

lished in the first to four major genres of biblical literature: Hebrew narratives, prophetic literature, Gospels, and Epistles. Here the value of such thorough preliminary work quickly becomes evident. The preacher who works his way seriously through this book will find his own understanding of the Bible greatly enriched and could find his preaching revolutionised.

The second volume arose from a conference arranged by the Rockford Institute Centre on Religion and Society in New York, in January, 1988. The participants came from a wide range of theological traditions, and included some evangelicals like David Wells and Clark Pinnock.

Cardinal Ratzinger, who, as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, is second only to the Pope as an authoritative spokesman for Roman Catholic doctrine, opened the conference with a public lecture on 'Biblical Interpretation in Crisis'. He examined the relationship of theology and exegesis since the Enlightenment began to drive a wedge between them. He saw Kant's philosophy as the major source of the presuppositions supporting that wedge, and he called for the recognition that the faith of the church is what truly opens the Bible to us.

Raymond Brown, William Lazareth and George Lindbeck all then gave papers on aspects of the conference theme. Brown stressed the importance of the historical approach, but reminded the conference that the Bible is a church document even in its historical context. Lazareth expounded Luther's principle of *Sola Scriptura*, making it clear that it was not a formula for church-rejecting individualism. Lindbeck outlined the 'classic hermeneutic' which assumed biblical unity, interpreted it through Christ and viewed typology as the link between the Testaments. This hermeneutic had collapsed for post-Enlightenment thinkers, but today the way is open for theologians and scholars, pastors and lay Christians to work together for a new consensus.

Paul Stallworth brings the volume to a conclusion by telling 'the story of an encounter', in which we hear the cut and thrust of the two-day debate. The participants tried both to maximise common ground and to highlight areas of continuing disagreement. If there had been more evangelicals present there may have been more fully articulated points of contention.

The church's role in biblical interpretation plays a major part in this book, but a much smaller one in that by Greidanus. Many of the conference participants will view this as a

weakness in the latter, but without doubt he ably presents a hermeneutic for preachers in today's church. Their volume raises questions, his supplies answers.

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The Actuality of Atonement: A Study of Metaphor, Rationality and the Christian Tradition
Colin E. Gunton

T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1988; 222pp., £11.95, hardback; ISBN 0 567 09497 9

SUMMARY

The author is a sympathetic but searching critic of the Enlightenment, and develops his thesis using his considerable philosophical skills. He discusses the various theories of the atonement, and concludes that the Western tradition has overdone the legal approach. Because of this, the penal substitutionary theory is treated unfairly in the book. The author surprises us with a defence of Edward Irving's concept of sacrifice, which many readers will find hard to accept.

RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur critique les Lumières avec sympathie, mais avec rigueur. Il démontre, en développant sa thèse, de grandes compétences philosophiques. Il traite des diverses théories de l'expiation, et conclut que la tradition occidentale a privilégié à l'excès le point de vue juridique. Du coup, la doctrine de la substitution pénale souffre, dans le livre, d'un traitement peu équitable. L'auteur nous étonne en prenant la défense du concept de sacrifice d'Edward Irving; de nombreux lecteurs auront de la peine à le suivre.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der Autor diskutiert die verschiedenen Theorien zum Sühnopfer und kommt zu dem Schluß, daß die westliche Tradition den juristischen Aspekt überzogen habe. Das führt dazu, daß der Gedanke der Stellvertretung unfair dargestellt wird. Der Autor überrascht mit einer Verteidigung von Edward Irvings Konzept des Opfers, was von vielen Lesern schwerlich akzeptiert werden dürfte.

With this book Professor Colin Gunton of King's College, London, completes a sort of trilogy on the three major doctrines, Christology (*Yesterday and Today*), Trinity (*Enlightenment and Alienation*) and atonement. Each of these books, but especially the second and third,

expose his considerable skill in philosophy, particularly as a sympathetic but searching critic of the Enlightenment.

This book lays a philosophical foundation but then turns to reflection on the doctrine of the atonement. The first part seeks, successfully in my view, to restore the validity of metaphor as a tool of rational discovery from its condemnation to oblivion at the hands of the Enlightenment up to and including Hegel. The main lesson for the theologian is that metaphor, as a primary vehicle of rationality, is an appropriate but indirect mode of exploring reality including God. Armed with that axiom Professor Gunton tackles three great atonement metaphors: battlefield, justice and sacrifice.

The author does much to place the 'battlefield' metaphor in its biblical setting and to appreciate but suitably qualify G. Aulen's celebrated case for the primary place of this idea in atonement theory. Most evangelical readers will be dissatisfied in this section mainly with the author's handling of the nature of the demonic. He sees the biblical language as expressing the helplessness of human agents before psychological, social and cosmic forces. It is doubtful if such an explanation can be squared with the NT account of Christ's ministry whilst still leaving the credibility of Jesus intact. This shortcoming, curiously, does not destroy the many helpful insights in Professor Gunton's sympathetic critique.

On the metaphor of 'justice', we are treated to some fine exposition of Anselm and P.T. Forsyth, but the author is convinced that the Western tradition, though not when at its best, has overdone the legal approach, adopting the central motif of 'demand' in which the human agent is expected to fulfil certain obligations in default of which there must be some penalty. He concedes that in the framework of the OT covenant the matter is not such a problem but does not then seem to take account of the Reformed notion of a more general creation covenant framework for all humanity. As a result the 'punitive' approach to atonement fares unduly badly in the book.

The author surprises us with a defence of the nineteenth-century writer Edward Irving as the chief substance of his chapter on 'sacrifice', but again the thrust of the section is to justify such language despite modern tastes. The book's thesis overall both upholds the value today of these biblical metaphors and curbs their individual influence. Metaphors disclose only part of the truth and do not necessarily integrate though they expound in parallel the same central idea. Many readers will be cautious here and rightly

reluctant to reduce all metaphors to the same level of importance when, in fact, integration is biblically viable around the covenant-law idea.

Perceptive closing chapters on the Trinity and the church round off a book with much to teach and encourage us even if we cannot agree with every assumption.

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From Grave to Glory: Resurrection in the New Testament (Including a Response to Norman L. Geisler)

Murray J. Harris

Grand Rapids; Academie Books (Zondervan), 1990, pp. 493. ISBN 0 310 51991 8

SUMMARY

This book is the fruit of an unfortunate controversy between the author and Dr Norman Geisler, concerning Dr Harris' belief in the physical resurrection of Christ. It is a defence and explanation of the controversy, which seems both strange and sad to outsiders.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce livre résulte d'une malheureuse polémique entre l'auteur et Norman Geisler, à propos des positions de Harris sur la résurrection physique du Christ. Harris se justifie et expose les enjeux de la controverse; le tout paraît bien étrange et triste aux observateurs extérieurs.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Buch ist das Resultat einer unglücklichen Auseinandersetzung zwischen Norman Geisler und dem Autor und handelt von Harris' Glauben an die leibliche Auferstehung Christi. Es ist eine Darlegung und Verteidigung der Kontroverse, die den Außenstehenden kaum interessiert.

God brings good out of evil – 'c'est son métier'. This book illustrates that happy feature of the divine activity!

I did not realise, before receiving this book for review, that its author has been the victim of one of those tasteless doctrinal witch-hunts for which certain branches of American evangelicalism show a particular *penchant*. Apparently his appointment in 1986 as Professor of New Testament exegesis and theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield,