth, or scriptural examples confirming the points he is making. Thus, he cites Baruch, Psalms, and Isaiah as providing testimonies to the divinity of Christ (11.15-16), and Joel as testimony that the grace of Son and Spirit are one (17.19). The lengthy list of those bearing witness in 10.19 is prefaced with the comment that "There are many true testimonies concerning Christ." Cyril provides scriptural testimonies in this general sense concerning Christ's everlasting kingdom (15.33) and how to gain everlasting life (18.30); he finds many testimonies to the Holy Spirit in both Testaments (16.29, et al.), testimonies of Christ's Resurrection (14.18) and New Testament testimonies to Jesus at God's right hand (14.29; cf. 27.30).

This more general use of *martyres* and *martyriai* must be seen in light of Cyril's use of *martyria(i)* in a more specific sense, to designate Old Testament material which he sees as directly foreshadowing Christ. Cyril cites Jesus himself as reading the Old Testament this way, e.g., in Christ's reference to the testimony of Ps. 109 to the Son at the Father's right hand (14.28); Christ also provides testimony by speaking in the prophets the "actual circumstances" of the Passion and Resurrection (14.8; cf. 13.13). Cyril sees his perception of not only specific Old Testament verses as predicting aspects of Christ's mission, but of Old Testament persons and events as types of Christ as also rooted in Jesus' own teaching:

The testimony we seek is supplied by the Lord Jesus Himself in the Gospels, when he says: "For even as Jona was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Now when we study the story of Jona the force of the resemblance becomes striking . . . (14.17).

Cyril also finds Peter (14.28; 17.19) and Paul (14.2) presenting Old Testament testimony to New Testament truth. For Cyril the testimonies of the prophets concerning Christ recorded in the New Testament are central to the true gospel and to enabling hearers to believe it. Thus he rages against Marcion:

He was the first to dare to cut out the Old Testament testimonies cited in the New—for these brought him to naught—and to leave the preaching of the Word without witness (*amartyron*). He fancied he had disposed of God with a pair of scissors, and thus hoped to correct the faith of the Church—as if there were no

right; (3) his expounding in detail on what is proved by the witnesses and the testimony they are giving even as he speaks to his hearers, which will create faith in them. Unlike Cyprian, Cyril is not providing lists; he sometimes dialogues with his witnesses, even putting words in their mouths. Cyril's use of *martyrs*, etc., is thus a distinguishing mark of his catechetical style.

kerygmatic tradition to be reckoned with (6.16, emphasis added).

Cyril uses *martyriai* in this sense to refer to verses from the Old Testament which he reads as specifically describing some aspect of Christ's life, thereby confirming that Christ is the fulfillment of God's promises; thus, the prophets provide testimonies of when the Incarnation would take place (12.17-28), the details of Christ's burial (14.3), Resurrection (14.3, 18), and Enthronement (14.27, 30), and their testimonies are necessary to explain the wood of the Cross (13.19). Cyril urges his listeners to "seal these testimonies in your heart" (13.8), since it is in hearing the *martyriai* and perceiving the perfect correspondence they reveal between God's promises and Christ, that Cyril believes they will experience the confirming of faith (*pistopoiēō*) which is his goal (13.9). "Therefore the Scriptures tell the time, the peculiar features of the place, and the signs following the Resurrection; henceforth have a firm faith (*pistopoiou*) in the Resurrection and let no one cause you to waver in confessing Christ risen from the dead" (14.7).

What Cyril emphasizes most about his *martyriai* is their comprehensiveness and exactness. "Now do not fix your attention on any skill of language on my part, for perhaps you may be deceived; unless you get the testimony of the prophets on each point, do not believe what is said" (12.5). Cyril insists on such thorough confirmation because the certainty of the gospel depends upon it: "Everything that concerns Christ has been written; there is nothing doubtful since nothing is unattested (*amartyron*). All has been inscribed in prophetic records, clearly written, not on tablets of stone but by the Holy Spirit." Thus Cyril urges his listeners to seek out the testimony of each detail of Christ's life given by the Gospels.²⁰ In setting forth the few more important testimonies for which he has time, Cyril exclaims, "Mark the exactness of the prophets, and their truthful testimony" (13.14), and "We have touched on the story of Paradise, and I am truly amazed at the verisimilitude of the types" (of the Passion, e.g., the garden, the tree, the afternoon; 13.19). This comprehensiveness and exactness which Cyril sees in scriptural *martyriai* to Christ undergirds his belief in all of Scripture as locus of God's self-revelation: "Nothing has been done without purpose" (13.21).²¹

²⁰ "Taking these (testimonies) as a start, be diligent and seek out the rest. Let not your hand be stretched out merely to receive, but let it be ready to work. God bestows all things freely. 'If any one of you is wanting in wisdom, let him ask it of God who gives' and he shall receive" (13.8, cf. 13; 12.26; 18.30).

²¹ Cf. 12.9. Cyril thus reads Scripture as a collection of witnesses and testimonies to what God has done. These witnesses make it clear that God has acted consistently and revealed Himself as God who saves; "there is one God in the two testaments who foretold in the Old Testament the Christ who appeared in the New" (4.33). The harmony (*sympḥōnia*, 2.4)

For Cyril the hearing of myriads of examples of the harmony between the two Testaments, the consistency with which God has worked, deepens faith that the Gospels describe events which actually took place:

Just as we advanced the testimonies concerning His Cross, so let us now verify the proofs (*apodeixeis pistopoiēsōmetha*) of His Resurrection; the Apostle, whose text is before us, says: "He was buried, and he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures." An Apostle has sent us back to the testimony of the Scriptures; from the same source we will do well to discover the hope of our salvation. First we must learn if the sacred Scriptures tell us the exact time of the Resurrection, that is, whether it comes in summer, or in autumn, or after winter; from what sort of place the Savior rose; what the place of the Resurrection is called in the admirable prophets; whether the women who sought and did not find Him afterwards rejoiced in finding Him; thus when the Gospels are read, their holy narratives will not be considered fables or fantasies (14.2).

Here Cyril uses the noun *apodeixis* to designate a collection of testimonies which when presented will constitute for his listeners overwhelming proof for the claims he makes for Jesus Christ (cf. 13.23). Cyril also uses *apodeixis* more generally, to refer to verses from Scripture which confirm or describe points he is making (2.9),²² or which, when exegeted, support his arguments (10.6, 9).²³ When he insists that saving faith depends not on argument, but on proof from Scripture, he is apparently using *apodeixis* to include everything from a quick proof-text, to an extensive collection of *martyriai*, to fulfillment of prophecy.

Although Cyril does not specifically use the word *typos* with the frequency with which he uses *martyrs* and its derivatives, he does employ both specific Old Testament types of Christ and *qal we homer* arguments (e.g., if . . . , then how much the more . . .) from these types, to reinforce belief in his Christological claims. Sometimes Cyril uses the resemblances between the *typos* and the *alētheia* (Christ) to emphasize the consistency with which God works, and therefore the truth of Jesus' claims, as in his exposition of Joshua as *typos* (10.11); sometimes he merely alludes to a type without detailed explanation simply to reinforce his listeners' sense

which Cyril perceives between God's self-revelation in the two testaments (both authored by the Holy Spirit, 4.16; 16.3) is crucial to him. The truth of Cyril's preaching on who God is depends on witnesses; his claim that God has revealed Himself in Christ and offers salvation for the human race through him depends on the testimony of those who have known God as saving throughout the unfolding of His plan. To remove the Old Testament testimonies from the New Testament is to "leave the King without witness" (16.17; cf. 6.16). This harmony between Old and New Testaments is also important because it shows how God's work at one time can provide the key to understanding His work at a later time (4.33).

²² Also 3.4, 7; 7.6; 15.3, 23; 18.30.

²³ Also 12.16, 19.

of the fulfillment of all things in Christ: "This is the time, the first month among the Hebrews, in which is celebrated the feast of the Pasch, formerly the typical Pasch, but now the true" (14.10). Elements which seem incongruous in the *typos* in itself may in fact be prophecies of Christ, demonstrating the complexity and exactness of God's revelation of His saving plan (14.20).²⁴

Cyril's continued demonstration that God works in correspondences allows him to construct typologically based arguments to deepen conviction in gospel truths. If Sarah could bear a child, if Moses' rod could become a living thing, if Aaron's rod could bear fruit, (and if God can create *ex nihilo*)—cannot Jesus be born of a virgin (12.28, 30)? If Moses' intercession worked, why not Jesus's (2.10)?²⁵

If under Moses the lamb kept the destroyer away, did not "the lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world," all the more deliver us from our sins? The blood of a brute sheep accorded salvation; shall not the blood of the Only-begotten much more save us (13.3)?

If God could work the resurrections and "ascensions" in the Old Testament, cannot He do as much for Jesus (14.15-17, 25)? Cyril believes the miraculous transformations he cites from the Old Testament should prove to the Samaritans that God can raise the dead on the Last Day (18.12). He also employs typological argument in reverse: after expanding on Paul's argument that if death came through Adam, how much more life through Christ, Cyril concludes, "If Phineas by his zeal in slaying the evil-doer appeased the wrath of God, shall not Jesus, who slew no other, but 'gave Himself as a ransom for all,' take away God's wrath against man?" (13.2, cf. 19).

By this use of witnesses, testimonies and types, Cyril seeks to deepen the faith of his hearers that the scriptural truths summarized in the Creed are true. But the candidates for baptism must come not only to deeper conviction that Christ is the redeeming Lord Cyril proclaims him to be, but also to an existential awareness that Christ's life-changing redemption is offered *to them* even now. To help bring them to this experiential knowledge, Cyril again has characteristic ways of making use of Scriptural material.

²⁴ Cyril also uses *typoi* to designate types of Christ in 11.1 (many typical Christs, but one true Christ); 12.28 (Aaron as typical high priest); 13.20 (the bronze serpent, Noah's ark, and Moses' rod showing how life comes from wood); 13.32 (the rent veil of the Temple). Concerning the Old Testament prophets seeing Christ, see 10.7.

²⁵ Similarly, if Hezekiah could revoke God's decree, cannot Jesus forgive sins? (2.15; cf. 15.22).

The Gospel Is True for the Elect

In addition to using rhetorical means to evoke saving faith by intensifying his listeners' sense of the truth of the gospel, Cyril also employs various techniques to enable the soon-to-be-baptized to experience that they personally are being drawn into that story. Sometimes he seeks to heighten their understanding by arousing emotion, as when he encourages them to place themselves at the scene of Jesus' judgment before Pilate (13.15).

Since, as inhabitants of Jerusalem, Cyril's listeners are already geographically surrounded by the scenes of Jesus' life, he often uses the holy places they can see every day as effective witnesses in their own right. "His witness is the holy wood of the cross, seen among us to this day, and by those who have taken portions thereof, from hence filling almost the whole world" (10.19). Similarly, "He was truly crucified for our sins. And should you wish to deny this, this visible place itself, this blessed Golgotha,²⁶ refutes you, where, in the name of Him who was here crucified, we are gathered together. Besides the whole world has now been filled with pieces of the wood of the Cross" (4.10). Witnesses to the Resurrection are "this place of the Resurrection itself" (14.23) which is "still to be seen" (14.22), and "even the stone which was rolled back lying there to the present day, testifies to the Resurrection" (14.22). Cyril seeks to make the scriptural account more immediate by interpolating local references: "And because of these words of Jesus: 'there will not be left here one stone upon another,' the temple of the Jews just opposite us is fallen . . ." (10.11); "For 'many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep arose; and coming forth out of the tombs after His resurrection, they came into the holy city'—manifestly the city we are in—'and appeared to many'" (14.16).²⁷ Cyril uses his listeners' presence at the site of the Crucifixion to inspire awe and exhort them to commitment: "The Lord was crucified; you have received the testimonies. You see this place of Golgotha. With a cry of praise you assent. See that you never deny it in the time of persecution. Let not the Cross be a joy to you merely in the time of peace, but keep the same faith during persecution" (13.23). Cyril's verbal summoning of even distant places to bear witness to the gospel has already been noted; when his place-witnesses are immediately visible to his hearers, he uses them as fully as possible to deepen in the elect their sense of personal connection with his gospel: "Yet one should never grow weary of hearing about our crowned Lord, especially on this holy Golgotha, for others merely hear, but we see and touch" (13.22).

²⁶ In at least three other places Cyril calls Golgotha to witness: 10.19; 13.4; 13.19.

²⁷ See also 14.21; 12.20.

In addition to taking advantage of his listeners' being surrounded by the very scenes of the events which made their own salvation possible, Cyril seeks to draw the elect into salvation history by establishing a relationship between them and the scriptural figures who have gone before them in that history. One way he does this is to use scriptural figures as both positive and negative models (*typoi*) to guide his listeners' dispositions toward God and response to Him; as Cyril finds Scripture filled with *typoi* of Christ, so he reads it as providing *typoi* for the believer. At the beginning of Cyril's instructions he gives a detailed description of how Simon Magus received no grace from baptism, concluding, "If I mention these examples of falls, it is to prevent *your* downfall. 'Now all these things happened to them as a type, and they were written for the correction' of those who approach the font to this day. Let none of you be found tempting grace . . ." (P 2).²⁸ The elect should take David as their *typos* of repentance (2.11, cf. 16), and Abraham is their *typos* of faith (5.5). Even when Cyril does not specifically refer to them as *typoi*, throughout his homilies characters from salvation history continually present themselves as God-given examples, both positive and negative, for his hearers.²⁹

Underlying this use of scriptural personages as direct models for those seeking baptism appears to be the perception that as the candidates identify with those who have preceded them in faith, they will begin to identify with their predecessors' relationship with God and begin to emulate it, and thereby be drawn personally into their own saving relationship with God. Thus Cyril's use of these *typoi* leads him to exhortation, to attempts to lead the elect into salvation by enabling them to identify with the people to whom salvation is promised and given:

Therefore, brethren, having before you many *typos* of sinners who repented and were saved, be you also earnest in confessing to the Lord, that you may receive pardon for past sins, be made worthy of the heavenly gift, and inherit the kingdom of heaven with all the saints, in Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever (2.20).

Cyril underscores this identification when he pointedly addresses his elect with the same words addressed to those who preceded them in seeking God (e.g., 18.34-35).³⁰ Since Scripture is thus addressed to his

²⁸ Cf. 17.35.

²⁹ For further instances of Cyril's use of scriptural personages as examples to enable his listeners to connect to salvation history, Homily 2, which contains many more examples than could be cited here, should be read in its entirety. See also 13.25; M 1.8; M 5.17. For other uses of *typoi* to refer to the elect, see 3.5; 18.26.

³⁰ For similar examples, see M 2.8; M 3.1; M 4.9; M 5.23, where Cyril explicitly uses scripture verses to describe the spiritual state of the newly baptized.

listeners personally, Cyril can use the same type of typological argument he uses to confirm how God worked in Christ in order to affirm how God will work with them:

Perhaps even among the women someone will say: "I have committed fornication and adultery. I have defiled my body with every excess. Can there be salvation for me?" Fix your eyes, woman, upon Rahab, and look for salvation for yourself too. For if she who openly and publicly practiced fornication was saved through repentance, will not she whose fornication preceded the gift of grace be saved by repentance and fasting (2.9)?³¹

Since the God of Old and New Covenants is the same, will He not do the same great deeds—and more—in Christ? "If God granted pardon and a kingdom to Nebuchadnezzar after such terrible crimes, when he had made confession, will He not grant you the remission of your sins if you repent, and the kingdom of heaven if you live worthily" (2.19)? After all, "Will not He who raised up Lazarus, already four days dead and fetid, far more easily raise you?" (2.5).³² Having asked his elect so many times if God will not be as faithful to them as to His people in Scripture, Cyril can assert this declaratively: "He brought Joseph out of bondage and prison to a kingdom; He will redeem you too from your afflictions and lead you into the kingdom of heaven" (15.23).³³ Thus Cyril seeks, through the use of scriptural *typoi* as examples to be identified with, to lead his listeners to expect that God will work in their lives, as He did in the lives of His people in Scripture.

Cyril also fosters in the elect a sense of connection to God's action in salvation history by making use of the classic rhetorical device of addressing figures from that history as if they were present, making it seem that his listeners are in dialogue with the people who will tell them how God has worked. As he lays out the Old Testament prophecies pertaining to the thirty pieces of silver, Cyril stops midway through his evidence to inquire, "Tell us also what happened to this payment, O Prophet! Does he who received it keep it or does he give it back? And after its return what becomes of it?" (13.10); after giving the prophet's reply, he shows its correspondence to the gospel account. Perhaps his most powerful summoning of a scriptural witness occurs in his portrayal of the good thief (13.30-31).³⁴

Cyril not only asks the people of Scripture to speak, thus heightening the drama of his presentation of witnesses, he emphasizes that they are

³¹ See also 2.10.

³² See also 2.14; 5.9; cf. 13.1.

³³ See also 11.3; 1.1; 17.38.

³⁴ For further examples, see 12.10-11; 13.25; 14.19.

speaking directly to the elect. In a passage alluded to above, Cyril portrays his elect as confronted at the Last Judgment by the witnesses to Jesus' Passion:

First, therefore, take as an indestructible foundation the Cross, and build upon it the rest of your faith. Do not deny the Crucified, for if you deny Him you have many to confute you. First Judas the traitor will confute you; for he who betrayed Him knew that He was condemned to death by the chief priests and the ancients. The thirty pieces of silver bear witness; Gethsemane bears witness, where the betrayal took place; nor yet do I speak of the Mount of Olives, where they who were with Him that night were praying. The moon in the night bears witness; the day bears witness, and the failing sun, for it endured not to look upon the crime of the conspirators. The fire, where Peter stood and warmed himself, confounds you; if you deny the Cross, the eternal fire awaits you; I speak of harsh consequences that you may not experience them. Remember the swords that came against Him in Gethsemane, that you may not feel the eternal sword. The house of Caiaphas will convince you, which by its present desolation manifests the power of Him who once was judged in it. Caiaphas himself will rise up against you in the day of judgement; the servant too who gave Jesus the blow will rise up, and those who bound Him, and those who led Him away. Herod and Pilate will rise up against you, all but saying: "Why did you deny Him who was maligned before us by the Jews, and who we knew well had done no wrong? For I, Pilate, then washed my hands." The false witnesses will rise up against you, and the soldiers who put the purple cloak upon Him, set the crown of thorns upon His head, crucified Him on Golgotha, and cast lots for His tunic. Simon of Cyrene, who carried the Cross after Jesus, will confound you.

Of the heavenly bodies the sun in eclipse will convict you; of the products of the earth the wine mingled with myrrh; of grass plants the reed; of herbs, the hyssop; of the products of the sea the sponge; of trees, the wood of the Cross. Add the soldiers, too, as I have said, who nailed Him to the Cross and cast lots for His vesture; the soldier who opened His side with a spear; the women who were then present; the veil of the temple then rent asunder; the pretorium of Pilate, now desolate by the power of Him who was then crucified; this holy Golgotha rising on high and visible to this day, displaying even now how the rocks, because of Christ, were then rent; the sepulchre nearby, where He was laid; and the stone placed upon the door, which to this day lies next to the sepulchre; the angels who were then present; the women who worshipped Him after His Resurrection; Peter and John, who ran to the sepulchre; and Thomas, who put his hand into His side, and his fingers into the print of the nails (13.38, 39).³⁵

Thomas' gesture leads Cyril to the conclusion that the scriptural witnesses are not only speaking to his elect, but actually did what they did for the candidates' sake: "For it was for our sake that he touched them

³⁵ See also 12.32, concerning the Incarnation; 14.22, concerning the rock of the sepulchre; M 4.7; M 5.20.

so carefully; for what you, who were not present, would have sought, he who was present did seek by God's dispensation" (13.39).³⁶

Thus Cyril appeals to his scriptural witnesses to speak, insists that they are speaking directly to his candidates, and exhorts his hearers to listen to what these witnesses are telling them, as when he urges them to pay attention to the Baptist's warnings to the people of Jerusalem and repent (3.7). To understand the fatherhood of God, Cyril asks his elect successively to listen to Jesus, Isaiah, Paul, Job, and "that excellent tutor Moses" (7.6-9).³⁷ Cyril's rhetorical techniques thus create the sense that the great figures of salvation history are present at the catecheses bearing witness to the truth of the gospel along with the surrounding sites of redemption; he can even instruct his listeners to visualize the scriptural speaker (15.4). Cyril thus establishes a relationship between his candidates and the figures of Scripture both by rhetorically making the scriptural *typoi* present and by encouraging his listeners to identify with them; he takes that identification process one step further when he encourages the elect to repeat the words of their scriptural predecessors that they may share their experience. "Repeat the words of David, 'I said, I will confess against myself my iniquity to the Lord,' and in like manner will be verified the second part of the verse: 'and you forgave the wickedness of my heart'" (2.6).³⁸ It is almost as if Cyril is saying, "This is how God's people relate to Him—now you try." E.g., "Do not be ashamed then of the Crucified, but say with confidence: 'He beareth our sins and carrieth our sorrows, and by his bruises we are healed.' Let us not be ungrateful to our Benefactor" (13.34).³⁹ As children learn to speak by imitating the language of their elders, Cyril's pupils learn the language of faith by repeating the faith-filled words of their scriptural forebears; in repeating the words, they are drawn into sharing the experience articulated by the words with those who first spoke them; thus in learning

³⁶ See also 15.4.

³⁷ Cf. 10.2; M 5.17.

³⁸ While Cyril's treatment of Scripture is obviously quite different from that of Origen, there are interesting similarities. In *Hermeneutical Procedure and Theological Method in Origen's Exegesis* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1986), Karen Torjesen has demonstrated how in his homilies on the Psalms, Origen goes through a four-step process in his explanation of each verse. After he explains the attitude of heart of the psalmist speaking the verse, he urges his hearers to imitate it, and then ends his treatment of the verse by putting it in the mouths of his hearers, as if to inculcate the proper disposition in them (27, cf. 46-47; for a similar approach in his homilies on the *Song of Songs*, see 87). Similarly, Origen's understanding of how his exegesis of Scripture mediates Christ's redemptive teaching activity to his hearers (12-14), can be seen as analogous to Cyril's understanding of how the Spirit works through his proclamation of scriptural truth to create saving faith in those who hear him.

³⁹ See also 1.6; 3.2; 7.5; 8.8; 9.13; 15.25.

to speak the language of the people of faith, they become assimilated to the people of faith. When the language Cyril gives them to repeat is prayer language, he uses it to lead his listeners imperceptibly a further step—into worship—thus integrating them into the community of faith through praise (e.g., 18.35).⁴⁰ In the final exhortation Cyril delivers to the candidates before their baptism he first draws them into the scriptural text by describing them with images from the prophets which are spoken directly to them; having thus drawn them into perceiving themselves and their experience in scriptural terms, he leads them to respond and articulate their experience with other appropriate words from Scripture (18.34-35).

Perhaps Cyril's most vivid rhetorical technique for drawing the candidates into the scriptural story so that they can appropriate it as their own is his addressing them as if they are the people in a scriptural narrative. In the *Procatechesis* the parable of the wedding feast suddenly expands to encompass the hearers:

Let no one enter saying: "I say, let us see what the believers are doing; I'm going in to have a look and find out what's going on." Do you expect to see without being seen? Do you imagine that while you are investigating "what's going on," God is not investigating your heart?

We read in the Gospels of a busybody who one day decided to "investigate" a wedding feast. Without dressing correctly for the occasion, he entered the dining room and, unchallenged by the bridegroom, took his place at table. Etiquette, of course, demanded that, seeing everybody's white garments, he should conform; but in fact, though fully the match of his fellow-guests as a trencherman, he did not match them in his dress (I mean, his resolve). The bridegroom, for all his large-heartedness, was not undiscerning and, while going the rounds of the company and observing his guests individually (it was not what they ate, but the correctness of their behavior and dress that interested him), he saw a stranger without a wedding garment, and said to him: "Pray, sir, how did you get in? What a color! What effrontery! The doorkeeper did not stop you in view of the liberality of the host? Quite so. You didn't know the correct dress for a festive occasion? Quite. Nevertheless, you came in; you saw the glittering clothes of those at table. Should not your eyes have been your teachers? Should not a timely exit then have been the prelude to a timely return? As it is, your untimely entrance can lead only to your untimely ejection." Turning to his attendants, he ordered: "Bind those feet" which presumptuously intruded; "bind the hands" which had not the wit to put a bright garment on him; and "cast him into the outer darkness"; for he is not worthy of the bridal torches. Ponder, I bid you, the fate of that intruder, and look to your own safety.

For our part, as Christ's ministers we have given a welcome to every man and, in the role of porter, have left the door ajar. You, maybe, have come in with your

⁴⁰ See also M 1.6; M 2.2; M 4.8.

soul befouled with the mire of sin and with your purpose sullied. You came in; you were accepted; your name was entered in the register. Do you see the majesty of the Church? Do you behold, I ask, its order and discipline, the reading of the Scriptures, the presence of the ecclesiastical orders, the regular sequence of instruction? You are on holy ground; be taught by what you see. Withdraw in a good hour now, and come back in a right good hour tomorrow. If the fashion of your soul was avarice, put on another fashion, and then come in. Put off, I say, lewdness and impurity; put on the bright robe of chastity. I give you timely warning before Jesus, the Bridegroom of souls, comes in and sees the fashions. You cannot plead short notice; forty days are yours for repentance; you have opportunity in plenty for undressing, for laundry work, for dressing again and returning. If you persist in an evil purpose, the preacher is guiltless, but you must not expect to receive the grace (P 2-4).⁴¹

Later their civic pride draws Cyril's listeners into John the Baptist's crowd when "all Jerusalem went out to him" (3.7-8), and there is even room for them in Jesus' admonitions about the Second Coming (15.22-23). Thus Cyril's elect learn not only to perceive themselves with scriptural imagery, but actually to experience themselves as part of the story of salvation history that they are in fact becoming part of by listening to, identifying with, and finally believing with its protagonists.

In sum, Cyril's method of using Scripture in his catechetical homilies is determined by his goal as a preacher: to present the teachings of Scripture in such a way that his candidates will be able to "seal by faith" what they have heard.⁴² This "sealing" involves the candidates coming into an experiential faith of deeper knowledge and belief which is manifested in a life changing in obedience to God. To call forth this kind of faith, Cyril sows the "seeds" of scriptural "witness," etc., which convince of the absolute truth of the gospel, and he cultivates them with the aid

⁴¹ See also: P 2; 3.6; M 4.2.

⁴² This goal shapes not only the ways Cyril uses scriptural material, but also the kinds of material he makes use of. While he does cite biblical moral teaching, and gives instruction on using Scripture to refute heresy, Cyril draws most heavily on scriptural narrative, titles and imagery, and prophetic and typological material. The narrative of how God has worked in human history—when, where, with whom—is the foundation on which Cyril bases his catecheses. Cyril also uses Scripture to provide his hearers with a whole vocabulary of prophecy, sign, and type, through which he will lead them into the Christian community's understanding of God's action in salvation history; this typological vocabulary includes *typoi* both of Christ and of his hearers. This use of scriptural material is quite different from that found in the initiatory homilies of John Chrysostom. Chrysostom's explicit goal was to effect moral transformation in his hearers, and he seeks to accomplish this by drawing heavily on scriptural images of the redeemed life which he enhances with the techniques of Second Sophistic; he makes much less use of scriptural narrative or typology than Cyril. For more extensive comparison and documentation, see Jackson 22-25; 121-27; 137-39.

of techniques aimed at deepening his hearers' conviction that this gospel truth applies to them personally by establishing a relationship between them and the figures of salvation history. Cyril's use of Scripture in preaching thus draws his candidates into a scriptural perception of what God is doing with them in the conversion process and a scriptural language for articulating it, as well as a scripturally centered knowledge and expectation of what He will do for them at the culmination of sacramental initiation.

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