



Abject Bodies in the Gospel of Mark (Bible in the Modern World)

Manuel Villalobos Mendoza, Manuel Villalobos Mendoza

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Basing himself on Judith Butler's notion of gender, abjectness, vulnerability, and the precariousness of the human body, Manuel Villalobos offers a compelling study of a number of characters in Mark's passion narrative whom he finds to be transgressing boundaries and disrupting their assigned gender roles. He then applies the same methodology to Jesus, queering the Markan passion narrative, and concludes that because it was subject to all kinds of physical abuses Jesus' body is the way by which God becomes identified and fully implicated in the life of those who live at the margins of society. The whole book, exegetically rich and imaginative, interweaves (often harrowing) tales of village life in Mexico with interpretations of specific Markan episodes. *Abject Bodies* develops a hermeneutic that Villalobos terms *del otro lado* ('from the other side'), because it celebrates the kind of ambiguity produced by gender, racial, cultural, and ethnic otherness. His hope is to initiate a dialogue between the Northern and the Southern hemispheres, a dialogue that crosses the boundaries that separate and exclude people because of economic and legal statuses and, especially, sexual orientation. The end product is a fresh and totally destabilizing reading that accomplishes the difficult task of bringing to the fore voices neglected by the history of the interpretation of the text.

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