

NOTE AND DOCUMENT

A Sermon by Robert Barnes, c. 1535

by JOHN CRAIG and KOREY MAAS

Robert Barnes is a name well known to historians of the English Reformation. He receives brief mention in most historical surveys, being variously discussed as Coverdale's prior, Luther's friend, Cromwell's *protégé*, or Henry VIII's martyr. Among scholars whose interests lie primarily with the theology of the Reformation, Barnes has at times received further, more focused attention, his written works being examined in some detail and he himself being painted as a rare English Lutheran.¹ Those interested in the politics of the Henrician Reformation have also found reason to assign Barnes a place of some importance, giving particular attention to his later role as royal ambassador to the princes and theologians of the German Protestant League of Schmalkalden.² In contrast to these portraits of Barnes as a theologian and diplomat, and in spite of the fact that Barnes regularly mounted the pulpit while in England, there has been no comparable emphasis on Robert Barnes the preacher.³ The reason for this

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¹ See, for example, Carl R. Trueman, *Luther's legacy: salvation and English reformers, 1525–1556*, Oxford 1994. See also James P. Lusardi, 'The career of Robert Barnes', in *The complete works of St Thomas More*, ed. L. A. Schuster, R. C. Marius, J. P. Lusardi and R. J. Schoeck, New Haven 1973, viii. 1367–1415.

² See, for example, Rory McEntegart, *Henry VIII, the League of Schmalkalden and the English Reformation*, Woodbridge 2002.

³ But see Alec Ryrie, '“A saynt in the deuyls name”: heroes and villains in the martyrdom of Robert Barnes', in Thomas Freeman and Thomas Mayer (eds), *Martyrdom and sanctity in early modern England* (forthcoming). Though primarily concerned with Barnes's posthumous reputation, Ryrie emphasises the fact that 'by the time of his death, it was clearly as a preacher that he was most respected, and most hated'. We are most grateful to Dr Ryrie for

lacuna is quite simply that, despite the amount of contemporary commentary on his preaching, none of Barnes's actual sermons has been preserved. This is a fact all the more lamentable since, as those friends and foes who did comment upon his preaching make clear, he was known by contemporaries to be an extraordinarily zealous and effective preacher.

It was, in fact, Robert Barnes's zeal as a preacher which first propelled him onto the stage of the English Reformation drama late in 1525. The story of his Christmas Eve sermon in St Edward's, Cambridge, and of his consequent examination and imprisonment, has been told so often that it needs no retelling here.⁴ But some small indication of the friar's vehement delivery is evident in the report of Stephen Gardiner, who later described it as so much 'raylinge', adding that when Barnes warmed to his subject he 'spake so much the more violently'.⁵ Indeed, by Barnes's own admission, he had allowed himself to become rather unrestrained in what finally descended to the level of an *ad hominem* attack on Cardinal Wolsey.⁶ Much to his surprise, Gardiner would later find himself to be the subject of a similar homiletical attack, culminating with Barnes rashly throwing his glove down in challenge.⁷ It is not surprising, then, that Barnes earned an unshakeable reputation for his temper in the pulpit. Thus, when Thomas Cromwell was informed by letter on 15 July 1537 that Barnes had preached a very good sermon that day, the writer felt it necessary immediately to add that this was done 'with great moderation and temperance of himself'.⁸

Though Barnes first came to public attention for his explosive style, he would eventually be known equally well for the biblical and evangelical content of his sermons. No less a preacher than Bishop Hugh Latimer, after hearing three of Barnes's Christmas sermons, concluded that 'he is alone in handling a piece of scripture, and in setting forth of Christ he hath no fellow'. This compliment, communicated to Cromwell, was followed by Latimer's

providing us with a copy of this essay before its publication. For the wider context see Susan Wabuda, *Preaching during the English Reformation*, Cambridge 2002.

⁴ The sources upon which the standard accounts are based include Robert Barnes, *A supplicatyon made by Robert Barnes doctoure in divinitie unto the most excellent and redoubted prince kinge henry the eyght*, n.p. n.d. [Antwerp 1531] (RSTC 1470), fos 22v–35v, and the expanded account in his *A supplicacion unto the most gracyous prynce H. the viij.*, London 1534 (RSTC 1471), sigs F1r–I3r; John Foxe, *Actes and monuments of matters most speciall and memorable ...*, London 1583 (RSTC 11225), 1192–4; Stephen Gardiner, *The letters of Stephen Gardiner*, ed. J. A. Muller, Cambridge 1933, 165–7.

⁵ *Letters of Stephen Gardiner*, 166.

⁶ Barnes, *Supplicatyon* (1531), fo. 33v, cf. fo. 29v.

⁷ *Letters of Stephen Gardiner*, 170. Gardiner claims that on this occasion Barnes 'raged after such a sorte as the lyke hath not ben herde doone in a pulpete'. This sermon precipitated the trial and imprisonment that led ultimately to Barnes's death by burning in 1540. There is thus little exaggeration in the statement that Barnes's career as a reformer both began and ended in the pulpit.

⁸ Hugh Latimer, *Sermons and remains of Hugh Latimer*, ed. G. E. Corrie (Parker Society, 1845), 378.

not-so-subtle request that the vicegerent find occasion to place Barnes in a pulpit before the king.⁹ Evidence for the regard in which Barnes was held for the content of his preaching is given also by his lay hearers. As it became an increasingly popular testamentary practice to replace the provision for trentals with a series of thirty sermons, Barnes's name began to appear with some regularity in evangelical wills. He is, for example, named in those of Robert Packington, Humphrey Monmouth and Alice Wethers to be among the preachers offering sermons in the weeks following their deaths, and he was soon known by critics as the 'principal preacher' of evangelical doctrine in England.¹⁰ Although much of Barnes's preaching took place in London, his reputation was by no means limited to that city. When Cranmer was reminded early in 1538 that an influential Calais chaplain had been promoting Romish doctrines, the archbishop was asked specifically to send Barnes as one of that year's Lenten preachers.¹¹ Later, and farther yet into the continent, King Francis I would receive word of his preaching;¹² Heinrich Bullinger would be informed that 'the word is powerfully preached by an individual named Barnes';¹³ and Philipp Melancthon would simply describe this preacher as 'the eloquent man'.¹⁴

The discovery of hitherto unknown notes taken by a hearer of one of Robert Barnes's sermons is of some significance, then, because they comprise what is thus far the only 'unretouched' evidence we have concerning the content of the preaching which quickly earned him a place of respect among England's early evangelical preachers.¹⁵ These notes also cast some light on two issues particularly contested in Barnes's theology: his views concerning the saints and his doctrine of justification.

Barnes had received criticism regarding the former as early as his 1525 Christmas Eve sermon. One of the charges laid against him in the following days was that he had included no prayer to the Virgin Mary.¹⁶ Later responding to this charge in his *Supplication* to Henry VIII, Barnes was at first dismissive. He simply denied that such an omission could offend, 'for than were the apostles heretykes/for they dyd not pray in theyr sermons to oure ladye'.¹⁷ He returned to the topic near the end of this work, however, and clearly outlined his opinions regarding the saints.¹⁸ He there adamantly opposed their status as mediators while at the same time insisting that, on

⁹ Ibid. 389.

¹⁰ TNA: PRO, PCC, Prob. 11/27, fos 32, 93ff., 232ff; *Letters and papers, foreign and domestic, of the reign of Henry VIII* [hereinafter cited as *LP*], ed. J. S. Brewer and others, London 1862–1932, xv. 306. ¹¹ *LP* xiii/1, 108. ¹² *LP* xv. 485.

¹³ *Original letters relative to the English Reformation*, ed. H. Robinson (Parker Society, 1846–7), ii. 627. ¹⁴ *LP* xiv/1, 1117.

¹⁵ The copyist, unfortunately, gives no indication of his identity or the reason for having produced the notes below. Whether he was an admirer of Barnes's preaching or, to the contrary, gathering evidence against him, must remain open to speculation.

¹⁶ Barnes, *Supplication* (1531), fo. 35r. ¹⁷ Ibid. fo. 35v. ¹⁸ Ibid. esp. fos 112v–47r.

account of their examples of Christian faith and life, they were to be praised, magnified, and deemed worthy of love.¹⁹ This *Supplication*, first printed at Antwerp in 1531, was subsequently revised and reprinted at London in 1534. In this later edition, without explanation, Barnes excised the article concerning the veneration of saints. It is quite possible that his decision to do so led to some confusion, for at the stake six years later, as Barnes made his last profession of faith, an onlooker pointedly asked where he stood on the matter. His reply is not at all dissimilar to the confession offered in 1531:

I have said before somewhat, I think, of them, how that I believe they are in heaven and with God, and that they are worthy of all the honour that scripture willeth them to have. But I say, throughout all scripture we are not commanded to pray to any saints: therefore I cannot nor will not preach to you that saints ought to be prayed unto.²⁰

He concluded by noting that ‘whether they pray for us or no, that I refer to God’.²¹ At least one critic, however, dismissed this confession as disingenuous. John Standish, in a published refutation of Barnes’s last confession, insisted that, in addition to what others had reported to him, he himself had heard the friar speak slanderously of the Virgin Mary while preaching upon the Magnificat nearly three years before his death.²² This charge, among others, prompted Miles Coverdale to take up the pen in defence of his former prior. His defence called upon the testimony of others present at the disputed sermon, who declared that ‘in their life they never heard a man speak more reverently of the blessed virgin Mary’.²³

Barnes’s decision not to reprint the article concerning the saints in 1534 opened the door for ambiguity. Likewise, the debate later ensuing between Standish and Coverdale, based as it was largely on hearsay, increased the possibility for confusion. But where Barnes himself did speak, in his *Supplication* of 1531 and at his death in 1540, he displays a carefully balanced middle way between an extremely high regard for the saints themselves and what could become an almost violent opposition to their veneration. That this middle way did indeed represent his consistent stance on the subject can now be further supported on the basis of the sermon notes below. Holding forth on St John the Baptist, Barnes is unyielding in his insistence that Christ’s unique work of mediation allows no room for the saints to be venerated as mediators between God and man. Thus Barnes cannot abide prayers offered to the saints. Yet (and perhaps rather strangely for one who denied the existence of purgatory) he will go so far as to request and encourage prayers offered for the saints. He notes that, in fact, the Holy Spirit will himself have

¹⁹ Ibid. fos 146v–7r.

²⁰ *Remains of Myles Coverdale*, ed. G. Pearson (Parker Society, 1846), 418. The last confession of Barnes is here reprinted together with the responses of Standish and Coverdale.

²¹ Ibid. 424.

²² Ibid. 350.

²³ Ibid. 351.

John praised. In this context, Barnes remains hesitant even to discourage the celebrations associated with the feast of St John the Baptist.

If it is possible that revisions to his *Supplication* between 1531 and 1534 caused some confusion regarding Barnes's stance on the saints, it is clear that such revisions have led to confusion regarding his doctrine of justification. Writing in 1964, William Clebsch argued that between the years 1531 and 1534 Robert Barnes 'changed his mind radically on justification'.²⁴ Clebsch portrayed this change as a 'withdrawal from a strict Lutheran stand on justification by faith alone'.²⁵ The basis for this was what seemed to Clebsch to be Barnes's increased optimism regarding the role of biblical law. Barnes's alleged withdrawal from a Lutheran stance was thus associated with a move toward the position taken by William Tyndale after 1530, a position Clebsch describes as moralism and legalism.²⁶ Carl Trueman, basing his argument on the two versions of Barnes's *Supplication*, offered a detailed and, on the whole, convincing refutation of Clebsch's interpretation of the evidence.²⁷ The sermon notes would seem to provide further evidence in support of Trueman's position. For instance, addressing the issue of the law's function and effects, Barnes asks his audience 'who is not desperate in the law'? The desperation effected by the preaching of the law is further highlighted by Barnes's statement that some have been driven to suicide when the law revealed to them a true knowledge of their selves. Rather than giving any hint of confidence in one's ability to fulfill God's commands, Barnes emphasises the law's accusatory and condemnatory function. Not only does this closely align Barnes with the Lutheran theology of his own day;²⁸ it puts him even in the vein of the later Formula of Concord, a document drafted, in part, in response to what was perceived as an increasing tendency among some Lutherans to downplay man's helplessness in the face of the law's commands. The Formulators therefore insisted rather unambiguously that the preaching of the law without the subsequent preaching of the gospel of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, can drive sinners 'utterly to despair'.²⁹

Relative to Clebsch's thesis that Barnes had given up such a firm stance by 1534, the question then becomes one of dating the sermon notes at hand.

²⁴ W. A. Clebsch, *England's earliest Protestants, 1520–1535*, New Haven 1964, 59.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 60. ²⁶ *Ibid.* 66, 168.

²⁷ Trueman, *Luther's legacy*, 156–97. Trueman maintains, however, that part of the reason that a radical withdrawal from Luther cannot be seen after 1531 is that Barnes *always* had a more positive view of the law than did Luther (p. 181 n. 78). The sermon notes at hand may serve to raise some small doubts about this.

²⁸ See, for example, Martin Luther, *Theses concerning faith and law* (1535), in *Luther's works*, ed. J. Pelikan and others, St Louis–Philadelphia 1955–86, xxxiv. 116–17: 'Briefly, it is necessary either to despair when one understands the law, but is ignorant of the grace of God, or one must trust in one's self, not understanding the law.'

²⁹ *Formula of concord, thorough declaration*, article 5, paragraph 10, in F. Bente (ed.), *Concordia triglotta*, St Louis 1921, 955.

Although there is no direct evidence for when this sermon was preached, both internal and external evidence help to limit the possibilities. The sermon's obvious emphasis on John the Baptist, the frequent allusions to the first chapter of the Gospel of St John, and the opening reference to a day spent in 'idle games' all point quite strongly to a date of 23 or 24 June, the latter being the feast of the nativity of St John the Baptist, the eve and day of which in London were given over to the games and festivities famously described by John Stow.³⁰ Between the winter of 1525, when Barnes first became a public figure, and the spring of 1535, Barnes spent most of his time either imprisoned or on the continent. Between these dates he made only two appearances as a free man on English soil. The first was a brief, disguised visit in the winter of 1531/32; the second lasted from August 1534 to January 1535 as he participated in negotiations between the English crown and representatives of the cities of Hamburg and Lübeck. If, as seems almost certain, this sermon was preached in late June, then it should be dated no earlier than 1535 – safely beyond the date by which Clebsch claims Barnes had withdrawn from the emphases found therein.

Throughout the summer of 1539 Barnes was again on the continent, and the months before his death in July 1540 were spent imprisoned in the Tower. It can safely be assumed, then, that the notes below were taken between 1535 and 1538; any suggestion more precise than this must remain tentative, as must any attempt to discern the location at which the sermon was preached. No decisive weight can be given to the fact that the notes are currently located in the Warwickshire Record Office, or that they are bound together with material primarily from Coventry.³¹ Nor can we take as authoritative John Foxe's statement that Barnes returned to England 'in the beginning of the raigne of Queene Anne, as others did, and continued a faythfull preacher in this Citie' [i.e. London].³² Barnes in fact spent two-thirds of Anne's reign in Germany. Yet London does recommend itself as the most logical choice of location, as Barnes is certainly known to have been preaching there during the summers of 1535 and 1537.³³ Also, during the Anglo-Schmalkaldic negotiations that took place in London through the summer of 1538, and of which Barnes was a part, the German Protestant delegates preached freely in the city; it is therefore not unlikely that Barnes did the same.³⁴ The only summer between 1535 and 1538 for which there appears no evidence of Barnes preaching in London – or anywhere for that matter – is that of 1536. Philipp Melanchthon, writing to Justus Jonas in June of that year, does note

³⁰ John Stow, *A survey of London* (RSTC 23343), ed. C. L. Kingsford, Oxford 1908, rev. edn 1971, i. 101–4.

³¹ Both Coventry and Warwick did, however, celebrate the feast of St John the Baptist: Thomas Sharp, *Illustrative papers on the history and antiquities of the city of Coventry*, Birmingham 1871, esp. pp. 133–4.

³² Foxe, *Actes and monuments*, 1194 (misnumbered as 1203).

³³ LP viii. 1000 (i); *Remains of Hugh Latimer*, 378.

³⁴ LP xiii/2, 112.

that when he had last heard from Barnes he was still preaching. But he also makes note of Barnes's realisation that with Anne's death England may be less than safe for prominent evangelicals.³⁵ And, indeed, when the Wittenbergers receive news of Barnes but two months later, it is the news that he has of late been in hiding.³⁶ The fact that Barnes refers in his sermon to the Charterhouse may also narrow the probable choice of date. The London Charterhouse surrendered to the crown on 10 June 1537, and it seems unlikely that Barnes would have spoken of it as he did after this date.³⁷ Of the probable years 1535, 1537 or 1538, then, it is the first which should be favoured. On 1 July of that year Barnes was criticised by a conservative London priest for 'two abominable sermons – one on Sunday last at St. Mary Woolners, the other at St. Dunstan's in the west, on St. Peter's Day'.³⁸ As this comment puts Barnes in London pulpits on 27 and 29 June 1535, it is most likely that the recorded sermon was preached in London on Thursday 24 June 1535, the feast day of St John the Baptist.

APPENDIX

notes owte of Doctor Barnes sermond³⁹

John the baptyst is nex our lady in solempen procession:
 ye have byn occupied all this day in an ydle game about your ceremonies:⁴⁰ not bekaus I wold have them undone but that ye regard and geve place to his word.⁴¹
 It [sic] not this a marvelous thyng that the prestes (which includes a marvelous holynes) 2 Chron 31⁴² shuld be agenst John and when Christ axyd them *baptismus Johannis unde* they wold not answer ther consyans⁴³

³⁵ LP x. 1034.

³⁶ LP xi. 475.

³⁷ David Knowles, *The religious orders in England*, Cambridge 1959, iii. 235–7.

³⁸ LP viii. 1000 (i).

³⁹ Warwickshire Record Office, DR 801/12, 68. The notes are found on a single sheet written both recto and verso and bound with other material collected by Thomas Sharp (1770–1841), antiquary of Coventry, dealing primarily with the church of Holy Trinity in Coventry. In the following transcription all standard abbreviations have been extended and proper names capitalised. We have rendered the sentences and spacing as found on the manuscript.

⁴⁰ This is most probably a reference to the midsummer festivities associated with the Feast of St John the Baptist. See Ronald Hutton, *The rise and fall of merry England*, Oxford 1994, 37–41 and n. 30 above.

⁴¹ That is the Scriptures. His text appears to be John i.19–28, in which John the Baptist encounters the Pharisees and Sadducees, although some of the notes point more directly to the account found in Matthew iii.1–12. See also Mark i.1–8; Luke iii.1–20.

⁴² A reference to 2 Chronicles xxxi, in which the priests and Levites are rewarded materially for their faithful discharge of their duties. See especially verse 18.

⁴³ A reference to a later encounter between Jesus and the chief priests and elders. See Matt. xxi.23–7; Mark xi.27–30; Luke xx.1–8.

I am not a man that cryeth (there was no pryde in hym) but a voyce:⁴⁴
 when Christ comes in place, John and all seyntes ar no thyng but voyces
 they ar but wyttnes bereres
 If John be suche [a]won which is the greates of all seyntes⁴⁵, what ar our seyntes?
 Christ dyed alone and rose ageyn alone and went to hell alone, savyd us alone etc., yf he dyd al
 this alone whye shuld he not have all preyse alone?⁴⁶
 yf John be not worthy to unbuckle his shoe⁴⁷, how can he stand cheke mat⁴⁸ with hym?
 let us take them therfor for voyces and pray God to be good to our lady and to seynte John
 Baptist and also to us⁴⁹
 and if Christ that hath mad a weye to heaven ward and taken away the maledyxion of the law
 and overcum even the devell, folow hym
 go not on the ryghte hande nor on the lyfte hand; go to no other savyor save to Christ⁵⁰
 John payd them home when he seyde that they were wyld ones,⁵¹ for he cryed to them
 who is not desperat in the law for who is able to fulfill it? who doth love god above all
 thyngs?⁵²

⁴⁴ John i.23: 'He sayde: I am the voyce of a cryar in the wildernes, make strayght the waye of the Lorde, as sayde the Prophete Esaias.' The polemical force of being a 'voyce' is brought out effectively in William Tyndale's *The parable of the wicked mammon* (RSTC 24454), a work which Barnes knew well. Here the Baptist is made to say: "'I am a voice of a crier.'" My voice only pertaineth to you. Those outward things which ye wonder at, pertain to myself only, unto the taming of my body. To you am I a voice only, and that which I preach': William Tyndale, *Doctrinal treatises*, ed. H. Walter (Parker Society, 1848), 104.

⁴⁵ Luke vii.28: 'For I saye unto you: a greater Prophete then John, amonge wemens chyl dren is ther none. Neverthelesse one that is lesse in the kyngdome of God, is greater then he.'

⁴⁶ Cf. Barnes, *Supplicatyon* (1531), 39r-v: 'The lambe hathe alonly dyed for us. the lambe hathe alonly shed his bloude for us. The lambe hathe alonly redemyd us. These thynges hath he done alone. Nowe if these be suffycient/than hath he alone made satisfaccion.'

⁴⁷ John i.27: 'he it is that cometh after me, whiche was before me, whose sho latched I am not worthy to unlose'. The parallel passage in Matt. iii.11 reads 'whose shoes I am not worthy to beare'. ⁴⁸ Cheek-mate, i.e. equal or rival in power or rank. See *OED*, *sub nomine*.

⁴⁹ Here Barnes reverses the traditional order asking God to be merciful to our Lady and John the Baptist, and this language is carefully chosen. Cf. his reported words at the stake: 'if saints do pray for you, then I trust within this half hour to pray ... for every christian man': *Remains of Miles Coverdale*, 425. The significance of this confession is further discussed in Alec Ryrie's "'A saynt in the deuyls name'". For similar language about intercession see John Craig, *Reformation, politics and polemics: the growth of Protestantism in East Anglian market towns, 1500-1610*, Aldershot 2001, 84-5.

⁵⁰ See Barnes, *Supplicatyon* (1531), fo. 133r: 'if men (I say) had this faith and this love towarde Christe / they wolde goo no further but to hym only they wolde make invente / and devyse no mediators / but faithfully reseve hym (accordyng to the scripturs) for their wonly mediator / savior and redemer'. The warning to go neither to the right nor to the left is a recurring biblical theme found especially in Deuteronomy; see, for example, v.32 and xxviii.14.

⁵¹ Matt. iii.7: 'When he sawe many of the Pharises and of the Saduces come to his baptyme, he sayde unto them: O generacion of vipers, who hath taught you to flee from the vengeance to come?'

⁵² Cf. Barnes, *Supplicatyon* (1531), fo. 86v: 'thy maker knowythe that they be impossible for the he knowithe also / thy damnable and presumtuos pryde / that rekkynest how thou canste do alle thyngis that be good of thyne awne strength with out any other helpe / and to subdewe thys presumtuos pryde of thyne / and to bryng the to knowlege of thyne awne self / he hath gevynge the his commaundmentes'. See also William Tyndale's comment in *A pathway unto the*

when the law bryngyth us to knowlege of our selfe we haue serten hobtes there and then, some hath runnyd to Jerusalem, other to S. James, other at charterhowse, other hange them selves⁵³ yf christ now be not toghte per truwly toghte *in remissionem peccatorum* Job seyth the heavens nor the angelles ar not pur in thye syght yf thou judge them⁵⁴

[verso]

there is no joy in heven with owt hym

Johannes cote with all his gret holynes is no thyng⁵⁵

Abell is as moch to sey as no thyng and Cayn is a lord or a ruler⁵⁶

yf we be godes chyldryn and yf we be fully stablyshed in Chryst blud we may lyghtly prevayle agenst the devyll:

the Turkes doth fast as moche as any of us⁵⁷

yf John spak thus unto thys gret holyones *preparate via domini*⁵⁸ al thys whyle dyd the devyll asawt the precursor of Christ: when he denyed that he was nother christ nother helyas nother a lesse prophyt⁵⁹

now the devyll pepes and choppes logyke⁶⁰ with John makyng a dyvysyon: whye dyst thou baptyse, baptyse syngnyfyeth a new renovacion of newnes of thynges: we (sey they) wyll have thou with us downe to Jerusalem and know how thou wylt answer for thy self and in whos authoritye thou dost all this thynges⁶¹

yf men shuld ax us whye we receve money for seyn⟨g⟩ masses: I think we shud be at a stay to answe⟨re⟩

holy Scripture (RSTC 24462): 'It [the law] killeth him, sendeth him down to hell, and bringeth him to utter desperation, and prepareth the way of the Lord, as it is written of John the Baptist': *Doctrinal treatises*, 22.

⁵³ These are all examples of the penitential system in action. 'Hobtes' are obits; the references to Jerusalem and St James of Compostella are to pilgrimages. For the London Charterhouse where Thomas More spent four years see Knowles, *Religious orders*, iii. 222–40. Barnes probably has in mind the repentance of Judas (Matt. xxvii.1–10), but see also Michael MacDonald and Terence Murphy, *Sleepless souls: suicide in early modern England*, Oxford 1990, 64–6.

⁵⁴ Job xv.15: 'Beholde, he hathe founde unfaithfulnesse amonge his owne sanctes: yee the very heavens are unclene in his sight.'

⁵⁵ For the significance of clothing images see Robert Whiting, *The blind devotion of the people: popular religion and the English reformation*, Cambridge 1989, 48–50.

⁵⁶ Perhaps Barnes has references such as 1 John iii.12, Heb. xi.4 and Jude 11 in mind and is suggesting sarcastically that virtue (Abel) is regarded as nothing and wickedness (Cain) is now elevated to a position of rule and authority. This is the implication of ignoring Christ in favour of saints.

⁵⁷ It is the absence of saving faith that renders the Turk's fasting of no worth. Cf. Tyndale's comment in *The parable of the wicked mammon*: 'The Turks and Saracens know that there is one God, but yet have no faith: for they have no power to worship God in spirit, to seek his pleasure, and to submit them unto his will': *Doctrinal treatises*, 121.

⁵⁸ Matt. iii.2: 'This is he of whom it is spoken by the Prophet Esay, which sayeth: The voyce of a cryer in wyldernes, prepare the Lordes waye, and make his pathes strayght.'

⁵⁹ John i.19: 'And this is the recorde of John: When the Jewes sent Prestes and Levites from Jerusalem, to axe hime, what arte thou? And he confessed and denyed not and sayd playnly: I am not Christ. And they axed him: what then? arte thou Helyas? And he sayde: I am not. Arte thou a Prophete? And he answered no.'

⁶⁰ Peeps: to speak in a querulous tone; chops logic: to argue. See M. P. Tilley, *A dictionary of the proverbs in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*, Ann Arbor, Michigan 1953, 390.

⁶¹ John i.24–5: 'And they which were sent, were of the Pharises. And they axed him, and sayde unto him: why baptised thou then yf thou be not Christ, nor Helyas, nether a Prophet?'

there is moche bablyng amonges some men upon this word *qui ante me factus* etc⁶²
 John goth on his matter seyng that Chryst shuld folow hym⁶³ in prechyng etc
 this was done at Bethagora and amongst all John baptyst frendes even befor all the
 company⁶⁴
 the holy gost wyll have John preyed
 yf we be synners we may say we may not go to hym therfor but rather go to hym therfor⁶⁵

⁶² The Vulgate renders John i.15 as '*qui post me venturus est, ante me factus est, quia prior me erat*'.

⁶³ John i.26–7: 'John answered them sayinge: I baptise with water: but one is come amonge you, whom ye knowe not, he it is that cometh after me, whiche was before me, whose sho latched I am not worthy to unlose.'

⁶⁴ John i.28: 'These thinges were done in Bethabara beyonde Jordan where John dyd baptise.'

⁶⁵ Or, in other words, Barnes is saying that those sinners who say they are unworthy to approach Christ, should go to Christ. In the *Supplicatyon* (1531), fo. 133r, he argues that those with faith 'could not be so unworthy but he of his only and mere marcye ys abyllle and also wolde make them worthy to reseve their petitions / so that if men had faithe they shulde perfytlly know that they had nede of no more than this won Christ that they shulde nor ought not seke to no other mediator / eyther to optayne any thing / or else to make them worthy'.