



Three Great Themes of the Bible

A series of three lectures by Sarah Ruden

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2019 • 7:30-9:00 PM

Compassion

The Bible teaches many kinds of loving kindness, but the imagery of compassion is special: one person becoming another; the body being turned inside out; God as a parent whose being, evident in the work of creation, is directed toward the children's good; God as suffering and vulnerable. The beauty and the intellectual persuasiveness of the Bible depend on the idea of compassion; like everything great in literature, it is both superficially startling and deeply natural.

MONDAY, APRIL 22, 2019 • 7:30-9:00 PM

Peace/Nonviolence

The Hebrew word *shalom* (often translated as "peace") broadly embraces wholeness, wellness, and integrity. It suggests the sincerity and balance necessary for general goodwill, tolerance, and service, as well as for resolving on nonviolence and sticking to the resolution. In the Christian Greek scriptures, the word *eirēnē* similarly connotes peace in the whole community and the loving resolution of differences.

MONDAY, JUNE 24, 2019 • 7:30-9:00 PM

Justice

The Biblical idea of justice differs from the Western idea centered on individual rights. But both Biblical traditions fostered the recognition of shared humanity, the urgency of inclusion, and the authority of law. The Bible sees justice in dramatic terms, stressing God's vindication of relatively powerless people (women, foreigners, the poor, the disabled, and the dependent) when they have been wronged or abused.

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Sarah Ruden, a Quaker by "convincement," is a poet, translator, essayist, and popularizer of Biblical linguistics. A Harvard-trained classical philologist, she has won high praise for her book-length translations of Greek and Roman classics, including Vergil's *Aeneid*, Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, and Aeschylus' *Oresteia*. *Paul among the People: The Apostle Reinterpreted and Reimagined in His Own Time* (2010) provides a fresh look at Paul by detailing the brutal Roman Imperial world against which Paul's message of love stood so strikingly. More recently, she published *The Face of Water: A Translator on Beauty and Meaning in the Bible*. She is now at work on a translation of the Gospels to express more authentically in English the idioms, images, emotions, and ideas of the original text.

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