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**THE USE OF THE BIBLE BY THE CHRISTIAN HUMAN RIGHTS
ORGANIZATIONS CHRISTIAN SOLIDARITY WORLDWIDE
(CSW) AND INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE MISSION (IJM)**

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the use made of the Bible by two Christian human rights organizations: Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) and International Justice Mission (IJM), identifying the particular parts of Scripture appealed to, the hermeneutic adopted, and asks whether there are other resources in the Bible which they could use to inspire and inform their work. CSW with its focus on the persecuted Church most naturally draws its inspiration from the New Testament, especially the Epistles; whilst IJM whose work principally addresses other forms of injustice such as slavery, forced prostitution, expropriation of land and exploitation of workers, makes greater appeal to the Old Testament. The biblical framework for IJM's work could be strengthened by a more sustained attention to Jesus' ministry as a model of human rights intervention and advocacy, by reflection on the significance of the Exodus as indicative of God's purposes for those who are enslaved or oppressed, and by consideration of the book of James as an important bridge between the concerns of the prophets in the Old Testament and the mission of the Church in the New. CSW needs to integrate its commendable emphasis on Jesus' mission as exemplary for Christian human rights action with a holistic reading of the Bible and in particular with a greater exploration of the spiritual and practical importance of the Church as the Body of Christ. *<author: please can you cut out 50 words or so?>*

Keywords: advocacy, hermeneutics, human rights, justice.

Introduction to the Work of CSW and IJM

1997 saw the emergence of two Christian human rights organizations. One,

1 Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), was formerly the UK wing of
 2 Christian Solidarity International, with a vision for expressing solidarity
 3 with persecuted Christians around the world. The other, International
 4 Justice Mission (IJM), was founded by American attorney Gary Haugen,
 5 with a manifesto to release victims of injustice and oppression through legal
 6 and political advocacy. This paper explores the use made of the Bible by
 7 these two organizations, identifying the particular parts of Scripture
 8 appealed to, the hermeneutic adopted, and asks whether there are other
 9 resources in the Bible which they could use to inspire and inform their
 10 work.

11 Notwithstanding the fact that both have a significant evangelical
 12 constituency amongst their supporters, a survey of CSW and IJM's
 13 literature, their promotional material and their websites revealed how little
 14 use is made of the Bible in some of their literature. Both organizations have
 15 worked out that story telling is a key to fund-raising and to keeping their
 16 supporters engaged with their mission. It is that, rather than Scriptural
 17 exegesis and application, which sells. Putting the matter differently, and
 18 perhaps more charitably, both organizations may take the view that their
 19 supporters are already convinced of the biblical imperative behind their
 20 work and therefore they do not need to take up time and space "preaching
 21 to the converted." Where the Bible does appear in their literature it is
 22 usually in the form of single verses, quoted in isolation and not given any
 23 form of context (especially in the prayer diaries which CSW sends its
 24 supporters).

25 This paper focuses instead on two books that bring the Bible into explicit
 26 conjunction with the stories that the organizations use to inform and
 27 inspire their supporters about their work. Gary Haugen's *Good News About*
 28 *Injustice*, published in 1999, can be read as IJM's mission statement, whilst
 29 Joseph D'Souza and Benedict Rogers' *On the Side of the Angels*, published in
 30 2007, is more an *ex post facto* exposition of the biblical motivation behind the
 31 work of CSW and D'Souza's Dalit Freedom Network.¹ Both books
 32 represent important, popular contributions to the ongoing debate regarding
 33 the relationship between Christianity and human rights.² The authors have

1. This is an evangelical Christian organization which campaigns for the rights and freedoms of India's Dalits, the "Untouchables" who form the lowest of India's castes: www.dalitnetwork.org.

2. Examples of the various positions taken on this issue include John Warwick Montgomery, *Human Rights and Human Dignity* (Edmonton, Alberta: Canadian Institute for Law, Theology and Public Policy, 1995 [1986]) who argues that the only secure foundation for human rights is a Christian one; J. M. Berthoud, *Une Religion Sans Dieu: Les Droits de l'Homme contre l'Evangile* (Paris: Editions l'Age de l'Homme, 1993), who argues that human rights are a substitute for God; and H. Taylor, *Human Rights: Its Culture and Moral Confusions*

1 also written accounts of their experiences in human rights fieldwork, but
 2 these are primarily intended to explain the situations on the ground rather
 3 than to give the biblical and theological framework for the work being
 4 carried out.³

5 It would be easy, but relatively unilluminating, to criticize Haugen,
 6 D'Souza and Rogers for not writing a different sort of literature. They do
 7 not offer the heavily footnoted, word-by-word exegesis of the most
 8 rigorous scholarship in biblical studies, nor would it be fair to expect them
 9 to do so given their target audience.

10 Haugen is explicit about his role being that of the activist, not the
 11 theologian. Towards the end of *Good News About Injustice* he says:

12 The teachers and shepherds of today's church have a huge task before them in
 13 helping Christians to come to know the God of justice. Our Bible scholars,
 14 theologians and historians need to dig deeply into the Scriptures to help us
 15 understand how God in his holiness relates to the sinful abuse of power and
 16 how we can do our part in "setting the oppressed free"... [T]he body of
 17 Christ cannot take up its rightful ministry of justice if its mind has not been
 18 thoroughly renewed by and rooted in the Word of God.⁴

19
 20
 21 Haugen, D'Souza and Rogers are not biblical scholars nor are they
 22 writing for a theologically expert audience, nor even for the academy in the
 23 broader sense. Their books are written for their supporters, for a number of
 24 reasons, including encouraging them to give to the work of **this**<these?>
 25 organizations and also explaining the theological rationale behind their
 26 work.

27 Even in terms of that task, Haugen acknowledges, in the Preface to his
 28 book, that "this modest volume is not an exhaustive treatment of anything"
 29 and that it was not pretending to offer "a full theological treatment of the
 30 character of the God of justice" but instead to "stimulate reflection...on
 31 some of the most arrestingly blunt declarations of Scripture."⁵

32 Nonetheless, given that these books are supposed to be providing some

(Edinburgh: Rutherford House, 2004) who takes an intermediate position.

3. G. A. Haugen and G. Hunter, *Terrify No More: Young Girls Held Captive and the Daring Undercover Operation to Win their Freedom* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005) tells the story of an IJM operation in Cambodia; B. Rogers, *A Land Without Evil* (Oxford: Monarch, 2004) addresses the attempted genocide of the Karen people by the military regime in Burma, and J. D'Souza's *Dalit Freedom Now and Forever: The Epic Struggle for Dalit Emancipation* (Secunderabad, India: OM Books, 2004) looks at the plight of India's Untouchables. Haugen has also recently published an inspirational book *Just Courage: God's Great Expedition for the Restless Christian* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008).

4. G. A. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice: A Witness of Courage in a Hurting World* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 179.

5. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 16–17.

1 sort of theological underpinning for the human rights work carried out by
 2 the organizations in question, it is not unreasonable to consider whether
 3 the Bible verses to which they refer are quoted in context, and whether they
 4 demonstrate an awareness of the place of the quotation within the canon of
 5 Scripture and of the main interpretations of the particular passages which
 6 they deploy in support of their causes.

7

International Justice Mission

8 IJM was founded in 1997 to fill a gap in Christian service, which had been
 9 identified by its founder, Gary Haugen. A survey of 65 organizations
 10 representing 40,000 missionaries had revealed that almost everywhere such
 11 Christian workers were aware of abuses of power by police and other
 12 authorities in the communities where they worked, yet there existed no
 13 specialist Christian organization with the expertise and the resources to
 14 address these issues.

15 IJM's website states: "When the poor are hungry, homeless or alienated,
 16 the Church has come to their aid by providing food, shelter and
 17 missionaries to meet the pressing needs. But when the poor have been
 18 oppressed, treated unjustly and suffered under the hand of someone more
 19 powerful, little was done on their behalf. Accordingly, IJM was established
 20 to help fill this void,"⁶ acting as an organization that stands in the gap for
 21 victims when they are left without an advocate. IJM staff members (human
 22 rights experts, attorneys and law enforcement professionals) receive case
 23 referrals from, and work in conjunction with, other non-governmental
 24 organizations and casework alliances abroad.

25 Gary Haugen founded International Justice Mission following his time
 26 as director of the United Nations genocide investigation in Rwanda. He
 27 turned to the Scriptures to find a response to the unutterable horrors he
 28 discovered there. Perhaps naturally, it was in the Psalms that he found
 29 words which gave voice to the emotions provoked by what he had seen. In
 30 particular, he quotes from Psalms 10 and 11 which state that the wicked
 31 man will be called to account by God.⁷

32 As he began reflecting more generally on injustice around the world,
 33 Haugen saw obvious parallels between the child prostitution, child labour,
 34 slavery, murder, corruption, abuse of police power, detention or
 35 disappearance without trial, and torture, which he was documenting today,
 36 and the situations described and condemned by the Old Testament

6. From <http://www.ijm.org/NETCOMMUNITY/Page.aspx?pid=183&srcid=178>
 <page not found; please find new link> (accessed December 12, 2007).

7. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 32–3, 74, 94–5.

1 prophets.⁸ It is the Old Testament Haugen quotes when offering a
 2 taxonomy of injustice as perpetrated through coercion and deception.⁹
 3 Haugen defines justice by reference to the story of the poor man's lamb
 4 told by the prophet Nathan to David to expose his abuse of power in
 5 violating Bathsheba and then covering up the consequences.¹⁰ On IJM's
 6 website, it is Eccl. 4:1 ("Again I looked and saw all the oppression that was
 7 taking place under the sun: I saw the tears of the oppressed—and they have
 8 no comforter; power was on the side of their oppressors") which Larry
 9 Martin, Senior Vice president of Education and Dean of the IJM Institute,
 10 cites when analysing injustice.

11 It is in the Psalms and the Prophets that Haugen finds God's hatred of
 12 injustice spelt out.¹¹ When describing God's compassion on the victims of
 13 injustice, he cites a wide range of biblical sources: Exod. 3:7; 22:26-27; Ps.
 14 9:9, 12; 12:5; 76:9; 103:6; 145:9; Isa. 19:20-21; 53:3; Lam. 3:36; the parable
 15 of the Good Samaritan in Lk. 10:25-37; Jn 11:33-35; and Jas 5:4.¹² It is Ps.
 16 146:5-10 which is set out at length, however, in order to make the
 17 argument that God hates injustice and longs to bring about deliverance
 18 from injustice.¹³

19 Haugen contends that "Everywhere in the Bible, teachers—Jesus,
 20 Moses, King David, the prophets and the apostles—tell us that our God is a
 21 judge who knows right from wrong and is passionate about the
 22 difference."¹⁴ However, Haugen largely makes his case for the content of
 23 justice from the Prophets, not from the Torah or the New Testament. He
 24 sets out the Nazareth manifesto (Lk. 4:18), itself a quotation from Isa. 61:1-
 25 2a but then he immediately juxtaposes Isa. 58:6-12 rather than exploring
 26 how Jesus' ministry might be understood as a fulfilment of this prophecy.¹⁵

27 Haugen argues that "seeking justice is a straightforward command of
 28 God for his people and part of Christ's prayer that his Father's will be done

8. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 49, quotes Job 24:2-4, 9-10; Ps. 37:14; Isa. 3:14; Lam. 5:11-13; Ezek. 22:29; Joel 3:3; Amos 1:13.

9. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 124-5, quotes Ps. 10:10; 37:4; Prov. 10:11; Isa. 32:7; at 130-1, he quotes Mic. 2:2; 3:9; 7:3; Isa. 32:7; Ezek. 22; Prov. 10:11; Jn 3:20. In *Just Courage* at 63-5, he quotes Pss. 12:5; 10:17-18; 35:10; 116:5 and Isa. 1:17.

10. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 72.

11. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 75, quotes Isa. 61:8; Pss. 7:11; 11:5-7; Prov. 28:5; Jer. 9:23-24; 22:15-16; and also Matt. 23:23. At 86-7, he quotes Amos 5:12; Prov. 14:31; Ezek. 22:25-31. At 88-9, he quotes Isa. 59:2, 16; Jer. 5:28-29; 21:12; Amos 2:6-7; Zech. 7:8-12; and also Lk. 11:42.

12. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 79, 81-2.

13. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 77.

14. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 89.

15. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 178; *Just Courage*, 40-1, 69, 132.

1 'on earth as it is in heaven' (Matthew 5:10)." What God requires of his
 2 people is spelt out in Micah 6:8: "He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
 3 and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love
 4 kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"¹⁶

5 If the Old Testament is predominant in Haugen's account of injustice,
 6 he relies on the New Testament to a significant extent in arguing why
 7 responding to injustice is a Christian imperative. In *Good News About*
 8 *Injustice*, Gary Haugen accuses the Church of having "forgotten how to
 9 be...a witness of Christ's love, power and justice in the world."¹⁷ He makes
 10 the key point that "while never neglecting or subordinating spiritual needs,
 11 Jesus called his followers to respond to hunger with food, to nakedness
 12 with clothes, to imprisonment with visitation, to beatings with bandages
 13 and to injustice with justice (Mt. 15:32-38; 25:35-36; Lk. 10:34; 11:42)."¹⁸

14 Elsewhere he says:

15
 16 But what is the core of my Christian calling? ... [T]o love God and to love
 17 our neighbour as ourselves (Mt. 22:37-40). Christ taught that to love our
 18 neighbour was to treat people the way we would like to be treated (Lk. 6:31).
 19 Accordingly, the call to remember the oppressed is couched in the logic of
 20 love: "Remember...those who are mistreated *as if you yourselves were suffering*."
 21 The Scriptures are confident that if we imagine that we are the child
 22 prostitute, the torture victim, the child labourer, we would not want to be
 23 forgotten.¹⁹
 24

25 Generally, however, Haugen uses the Old Testament to identify the
 26 content of injustice to be combated, and the New Testament to make the
 27 case for Christian involvement in and perseverance in the work of seeking
 28 justice.²⁰ He quotes Paul, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at
 29 the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up" (Gal. 6:9).²¹

30 Haugen is not, however, guilty of espousing an over-realized
 31 eschatology, and his book is wisely devoid of speculations about the
 32 millennium. Instead, Haugen argues for the importance of Christian
 33 engagement in the fight against injustice, even though the fight will be a
 34 continual one.

35
 36 We are not caught up in a Pollyanna-like dream of bringing heaven to earth
 37 and abolishing injustice. On the contrary, we know that an ocean of
 38 oppression will pound humanity until he whom "even the wind and waves

16. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 76.

17. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 13.

18. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 95.

19. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 39.

20. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 35-6, 50, 99, 105, and ch. 12.

21. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 62.

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obey” shall command the storm to cease (Mt. 8:27).²²

There is no question that God grants justice. As Jesus put it, “he will *quickly* grant justice” (Luke 18:8 NRSV). The question is, Will God find faith on the earth? Will he find his instruments of mercy and justice, his people, ready for service (Lk. 18:1-8)?²³

We will not see heaven come to earth or the world purged of injustice. But we will see the God of justice being faithful. We will see him “rescue the poor from those too strong for them” (Ps. 35:10). We will see that he “secures justice for the poor and upholds the cause of the needy” (Ps. 140:12-13). If we simply and courageously make ourselves available to him, Jesus Christ himself will “release the oppressed” (Lk. 4:18)—and we will know the extraordinary joy of watching him do it *through us*.²⁴

With regard to the practical ways in which Christians should respond to injustice, there is a marked contrast between the ways in which Haugen approaches the role of prayer and how he uses Scripture with regard to other forms of action. In his discussion of the importance of prayer, Haugen refers to a wide variety of Scripture: Exod. 3:7-9; Neh. 9:27; Ps. 141:5; Acts 12; Rom. 8:26-27; Eph. 6:12; Jas 2:15-17, 5:13-16; 1 Jn 3:18. However, in terms of practical action, Haugen argues for four distinct types of intervention, each of which is justified by reference to a passage of Scripture operating somewhat in the nature of a proof-text: Ps. 82:3-4 is cited in relation to victim rescue, Ps. 10:2, 15 in relation to perpetrator accountability; Ps. 10:18 in relation to structural prevention; and Ps. 146:7-9 in relation to victim assistance.²⁵

Although Haugen quotes Scripture liberally, he rarely expounds it. At times he paints with a very broad brush, as when he says: “an entire book of the Bible is all about a woman’s very practical efforts to stop the violent deceptions of an abusive government official—the book of Esther.”²⁶ Whilst this is true, one would like to see some more explanation of the message of Esther beyond this rather bald assertion.

There are two significant exceptions to Haugen’s general approach to Scripture. The first is his treatment of Matthew’s account of Jesus’ arrest (Matt. 26:47).²⁷ He identifies from this passage three important elements of coercion (the use of weapons and brute force, the existence of powers behind the force, the claim to lawful authority), and uses these three

22. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 61.

23. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 100.

24. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 105. <original emphasis?>

25. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 155-7.

26. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 143.

27. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 126-9.

1 elements to interpret situations of contemporary injustice, from racial
 2 segregation in the Deep South to bonded labour in India. The second is his
 3 analysis of the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:25-37). The three
 4 lessons he draws from this are that the Good Samaritan got close enough to
 5 assess the man's needs; he offered what aid he could; and he referred his
 6 hurting neighbour to a professional who was equipped to meet the man's
 7 needs in a way that he himself could not.²⁸

8 *Areas for Further Work*

9 Although Haugen cites the Old Testament prophets frequently, he does
 10 not relate their message to the social vision of the Torah. The prophetic
 11 critique of particular injustices is not put in the context of the alternative
 12 social vision which the Deuteronomists developed.²⁹ He says almost
 13 nothing about the Exodus as the demonstration of God's willingness to
 14 address flagrant injustice; although it does get mention when he is
 15 discussing the power of prayer.³⁰ Nor, as we shall see, in marked contrast to
 16 CSW, does he focus much attention on the pattern of Jesus' ministry as an
 17 inspiration for Christian action against injustice (apart from the perhaps
 18 unavoidable reference in Matt. 25). Finally, although Haugen makes use of
 19 quotations from the book of James, he does not look at the key message of
 20 the book as a whole and its function as bringing the prophetic concerns of
 21 the Old Testament into the life of the Church in the New Testament.

22 It is likely that some of these moves would prove to be difficult to make,
 23 for a variety of reasons. The social vision of the Torah cannot be
 24 immediately conveyed; it requires unpacking and explanation in a way that
 25 would differ from Haugen's preferred style of communication. Considering
 26 Jesus' own ministry in terms of justice takes us in the direction
 27 of the political Jesus (the Jesus of John Howard Yoder, Jim Wallis and Alan
 28 Storkey) and this Jesus is an uncomfortable one for Haugen's American
 29 audience to confront.³¹ Potentially even more problematic is the Exodus,
 30 with its use in liberation theology something from which I suspect IJM
 31 would find it prudent to distance itself. Perhaps the easiest thing to
 32 integrate into his writings would be the book of James. This "epistle of

28. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 186. Haugen revisits the parable of the Good Samaritan in chapter 6 of *Just Courage*.

29. Perhaps because Haugen does not want to have to deal directly with the flat earth reading of the Torah by the Theonomists.

30. Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 158.

31. J. H. Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus: Vicit Agnus Noster*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1994); J. Wallis, *God's Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It* (Oxford: Lion Hudson, 2006); A. Storkey, *Jesus and Politics: Confronting the Powers* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005).

1 straw,” as Luther unkindly called it, in fact links Christian social teaching to
 2 the prophetic tradition of Amos and Micah. Here, in the New Testament,
 3 is social critique confirming that not just Jesus, but also the Church that
 4 bears his name, has a mandate to challenge and confront social injustice.

5 **Christian Solidarity Worldwide**

6 CSW’s website contains quotes not only from the New Testament, but also
 7 from the Hebrew Bible. In particular, CSW has adopted Prov. 31:8-9
 8 “Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all
 9 who are destitute, speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor
 10 and the needy” as something of a motto.³² CSW’s website also takes the case
 11 of Jeremiah’s imprisonment recorded in Jeremiah chapters 38 and 39 as a
 12 case study which its supporters might like to reflect on.³³ Those references
 13 to Old Testament passages on CSW’s website are important because *On the*
 14 *Side of the Angels* by D’Souza and Rogers places much greater emphasis on
 15 the New Testament than does Haugen in *Good News About Injustice*.

16 Reading D’Souza and Rogers’s book it is striking how different the
 17 appeal is to Scripture from that in Haugen’s book. Whereas Haugen builds
 18 his case for the importance of justice around the Old Testament prophets,
 19 D’Souza and Rogers do so from the New Testament. Whereas Haugen
 20 reflects very little on the Nazareth Manifesto, it is a central feature of
 21 D’Souza’s and Rogers’s work. D’Souza and Rogers pay particular attention
 22 to Jesus’ actions in the gospels, reading them as “political” in nature and as
 23 actions in favour of human rights. They quote at length from missiologist
 24 Charles R. Taber and argue that:

25
 26 Building on, but radically extending, hints found in the Hebrew Law and
 27 Prophets, Jesus alone among all religious founders and leaders rejected all
 28 forms of discrimination and insisted that all human beings ought to be treated
 29 in exactly the same way... He extended the category “neighbour” to *all*
 30 *humankind* <whose italics?> and insisted that the two Great Commandments
 31 applied to all. These surely were the reasons why Jesus’ peers found him
 32 troublingly subversive and therefore condemned him.³⁴
 33

34 This emphasis on the radical implications of Jesus’ message is reinforced

32. From <http://www.csw.org.uk/AboutCSW/index.htm> <page not found, please supply new link> (accessed December 12, 2007).

33. From <http://www.csw.org.uk/Resources/ChurchRes/index.htm> <page not found, please supply new link> (accessed December 12, 2007).

34. J. D’Souza and B. Rogers, *On the Side of the Angels: Justice, Human Rights, and Kingdom Mission* (Milton Keynes: Authentic, 2007), 62–3, quoting Charles R. Taber, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* (June 2002). In fact this is an abbreviated quotation of the quotation cited.

1 in D'Souza's own book *Dalit Freedom Now and Forever*, whose ninth chapter,
 2 entitled "Jesus and Brahminism," presents Jesus' death on the cross as "a
 3 death blow" to "spiritual fascism," extending "spiritual rights" "to all people
 4 freely and equally"³⁵ and whose vision of the Kingdom was one in which
 5 "all people are made in the image of God and where the God of love
 6 reaches out to the oppressed, the poor, the sinners and the downtrodden."³⁶

7 There is thus a key difference between the approaches of Haugen on the
 8 one hand, and D'Souza and Rogers on the other. Whereas Haugen typically
 9 appeals to the Old Testament to establish what to do and to the New
 10 Testament to show the importance of doing justice, D'Souza and Rogers
 11 build both parts of their case for Christian human rights advocacy from the
 12 New Testament, and directly from the example of Jesus.

13 Another key difference is that whereas the Kingdom of God is not a
 14 prominent organizing concept for Haugen,³⁷ it is key to the hermeneutic of
 15 D'Souza and Rogers and a main focus of the third chapter of their book.³⁸
 16 In many ways, the capstone of D'Souza and Rogers's argument that justice
 17 is integral to the kingdom of God comes towards the end of their book
 18 where they expressly make the following link: "The Great Commission
 19 must always go hand in hand with the Great Commandment, and the Great
 20 Commandment is deeply linked with the need for involvement in the lives
 21 of those who are oppressed, persecuted, abused, and dehumanized."³⁹ In
 22 her Foreword endorsing D'Souza and Rogers's book, Baroness Cox says:
 23 "the authors argue convincingly [that] aid and advocacy are inherently
 24 interwoven: the Biblical mandate requires us to speak for the oppressed and
 25 also to heal the sick, feed the hungry, and clothe the naked."⁴⁰

26 CSW also makes the case for human rights advocacy on behalf of fellow
 27 Christians expressly on its website. Christian Solidarity Worldwide has a
 28 special vocation to challenge human rights abuses against Christians, and
 29 their website cites 1 Cor. 12:26 "If one part [of the body] suffers, every part
 30 suffers with it..." and Heb. 13:3 "Remember those in prison as if you were
 31 their fellow prisoners and those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves
 32 were suffering."⁴¹ In the section on its website entitled "Why should the
 33 Church be concerned?," CSW states:
 34

35. D'Souza, *Dalit Freedom Now and Forever*, 90.

36. D'Souza, *Dalit Freedom Now and Forever*, 92.

37. This is not say that he ignores so central a biblical theme. On the contrary, he makes reference to it (<title?>, 13, 35).

38. It dominates the discussion in *On the Side of the Angels*, 55–79.

39. D'Souza and Rogers, *On the Side of the Angels*, 174.

40. D'Souza and Rogers, *On the Side of the Angels*, xi.

41. Haugen also picks up on this verse in his recent book *Just Courage* at 48 and 75.

- 1 • Because the Bible teaches we are one Body (1 Cor. 12:12-26),
 2 therefore it is a family issue
 3 • These are our brothers and sisters who are often left as orphans,
 4 widows, destitute, naked, hungry, thirsty, ill and without
 5 medicines, sometimes imprisoned, even facing a death sentence
 6 with no-one to: (Matt. 25:34-45)
 7 • Speak for them
 8 • To provide food and clothes for them
 9 • To provide medicines for them
 10 • To provide Bibles and spiritual support.

11
 12 The appeal to Matt. 25:34-45 is to be expected but other than the
 13 reference to 1 Cor. 12:26, CSW does not offer a developed account of its
 14 understanding of the unity of the body of Christ.⁴² This key concept is
 15 assumed as axiomatic rather than argued for.⁴³ This omission by D'Souza
 16 and Rogers may be partly tactical. D'Souza and Rogers's book, although
 17 illustrated by reference to the organizations with which they are involved, is
 18 intended to be a broader apologetic for Christian involvement in human
 19 rights work rather than solely focused on CSW's own mission. As to the
 20 relative silence in CSW's other literature, this may also be tactical. CSW
 21 promotes Christian Solidarity without regard to denominational
 22 boundaries, and giving an account of exactly how the various Christian
 23 churches constitute one Church is something which may be seen as
 24 divisive.

25 Although the New Testament is far more prominent in the work of
 26 D'Souza and Rogers than it is in *Good News About Injustice* by Haugen, the
 27 Old Testament is not wholly ignored. Psalm 10, a key text for Haugen, is
 28 set out at length in their book.⁴⁴ In their final chapter, D'Souza and Rogers
 29 quote Isa. 58:6-12, Isa. 1:17, Amos 5:21-24, and Mic. 6:8 in turn as proof of
 30 how important justice is to the God of the Bible.⁴⁵

31 Whereas Haugen, largely writing for the American evangelical
 32 constituency, says little about the Exodus, perhaps because he does not
 33 want the idea of justice mission to be dismissed as simply a Westernized
 34 liberation theology, by contrast, Joseph D'Souza is an Indian theologian and
 35 human rights activist, for whom the theological imperative is to be seen to

42. The dedication to Roger's *A Land Without Evil* quotes 1 Cor. 12:12.

43. In *Good News About Injustice*, Gary Haugen picks up on verses more naturally applicable to the work of CSW, citing the call to remember those who are in prison or mistreated (Heb. 13:3; Gal. 2:10; Col. 4:18) but he doesn't put these verses in the context of the unity of the Body of Christ either: Haugen, *Good News About Injustice*, 39.

44. D'Souza and Rogers, *On the Side of the Angels*, 22-23.

45. Rogers also quotes Mic. 6:8 and Prov. 31:8-9 in *A Land Without Evil*, 244.

1 be doing something with the texts so dear to the hearts of the liberation
 2 theologians. The four pages D'Souza and Rogers devote to exploring the
 3 Exodus story may be read as an attempt to demonstrate how those passages
 4 may be integrated in a vision of integral mission.⁴⁶

5 *Areas for Further Work*

6 As noted above, although the Gospels feature prominently in D'Souza and
 7 Rogers's book, there is relatively little reference to the appeals for solidarity
 8 amongst Christian churches in the New Testament epistles. There is
 9 certainly room for a companion volume in which CSW goes beyond simply
 10 invoking the idea of the Body of Christ to explaining the spiritual
 11 significance of this idea. Doing so might enable D'Souza and Rogers to
 12 show how the teaching of Jesus about the importance of justice was
 13 interpreted and applied by the early Church in its particular social context
 14 or alternatively how it was neglected and ignored.

15 D'Souza and Rogers's book is a light read. It seems at times to be
 16 vulnerable to the challenge of biblical occasionalism. Reading their short
 17 book, one sometimes feels that the biblical theology is there to illustrate the
 18 contemporary stories, rather than vice versa. The interpretation of Jesus'
 19 mission in terms of human rights action needs to be grounded in the social
 20 vision of the Torah and the ministry of the prophets in order to offer a
 21 more coherent narrative of how action on behalf of those who have been
 22 oppressed, enslaved and violated is integral to the mission of God.

23 **Conclusions**

24 CSW with its focus on the persecuted Church most naturally draws its
 25 inspiration from the New Testament; whilst IJM whose work principally
 26 addresses other forms of injustice such as slavery, forced prostitution,
 27 expropriation of land and exploitation of workers, makes greater appeal to
 28 the Old Testament. This judgment is, however, a generalization and
 29 requires further nuancing. CSW focuses more on the Gospels and less on
 30 the Epistles than might have been expected whilst IJM draws mainly from
 31 the prophets rather than other parts of the biblical literature.

32 The biblical framework for IJM's work could be strengthened by a more
 33 sustained attention to Jesus' ministry as a model of human rights
 34 intervention and advocacy as well as reflection on the significance of the
 35 Exodus as indicative of God's purposes for those who are enslaved or
 36 oppressed. The book of James is also an important bridge between the
 37 concerns of the prophets in the Old Testament and the mission of the

46. D'Souza and Rogers, *On the Side of the Angels*, 69–73.

1 Church in the New.

2 CSW needs to integrate its commendable emphasis on Jesus' mission as
3 exemplary for Christian human rights action with a holistic reading of the
4 Bible and in particular with a greater exploration of the spiritual and
5 practical importance of the Church as the Body of Christ.

6 Martin Luther King warned about "the paralysis of analysis." The
7 number of systematic theologies, from Thomas Aquinas to Karl Barth,
8 which have remained uncompleted is testimony to the fact that developing
9 a holistic theology which gives full weight to all aspects of God's self-
10 revelation is more than the work of a lifetime. Of course, we need to reflect
11 upon *praxis*, and to recognize bias and partiality in our approach to
12 Scripture, but CSW and IJM are to be commended both for reflecting on
13 such questions and also for being followers of Jesus not just in word but
14 also in deed. It is, however, to be hoped that they will engage in or be
15 supported by more in-depth research and writing on the ways in which the
16 concerns of human rights are expressed and addressed in the Bible.

17
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