

Life in its unfullness: Revisiting ἀναίδειαν (Lk 11:8) in the light of papyrological evidence

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■ Introduction

The majority of parable scholars agree that the interpretation of the parable of the Friend at Midnight (Lk 11:5–8) hinges on the meaning of the word ἀναίδειαν in Luke 11:8. Scholarly opinion, however, is divided about the meaning and attitude being described with ἀναίδειαν. Does ἀναίδειαν, which only occurs in Luke 11:8 in the New Testament, refer to a positive or negative attitude? Also, to whom does ἀναίδειαν refer in the parable? To the host (outside the door asking for help) or the neighbour (inside the door being asked for help)?

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Since ἀναίδειαν is a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament, scholars have turned to extra-canonical evidence in an effort to define as precisely as possible the meaning and attitude described with ἀναίδειαν in the parable. Ἀναίδειαν, and its derivatives (e.g. ἀναιδεῖ, ἀναιδεῖς, ἀναίδεια, ἀναίδειαν, ἀναιδουῖ, ἀναιδουῖς, ἀναιδέστατον, ἀναιδεία, ἀναιδῶς, αἰδώζ, ἀναιδίας, ἀναιδῆς, ἀναιδῆ, ἀναιδῆς, ἀναιδεῖν and ἀναιδεῖν) occur in early Jewish and patristic writings, the LXX, in Graeco-Roman and early Christian writings.

We also have one inscription in which ἀναίδειας occurs. The meaning of ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives, in these sources, has received its due attention in the study of the possible meaning of the term³⁶ and indicates that the term is consistently used in a negative and pejorative manner.³⁷ Some of these occurrences will be discussed below in a concise manner to present a comprehensive picture of the meaning of the term.

A comprehensive study of the meaning of the term in extant papyrological evidence, to our knowledge, however, has not been done. The main contribution this chapter wants to make is to fill this void. Roman-Egypt papyri contain nine occurrences of ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives. Does the meaning of the term in available papyri follow the meaning it has in early Jewish and patristic literature, the LXX, Graeco-Roman and early Christian writings, and the one inscription thus far discovered? And, if it does, what implication does it have for the interpretation of ἀναίδειαν in the parable, and for the interpretation of the parable itself? Finally, it will be argued that a life characterised by ἀναίδειαν creates life in its unfullness.

The meaning of ἀναίδειαν in early Jewish literature, patristic literature, the LXX, Graeco-Roman writings, early Christian literature and inscriptions.

■ Ἀναίδειαν in early Jewish literature

In *Sirach* (written c. 200–175 BCE) ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives occur four times.³⁸ In *Sirach* 23:6 the author prays that the greediness of the belly or lust of the flesh should not take hold of him, as well as a mind that is shameful (ἀναιδεῖ), and *Sirach* 25:22 remarks

36. See, for example, the excellent contribution of Snodgrass (1997:505–513):

Using the end of the fourth century C.E. as a reasonable range for analysis, the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae data base includes at least 258 occurrences of ἀναίδεια, all of demonstrably *negative* ... It refers to people who have no proper sense of shame and willingly engage in improper conduct. (p. 506; emphasis in the original)

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38. *Contra* Hultgren (2000:231, n. 23), who also lists *Sirach* 23:11 as an occurrence of ἀναιδῆς. According to our reading of *Sirach*, there is no occurrence of ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives in *Sirach* 23:11.

that a woman who has to support (ἐπιχορηγέω) her husband is full of anger, shame (ἀναίδειαν), and disappointment. In *Sirach* 26:11 and 40:30 ἀναίδειαν also carries a negative meaning: In *Sirach* 26:11 fathers are warned when one of their daughters has an impudent (ἀναιδού) eye, and should marvel if such a daughter is not disobedient and in *Sirach* 40:30 the words of a beggar are described as being shameless (ἀναιδούς).

In his writings, Josephus uses ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives 17 times³⁹ and like Joshua ben Sira, always in a negative sense. In *Jewish War* 1.84, for example, Josephus uses ἀναιδέστατον in the context of the murder of Antigonos in 103 BCE – through the machinations of Salome Alexander, the wife of Aristobolus – by the guards of his brother Aristobolus, the first ruler of the Hasmonean dynasty. When Antigonos heard the news that his brother was killed, he cried out ‘O you most impudent (ἀναιδέστατον) body,’ referring to the ‘great crime’ he allowed to happen. In *Jewish War* 6.199, Josephus tells of a mother that ate her son during a famine, calling this a shameless (ἀναίδειαν) act, and in *Jewish Antiquities* 20.154 Josephus refers to the lies some told about Nero as a shameless (ἀναιδῶς) deed. A final example from Josephus’ *Against Apion*: In *Against Apion* 1.46, Josephus says that some persons write histories without having been near the places in which the events they describe took place. When writing history in this manner, Josephus argues, people abuse the world in a shameless (ἀναιδῶς) way. From these few examples, it is clear that when Josephus uses ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives, it is in a negative way. This is also the case in the other occurrences of the term in his writings.

Finally, *Baruch*, that *inter alia* has as theme God’s exiling of Israel to Babylon due to their behaviour, states that God has brought against Israel a shameless nation (ἔθνος ἀναιδές) that had no respect for an old man, and no pity for a child (see *Bar.* 4:15; cf. *Dt* 28:50).

■ **Αναίδειαν in the writings of the Church Fathers**

In the writings of the Church Fathers, we find several occurrences of ἀναίδειαν, some with specific reference to Luke 11:8. Without exception, these writings describe the attitude of the host as negative, depicting him as shameless.⁴⁰ Chrysostom, for example, in *On the epistle of St. Paul the apostle to the Ephesians*, writes:

39. See *Jewish War* 1.84, 224, 276, 490, 504, 616; 2.278; 6.199, 337, *Jewish Antiquities* 13.317; 17.119; 20.154, 181, *Life* 1.357, and *Against Apion* 1.46; 2.22, 26, and 2.287. *Contra Hultgren* (2000:231, n. 23), who is of the opinion that Josephus has ten occurrences of ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives, including *Jewish Antiquities* 20.357 that does not exist.

40. See, for example, Tertullian (*Marc.*), Tatian (*Diat.*), Origen (*Comm. Matt.*), Augustine (*Anic. Fal. Prob.*; letter to the widow of Sextus Petronius Probus, 412 CE), Chrysostom (*On the epistle of St. Paul the apostle to the Ephesians*; Homily XXVII, Hebrews xi. 28–31, written at Rome in 384 CE; Homily XXII, *Matt.* VI. 28, 29), John Cassian (*The Conferences of John Cassian*, The first conference of Abbot Isaac, *On Prayer*, Chapter XXXIV), and Ambrose (*Off. I.* XXX).

Hast thou never heard of that widow, how by her importunity she prevailed? (Luke xviii. 1–7).
Hast thou never heard of that friend, who at midnight shamed his friend into yielding by his perseverance? (Luke xi. 5–8) (Schaff 1890:206)

■ **Ἀναίδειαν in the LXX**

The LXX (excluding the references to *Sirach* and *Baruch* above) has nine occurrences of ἀναίδειαν. In his prophecy against the house of Eli, the author of 1 Samuel accuses Eli that they look with a greedy (ἀναιδεῖ) eye at the sacrifices that the Lord demands, and in Isaiah 56:10–11 Israel’s watchmen are described as being blind and without knowledge, as dogs that are mute with an insatiable (ἀναιδεῖς) appetite (Is 56:11). These two uses of ἀναίδειαν are clearly negative. In the other occurrences of ἀναίδειαν in the LXX, the word is also, and without exception, used in a negative sense. In Proverbs 7:13 the shameful lying face of an adulteress is described as ἀναιδεῖ δὲ προσώπῳ; Proverbs 21:29 describes the face of a godless man as bold (ἀναιδῶς); and Proverbs 25:23 states that someone who does not show due respect for another person by showing a cheeky or angry (ἀναιδεῖ) face, provokes the tongue. In Deuteronomy 28:50 Israel is warned that if they do not carefully follow all the commands of the Lord, he will bring a nation against them that is fierce-looking (ἀναιδὲς προσώπῳ), and has no respect for the old or pity for the young. In Jeremiah 8:5, Jeremiah describes the people of Judah as people who shamelessly (ἀναιδῆ) turned away from the Lord and who are full of deceit, and Ecclesiastes 8:1 describes the face of the wise man as not hard (ἀναιδῆς προσώπῳ). In Daniel 8:23 (see also Dn Th 8:23), the goat in Daniel’s vision (cf. Dn 8:5–8), most probably a reference to Alexander the Great, is described as a stern-faced (ἀναιδῆς προσώπῳ) king who will cause devastation and deceit to prosper (Dn 8:24–25) and in Daniel Th 2:15, Daniel describes Nebuchadnezzar’s decree – that he will cut his astrologers into pieces and turn their houses into piles of rubble if they do not tell him what his dream was and interpret it (cf. Dn 2:5) – as harsh (ἡ γνώμη ἢ ἀναιδῆς). Thus, without exception, ἀναίδειαν is used in the LXX to refer to something that is considered as negative.

■ **Ἀναίδειαν in Graeco–Roman writings**

As is the case in the writings of the Church Fathers, Graeco-Roman writings also have several occurrences of the use of ἀναίδειαν, and again, without exception, use ἀναίδειαν to describe negative attitudes, actions, or personal traits. A few examples will suffice.⁴¹ *Sibylline Oracles* 4.24–36 compares holy men with men who commit murder, barter for

41. See, for example, also Homer (*Od.* 22.424), Archilochus (*Archil.* 78), Sophocles (*El.* 607), Herodotus (*Hist.* 6.129; 7.210), Aristophanes (*Fr.* 226), Plato (*Phaed.* 254d), Herodianus (*Hdn. Gr.* 2.453), Aristotle (*Top.* 150b), Demosthenes (*Theocr.* 6, Oratio 24), Menander Comicus (*Frag.* 1090.1–2) and Dio Cassius (*Rom. Hist.* 45.16.1).

dishonest gain, and abuse other males sexually. These men's actions and affections, according to *Sibylline Oracles* 4.36, are set on shamelessness (ἀναιδείην). Plato, in *Leges* 647a, describes the man who fears the law as modest, and the man who opposes the law as immodest (ἀναίδειαν). Demosthenes, *In Midiam* 62, *Oratio* 21, writes that no one 'has ever been so lost to shame (ἀναίδεια) as to venture on such conduct as this,' and in his *In Theocrinem* 6, *Oratio* 4, he writes that 'so far as effrontery (ἀναίδεια) goes, such a man is ready to do anything.' Plutarch (1936) also uses the word in a negative way. In *Moralia* 31.2 he writes that when shamelessness (ἀναίδεια) and jealousy rule men:

[S]hame (αἰδώς) and indignation leave our race altogether, since shamelessness (ἀναίδεια) and jealousy are the negation of these things whereas shamelessness (ἀναίδεια) is not a counterfeit of shame, but its extreme opposite, masquerading as frankness of speech.⁴²

And in *Isis and Osiris* 363F–364A he says that God hates ἀναίδεια. Xenophon (*Symp.* 8.36), as a final example, states that what to be worshiped is not impudence (ἀναίδεια), but modesty (εἰδῶ).

■ Ἀναίδειαν in early Christian literature

There are three occurrences of ἀναίδειαν in the Shepherd of Hermas' *Vision* and *Mandate*. In Shepherd of Hermas, *Vision* 3.3.2, Hermas, because he keeps on inquiring about a specific topic wanting to know everything, is described as being shameless (ἀναιδῆς). And when he asks a question that is too upfront, he is described as being shameless (ἀναιδευσάμενος; Herm. Vis. 3.7.5). In Shepherd of Hermas, *Mandate* 11.1.12, the man who thinks he has the Spirit, but in fact is possessed by an earthly spirit, is described as someone who wishes to have the best seat, who is bold, shameless (ἀναιδῆς) and talkative, who lives in the midst of many luxuries and many other delusions, and takes rewards for his prophecy. Basil, in his *On the renunciation of the world* 31.648.21, is of the opinion that high-mindedness, boldness and shamelessness (ἀναίδεια), are the imitation of the devil. Thus, as these examples suggest, also in early Christian literature the use of ἀναίδειαν is linked to negative character traits.

■ Ἀναίδειαν in an inscription on a stone in the Areopagus

A final example of the negative connotation of ἀναίδειαν is an inscription on the stone in the Areopagus on which the accuser stood, demanding the full penalty of the law against one accused of homicide. This stone is called the λίθος ἀναίδειας (stone of outrage), a clear negative use of ἀναίδειαν (see Liddel & Scott 1968:105).

42. The translations of *In Midiam* 62, *Oratio* 21, *In Theocrinem* 6, *Oratio* 4, and *Moralia* 31.2 are from Snodgrass (2008:493).

■ **Ἀναίδειαν in Roman-Egypt papyri**

The above discussed occurrences of ἀναίδειαν in early Jewish and patristic literature, the LXX, Graeco-Roman and early Christian writings, and the one inscription on a stone in the Areopagus indicate that ἀναίδειαν is used, without exception, in the context of negative attitudes, actions and character traits. Do the occurrences of ἀναίδειαν in available Roman-Egypt papyri support this unanimous use of the term?

To our knowledge, no comprehensive study of the occurrences and meaning of ἀναίδειαν in available papyri has been done yet. In scholarship on the parable of the Friend at Midnight, only a few references are made to papyrological evidence when it comes to the possible meaning of ἀναίδειαν.⁴³ A search of ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives in available Roman-Egypt papyri yielded nine occurrences. These occurrences will now be discussed, and the conclusion reached is that the use of the term in Roman-Egypt papyri concurs with the consensus that ἀναίδειαν always carries a negative meaning.

■ **P.Cair.Isid. 75**

P.Cair.Isid. 75, dated 24 October 316, originates from the Karanis village in the Arsinoite nome and consists of a petition submitted by Isidorus, son of Ptolemaeus, to Aurelius Gerontius, praepositus of the fifth pagus of the said nome. In the petition, Isidorus complains that on the previous day at mid-hour while he was working on his land, six fellow villagers, who were drunk and previously had no complaints about him, broke into his house by splitting the door, and smashing his furniture. If the women in the house had not called for help, Isidorus states, they would have damaged the premises also. In the petition, Isidorus alleges that the culprits felt secure from punishment by reason of their wealth. Their act he considers as shameful, and therefore asks for the law to take its due course, an action on which he would settle:

αὐτοῖς ἐπεβουλεύοντο. ὄθεν τῆς τηλικαύτης αὐτῶν ἀναιδίας(*)
δεομένης τῆς ἀπὸ τῶν νόμων ἐπεξελεύσεως τῶν τε
θυρῶν καὶ τῶν συντριβέντων σκευῶν φανερῶν ὄντων,
ἀναγκαιῶς τὰ ἔνγραφα ἐπιδίδωμι ἀξιῶν αὐτ[ο]ῦς ἀχθῆναι ἐπὶ σοῦ

43. BAGD:54 only lists the occurrence of ἀναιδίης in P.Lond. II 342 and ἀναιδευόμενοι in P.Ryl. II 141. Snodgrass (1997:506, n. 1) refers to five occurrences of ἀναίδειαν in the Duke Papyri (from the Packard Humanities Institute CD-ROM), stating that these occurrences all show 'the same understanding as those in the TLG data base.' He, however, does not present his analysis of the five occurrences referred to. See also Snodgrass (2008:733, n. 23).

20. ἵνα τὰ ἀκόλουθα τοῖς νόμοις πραχθῆναι δυναθῆ, ὁ παραπη-
 συχάσω(*) ἐπὶ τούτοις. διεντύχει.⁴⁴

According to Isidorus, it is clear that the perpetrators had no sense of shame (ἀναιδία) and willingly engaged in improper conduct. In P.Cair.Isid. 75.16 the term clearly has a negative connotation.

P.Lond. II 342

P.Lond. II 342 originates from the Socnopaie Nesus village in the Arsinoite nome and is dated 21 June 217. The papyrus consists of a petition by Pabous to the benefactors of the village regarding the oppressive conduct of Sempronius, a πρεσβύτερος from the village. In his petition, Pabous tells of an incident during which Sempronius and other persons who accompanied him came to his house and falsely accused two of his relatives, Ekysis and Ephonychos, of some wrongdoing. After the accusation they left but came back later and violently tried to force him to hand over the two alleged wrongdoers. Pabous then states in P.Lond II 342.15 that Sempronius is shameless (ἀναιδής; P.Lond II 342.14), because:

15. ἐν τῇ κόμῃ καὶ παρ' ἐκάστα λογεΐας
 ποιεῖται καὶ ἐργολάβει τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς
 κόμης καὶ τείρωνας(*) κυνηγῆσαι
 ὕστερον ἀργυρισθεὶς ἀπέλυσεν αὐτοὺς

Thus, according to Pabous, Sempronius is oppressive. He levies contributions on the villagers and forces some of the villagers to assist him in his hunting expeditions. Above all, Pabous had to pay a bribe to resolve the matter. This is why Sempronius is shameless: He has no shame to use his position to be oppressive, levy contributions and force people to help him. He uses violence, accuses people falsely, and takes bribes. He engages in improper conduct and is, therefore, a shameless person.

P.Oxy. 41.2996

This papyrus is a private letter from Anthestianus to Psois, originates from the Oxyrhynchus nome and dates to the 2nd century CE. In the letter, Anthestianus

.....
 44. Therefore, because of the gross shame of their plans, and what they would have done, it is required of the persecuting law to act on the door and the vessels which are evidently shattered, I give this necessary document, asking them to be brought before you, so that in conformity with the laws it can be made possible to exact punishment. I shall settle on this. May you continue prosperous (author's own paraphrased translation).

reminds Psois of the visit of Sarapammom, whom he sent to yet again ask Psois to settle the outstanding debt he accumulated over time. He owes Anthestianus seven hundred drachmas for chaff, the hire of animals for the transportation of the chaff and soil he bought. He also owes Horion the potter fifty drachmas and wine. Psois, however, was full of excuses for not paying. Anthestianus, therefore, has asked his friend, Dionysius, to pay him a visit and demand from him what he owes. He also wrote to Sarapammom asking him to again visit Psois, so that Sarapammom will:

40. θεῖν πάλιν πρὸς σ[ἐ] ἴ(*)να μὴ
ἀναιδομαχῆς ἀ[γν]ωμο-νῶν πρὸς τὴν ἀπαίτησιν
προφασιζόμενος, ἀλλὰ
πάντως εὐγνωμόνησ[ο]ν
40. [again go to you so that (Psois) will not
continue to quarrel with no shame,
disregarding my demand
and making excuses, but
comply without fail].

Psois, according to Anthestianus, is a shameless person because instead of settling his long outstanding debts, disregard to Anthestianus' demands, and is full of excuses for not paying. He thus engages in improper conduct with no shame.

P.Ryl. II 141

P.Ryl. II 141 is a petition of an unknown farmer to Gaius Trebius Justus, a centurion from Petermouthis; a farmer of state land and collector of public dues, and also a farmer on the estate of Antonia, the wife of Drusus. The petition originates from Euhemeria in the Arsinoite nome and is dated 28 April to 25 May 37 CE.⁴⁵ In the petition, the farmer states that while he was talking to the shepherds Papontos, son of Orsenouphis, and Apion, also known as Kapareis, on what they owe him for damages for their flocks grazing on his lands (P.Ryl. II 141.11–17), the two shepherds:

- ἔδωκάν μοι
πληγὰς πλείους ἀναιδευ-
20. ὄμενοι μὴ ἀποδῶνα(*)
[they attacked
me with blows,
shamelessly refusing to pay].

45. The petition is written in the first year of Gaius Caesar Imperator, thus in 37 CE (see P.Ryl. II 141.9–11).

As a result, the farmer continues, he has lost 40 silver drachmae he had with him from the sale of opium, and his belt. The shepherds thus not only refused to pay, they also robbed him. What we have in P.Ryl. II 141 concurs with P.Oxy. 41.2996. In both cases, persons who owe money shamelessly refuse to pay. P.Ryl. II 141 also concurs with P.Lond. II 342 regarding the use of violence. Refusing to pay what is owed, and the use of violence is to engage in improper conduct with no shame.

SB 6.9105

Sb 6.9105 is a petition from Gaius Lucretius Papirianus to Philoppos, the chosen *ἐιρηνοφύλαξ* (guardian of the pace) of Theadelphia, to act against an official named Ababikein who unlawfully collected tax from a cripple. The provenance of the petition is the Arsinoite nome and is dated 1 August 198 CE. In his petition, Gaius Lucretius Papirianus states that Ababikein came to his orchard where he came across and injured the cripple who has been released by the governor from paying poll tax. Ababikein, however, overstepped his authority by extorting the poll tax from the cripple on the pretext of the authority of the elders. This act Gaius Lucretius Papirianus describes as shameful (*τὰς ἀναιδείας*; Sb 6.9105.9). This, however, was not the first time Ababikein acted in a shameful manner, as can be deduced from Sb 6.9105.8–12:

.... οὐκ ἄγνοεῖς
τὰς ἀναιδείας καὶ τὰς πει-

10. ράσεις τὰς περὶ Ἀβαβί-
κειν, ᾧ καὶ ἄλλοτε πλη-
γὰς ἐπέθηκας ἀναιδειῶν

[You are not unaware
of the shamelessness and you]

10. [will testify, regarding Ababi-
kein, who also at another time, you had
set blows on account of shamelessness].

It thus seems that Ababikein not only engaged in shameful acts but that his overall behaviour was that of a shameful person, engaging in improper conduct with no shame when collecting taxes.

SB 6.9387

Sb 6.9387 originates from Ibion Eikosipentaruron in the Arsinoite nome and is dated 2nd to 3rd century CE. The papyrus is a private letter from Heron to an unknown addressee, in which he asks that the commander of the infantry should be removed, and to give him advice on the neglect by someone regarding three palm

groves and one fir tree of Hermopolis Themistou in the olive garden and the palm grove of Tonaitianes. This neglect, Heron describes as shameful (ἀναιδῶς) conduct (SB 6.9387.9).

SB 6.9421

SB 6.9421 is dated 300–400 CE, originates from Oxyrhynchus, and is a complaint lodged by Aurelius A[---], also known as Aphynchis, former exhibitor of games in the city of the Oxyrhynchites. The complaint is addressed to Aurelius Alexander, a police magistrate, and states that he was mistreated and assaulted by Didyme, wife of Agathos Daimon, the cook. In his complaint Aphynchis states that during the previous evening Didyme, while passing his house and seeing him and his family standing outside his house, started to insult him, using language that could not be repeated. When he asked her to stop insulting him and leave, she leaped at him and hit him. After this, she also insulted some of his daughter's sons. Because of these actions, he describes Didyme as γυνὴ ἀναιδεία μεγίστη καὶ θράσει κεχορηγημένη – a women greatly furnished with shame and brutality (SB 6.9421.12–13). From this context, it is clear that ἀναιδεία here carries a negative meaning.

SB 6.9458

Sb.6.9458, a complaint regarding excessive cargo fees, is dated in the second half of the second century and originates from the village Tebtynis in the Arsinoite nome. In his complaint, the petitioner, a priest named Kronion Pakebkis of Harpochration, complains that Kronios – a certain daring man (τινὸς ἀνθρώπου τολμηροῦ;⁴⁶ SB 6.9458.5–6) – was overcharging people on transportation costs (cargo costs) for wheat brought into the harbour. Transportation cost for one bag of wheat normally is 19 obol, but Kronios demanded from him 30 obols per bag of wheat. By charging this, Kronios wanted to make an unacceptable profit. Kronion was not willing to pay what Kronios demanded and only paid the normal price. Kronios was not happy with this. When Kronion was not at home, Kronios went to his home, acted violently, and made one of Kronion's slave girls strip naked in the middle of the street. Kronios even went further, as this was not enough, he victimised the slave girl. After this incident, Kronion did speak with Kronios, but he paid no heed to what Kronion told him. The

46. Semantically linked to τόλμημα, -ατος which could be a 'daring act' or 'shameless act' (cf. P.Oslo 2.22.5–6, P.Col 6.47, P.Mich 3.174.9, P.Mich 6.423.26). See also *Sirach* 8:15, 9:2–3 where actions described by using the word τόλμημα and its derivatives (τολμάω, τολμηρός) are clearly acts which would be deemed as shameless (*inter alia* drunkenness, giving insults and the use of violence).

behaviour of Kronios, especially the overcharging of cargo fees, according to Kronion, is shameful (*ἀναιδεία*; SB 6.9458.11).

P.Sakaon 48

P.Sakaon 48 is dated 6 April 343 CE and originates from the village of Theadelphia in the Arsinoite nome. The papyrus consists of a quite lengthy petition from Aurelius Zoilos, son of Melas and deacon of the principal church in Theadelphia, to Aurelius, curialis and praepositus of the eighth pagus of the Arsinoite nome. In his petition Aurelius Zoilos states that his late son, Gèrontios, married Nonna, the daughter of Annous. When Gèrontios became sick, Sakaon, also from Theadelphia, took possession of Aurelius Zoilos' house, and by assault abducted Nonna and carried her off to his own house. This act, he later heard, was done with the support of Nonna's mother and Sakaon's brothers. Later his other son, Pasis, after Gèrontios passed away, witnessed how Sakaon and his brothers ill-treated his grandfather. They were about to chop up his cloak with axes, and when Pasis intervened he was attacked with axes and clubs. Luckily Pasis was able to take flight, otherwise, he would have been killed. Since this incident, Sakaon and his brothers also carried off sheep, 16 oxen, and 5 asses that his sons had on lease, leaving Aurelius Zoilos with the responsibility to replace the asses as expected by the owner.

In his petition Aurelius Zoilos describes these acts as lawless and audacious (οὗ [ἐτ] ὀλιμησαν ῥησοκινδύνου πράγματος; P.Sakaon 48.12–13),⁴⁷ and considers it as shameful behaviour, as he states in P.Sakaon 48.4: οἱ τὸν ἀν[αιδ]ῆ [κ]αὶ ληστρικὸν [τρό]πον ἡρημ[έ]ν[ο]ι, καθαρῶτατε τῶν [ἀ]νδρῶν, δίκαι[ιοί] εἰσι <τῆς> τῶν νόμων [Those who have chosen the way of shame and robbery, O purest of men, deserve to experience the visitation of laws].

Robbery, assault, malicious damage to property, theft and the use of violence, according to P.Sakaon 48, is the way of shame.

The above analysis of the ten occurrences of *ἀναίδειαν* and its derivatives in nine Roman-Egypt papyri concurs with the negative meaning of the term in early Jewish and patristic writings, the LXX, Graeco-Roman and early Christian writings, and the one inscription in which *ἀναίδειας* occurs. As in these literary sources, the term is consistently used in a negative and pejorative manner, referring to a willing and shameful participation in improper conduct; robbery, assault, swearing, housebreaking, malicious damage to property; illegal levy of contributions, forcing people to do something against their will; the use of violence, accusing people falsely, taking bribes, non-settling of outstanding debt; non-retribution for damages caused, unlawful collection of taxes, negligence of responsibilities; and oppressive behaviour.

47. See also *παρανόμου καὶ ῥησοκινδύνου* πράγματος in P.Sakaon 48.23.

■ Ἀναίδειαν in Luke 11:5–8

From the above analysis, it can be concluded that ἀναίδειαν has a negative and pejorative meaning. As stated by Herzog (1994:202): The ‘meaning of *anaideian* remained consistently censorious from the classical through the Hellenistic and early church periods.’ The papyrological evidence discussed above attests to Herzog’s conclusion. Regarding the meaning of the term, Herzog (1994:212–213) has concluded that the meaning of ἀναίδειαν (and its related forms) fits into two major categories; greed, and behaviour that violate socially and religiously sanctioned boundaries. Papyrological evidence attests especially to the latter meaning of the term, namely willing and shameful participation in improper conduct (e.g. robbery, the use of violence, swearing, illegal levy of contributions, taking bribes, non-settling of outstanding debt, non-retribution for damages caused, unlawful collection of taxes, negligence of responsibilities, and oppressive behaviour). In short, the meaning of ἀναίδειαν refers to a shameful act that is considered as improper and unacceptable in terms of socially accepted norms.⁴⁸

Defined as such, what is the implication for understanding the term in Luke 11:8?

- Firstly, the meaning of ἀναίδειαν in Luke 11:8 simply cannot have a positive meaning. There are, however, scholars who argue for a positive meaning of ἀναίδειαν. Derrett (1978:84), for example, tries to solve the pejorative meaning of ἀναίδειαν in Luke 11:8 by arguing that the word’s meaning had shifted from an invariably pejorative to a more neutral meaning of ‘boldly’ or ‘unselfconsciously’. Derrett’s understanding of ἀναίδειαν in Luke 11:8 is representative of interpreters of the parable who, like Derrett, see the neighbour in the parable as a reference to God. If the neighbour in the parable represents God it creates a problem, since God cannot be characterised in a negative way. Ἀναίδειαν therefore cannot have a negative meaning, because God cannot be depicted as having no shame. To solve this problem, ἀναίδειαν is translated as ‘importunity’ or ‘shameless boldness’ (Herzog 1994:202; see also Snodgrass 2008:443), giving ἀναίδειαν a neutral

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48. Some scholars often render the meaning of ἀναίδειαν as importunity or persistence (see e.g. Donahue 1988:185; Funk, Hoover & The Jesus Seminar 1993:327; Kistemaker 1980:150; Lockyer 1963:264). Regarding these translations, Malina and Rohrbaugh (2003) make the following important comment:

Western commentaries notwithstanding, there is no evidence that the Greek word rendered ‘importunity’ (RSV) or ‘persistence’ (NRSV) ever had those meanings in antiquity. The fact is that the word means ‘shamelessness’, the negative quality of lacking sensitivity (as sense of shame) to one’s public honor status. (p. 273)

See also Hultgren (2000:231) and Scott (1989:91) for the translation of ἀναίδειαν as shamelessness, that is, conduct that is considered as shameful because it is considered as improper and unacceptable in terms of socially accepted norms.

(positive) meaning. If one, however, interprets the parable as a realistic story about village life in 1st-century Palestine, the neighbour is not a reference to God, but simply a villager being asked for help by a co-villager. From this perspective, there is no conundrum that has to be solved regarding the meaning of ἀναίδειαν. To this possible reading we return below.

- Secondly, and linked to the above, interpretations of the parable that link ἀναίδειαν to the attitude or actions of the host, although interpreting ἀναίδειαν as a negative term, should be dismissed. This understanding of ἀναίδειαν also takes as point of departure that the neighbour in the parable is a symbol of God. Ἀναίδειαν, because of its negative meaning, therefore can only refer to the attitude of the host. If not, the parable does not pay much of a compliment to God and leads to a ‘theological morass’, as it pictures God as a reluctant grouch who only answers prayers out of divine shame (Buttrick 2000:186). These interpretations should be dismissed because of the syntactical structure of Luke 11:8. In Luke 11:8, that reads λέγω ὑμῖν, εἰ καὶ οὐ δώσει αὐτῷ ἀναστάς διὰ τὸ εἶναι φίλον αὐτοῦ, διὰ γε τὴν ἀναίδειαν αὐτοῦ ἐγερθεὶς δώσει αὐτῷ ὅσων ἠρήξει, the αὐτοῦ in Luke 11:8b is clearly linked to the ἀναίδειαν of the giver (host).⁴⁹

With the above taken into consideration, what is a possible interpretation of the ἀναίδειαν of the neighbour in the parable? Put differently: Why does the parable portray the actions of the neighbour as negative? To answer this question, at least two things are important when reading the parable. Firstly, one has to picture the possible economic and political background that is presumed by the parable. And secondly, one has to determine, as far as possible, what was considered as normal and acceptable behaviour in village life in 1st-century Palestine.⁵⁰

In 1st-century Jewish Palestine, the relationship between the ruling elite and the ruled peasantry was one of power and exploitation, especially by means of rents, taxes and tolls. The peasantry also had to cope with drought, famine, floods, overgrazing, overpopulation and scarce land. These conditions left the peasantry on the edge of destitution (see Herzog 1994:206), and had a negative impact on traditional village life and village values (esp. hospitality). Most villagers were under tremendous pressure to survive, which impacted heavily on the relationships between families (Herzog 1994:207). Some villagers, who previously felt responsible for helping their neighbours in times of shortage, were no longer willing to do so. Some even started to mimic their Roman overlords and the Jewish temple elite by setting up patron-client relationships with co-peasants and villagers. For them the solution for survival was balanced reciprocity; they

49. See also Oakman (2008):

The neighbor’s importunity is often seen as the point of the similitude, but I take the second *autou* of 11:8 to refer to the man in bed, not the man at the door. (p. 94; emphasis in the original)

50. For a detailed analysis of the parable, see Van Eck (2011:1–14 of 14).

would help, but wanted something in return. General reciprocity thus was replaced by balanced reciprocity.

What was considered as ‘normal’ behaviour in 1st-century village life? Van Eck (2011:10–11 of 14) has indicated the following:

- receiving unexpected visitors (friends) as family
- extending hospitality to friends as a normalcy, a guest (friend) of one villager was considered to be a guest of the entire village
- treating a guest with honour was the responsibility of the entire village
- to ask for help from other villagers to feed (honour) an unexpected guest.

The host, therefore, asking a neighbour for bread in the middle of the night to feed a guest was normal behaviour. Put differently, there is no ἀναίδειαν (shamelessness) involved in his request. But the same cannot be said of the reaction of the neighbour inside the door. He is not interested in friendship and being hospitable. He, however, has an offer to make. Because of his ἀναίδειαν (shamelessness), he is willing to treat the host as a client. He will help, but only in terms of balanced reciprocity. He will help, but wants to get something out of the ‘transaction’. And this, in terms of the socially accepted norms and values of village life, was improper and unacceptable – it was ἀναίδειαν (a shameless action). One of the exploited became an exploiter himself.

■ Ἀναίδειαν and ‘Life in its fullness’

Since this chapter is part of the centenary celebration of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria, a final word is appropriate. The Faculty of Theology’s Faculty Research Theme (FRT) is *Oikodome – Life in its fullness*. With this theme the Faculty aims, in its academic discourse, to be relevant in the South African society (see Kok 2015:1). In what sense does our academic discourse contribute to social cohesion in South Africa, our ethical norms and especially the weak in our society? Is our academic discourse practiced in the so-called ivory tower, or does it contribute to life in its fullness?

For the historical Jesus, from this perspective, life in its fullness was the kingdom of God. In his parables, Jesus offered his hearers a different world than that created by the privilege and power of those in power (Hoover 2001:92); a world that was just and in which everyone had enough. The implications of the study of the meaning of ἀναίδειαν in the parable of the Friend at Midnight is evident; where ἀναίδειαν is present, the kingdom of God (life in its fullness) is not. Life in its fullness will also be present where neighbours treat others as kin, practice general reciprocity – giving without expecting to get something in return.

■ Summary: Chapter 10

The aim of this chapter is twofold. Firstly, the chapter presents a comprehensive study of the meaning of the term ἀναίδειαν in extant papyrological evidence. The conclusion reached is that the term, as is the case in early Jewish and patristic writings, the LXX, Graeco-Roman literature and in early Christian writings, always carries a negative and pejorative meaning. This meaning of the term is then used to interpret the occurrence of ἀναίδειαν in the parable of the Friend at Midnight. Secondly, as part of a publication that celebrates the centenary of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria, a few remarks are made with regard to the Faculty of Theology's Faculty Research Theme (*Oikodome – Life in its fullness*) and the attitude of ἀναίδειαν as depicted in the parable.

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