

speaking of the inspired origin of a book, the latter speaking of its experienced profitability.

The author also makes a second distinction, not between authoritative books and Scripture, but between Scripture and canon. By the latter, he understands the exact determination of which books are Scripture and which are not, a question not finally settled, in the case of the New Testament, earlier than the fourth century. He holds that the exact limits of the Jewish Old Testament were determined similarly late. It was only then that the books could be listed. In both cases, however, the books were used as authoritative much earlier, and certain other books as well—books like the Shepherd of Hermas and the Didache in the case of the New Testament and books like the Apocrypha and Enoch in the case of the Old Testament. What Barton's attitude to these other books is remains obscure. Indeed, he does not really discuss the boundaries of the Christian Old Testament as a separate question from the Jewish, and if he did, he might be driven by consistency to the conclusion that the Christian boundaries and the Jewish are not the same.

This second distinction of Barton's is even more vulnerable than his first. The idea that one cannot speak of a canon until one has an exact list has no historical basis. It is true that the word 'canon' is not used until the fourth century, but the idea is present as soon as belief in Scripture is present, and extant Christian lists of the Scriptures date not from the fourth century but from the second. It is true that the second century list of the New Testament Scriptures, the Muratorian Fragment, is not altogether identical in content with the later lists, and mentions doubt about one of the books it includes, yet the amount of common ground is striking. And as to the second century list of the Old Testament Scriptures, that of Melito, it is identical, apart from one book, with the canon of the Hebrew Bible and with the lists provided by those of the later Fathers who adhere to the Hebrew canon.

Altogether, this is a worthwhile and thought-provoking book, but not to be treated as a manual. Its worst parts are those dependent on the author's earlier book, *Oracles of God*.

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Children in The Early Church: Children in the Ancient World, the New Testament and the Early Church

W. A. Strange

Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1996,
120pp., £ 8.99, ISBN 0 85364 763 1

RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur expose brièvement, mais utilement, quelle attitude on avait vis-à-vis des enfants dans les familles et dans la société chez les Juifs, les Grecs et les Romains au temps de Jésus. Il présente l'attitude de Jésus et de l'Eglise primitive, telle qu'elle se dégage de la Bible. Il examine ensuite la place des enfants en rapport avec le baptême et la Sainte-Cène à travers les éges. Finalement il fait quelques remarques sur la situation actuelle.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der Autor bietet einen kurzen, aber hilfreichen Überblick über die Einstellung zu Kindern in den Familien und der Gesellschaft der jüdischen, griechischen und römischen Kulturen zur Zeit Jesu. Außerdem skizziert er anhand des biblischen Berichts die Einstellung Jesu sowie die der frühen Kirche. Anschließend betrachtet er die Rolle von Kindern im Zusammenhang mit Taufe und Abendmahl durch die verschiedenen Zeitepochen und äußert schließlich einige Gedanken zur gegenwärtigen Situation.

This book is timely in light of the continuing debate on the place and role of Children in the Church. Last November the Church of England Synod accepted guidelines in a report to the Synod about the admission of children to Holy Communion. Recently I saw a large poster outside a church which read 'Children welcome'—it is surely an indictment of the whole Church that we need to make a statement like that.

The author of this book began with a question in mind, 'if Jesus had so much to say about children, why did the early Church have so little to say?'

Answering this generated other questions which in turn give this short book its framework. In it Dr Strange provides a survey of the early cultures around Jesus' time, of the Jewish, Roman and Greek attitudes to children within the family and within society as a whole. He then briefly reviews the biblical

material of Jesus' attitude to children, and the place of children in the Early Church as mentioned in the Epistles.

In a very interesting chapter on 'Children and the Sacraments', he gives a historical and biblical overview of infant baptism and children at the Eucharist. He does not provide a definitive 'proof' for infant baptism but clearly tries to present arguments that uphold this position while at the same time appreciating those who hold to believers' baptism. Most of the arguments for infant baptism are clearly documented in many other places.

However, I found the survey Dr Strange presents on children and the Eucharist very informative. From a reference to Cyprian (d.258) it appears that children were in the habit of receiving communion from birth (i.e. after baptism). Although Augustine built a powerful case for the admission of Children to Communion, the Western Church at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) barred children from communion, whilst in the Eastern Church the admission of children to communion continued to be the norm, as indeed it remains today.

Those who are convinced that children play a vital role in today's church will find this book very affirming, and those who still need to be convinced on the right place of children will find it thought provoking. The book is not just for ministers and church leaders; it is a well written and accessible volume to all, and it is clearly written by someone who is passionate about children's full involvement (as far as they are themselves able) in the Body of Christ, the Church today.

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God and the Biologist: Faith at the Frontiers of Science

R.J. Berry

Leicester: Apollos, 1996, 143pp., £12.99, pb, ISBN 0-85111-446-6

RÉSUMÉ

La science et la foi chrétienne sont deux façons différentes de connaître. A cet égard elles sont complémentaires. La science répond à la question "comment?", la foi à la question "pourquoi?". Dans trois essais, l'auteur, professeur de génétique, plaide pour une position

chrétienne au sujet de l'évolution, de la technologie génétique et de l'éthique de l'environnement. Il prétend que l'évolution est un fait, que les humains sont des animaux, mais que cela ne compromet pas la compréhension de la vérité scripturaire. Au contraire, cela permet aux chrétiens de parler d'un but dans un monde livré au hasard et de l'immanence de Dieu dans un monde hostile. La technologie moderne dans le domaine de la procréation a soulevé la question cruciale du moment précis où commence la vie. Les théologiens ne donnent pas de réponse claire à cette question et nous devons rechercher l'éclairage de la recherche scientifique actuelle. Il appartient aux chrétiens d'introduire l'éthique dans le débat écologique, car les solutions purement politiques et scientifiques sont inadéquates. L'auteur engage l'Eglise à adopter une attitude responsable et réfléchie vis-à-vis de la création dans son ensemble.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Wissenschaft und christlicher Glaube stellen verschiedene Arten des "Wissens" dar und verhalten sich zueinander komplementär. Die Wissenschaft beantwortet die "Wie-Frage", der Glaube hingegen die "Warum-Frage". In den drei Essays verteidigt der Autor, ein Professor für Genetik, eine christliche Position zu den Themen Evolution, humane Reproduktionstechnologie und Umweltethik. Er versteht die Evolution als Tatsache und den Menschen somit als Tier. Dies jedoch mache ein biblisches Wahrheitsverständnis keineswegs zunichte. Vielmehr erlaube diese Sicht Christen, in einer Welt des Zufalls über Sinn zu sprechen und in einer feindlichen Welt über die Immanenz Gottes. Die moderne Reproduktionstechnologie hat die drängende Frage aufgeworfen, wann genau das Leben beginnt. Da die Theologie keine endgültigen Antworten auf diese Frage bietet, müssen wir uns anhand aktueller wissenschaftlicher Forschung informieren. Christen haben die Aufgabe, ethische Fragen in die Umweltdebatte einzubringen; denn politische und wissenschaftliche Lösungen an sich sind inadäquat. Der Autor fordert die Kirche heraus, ein verantwortliches Verhalten in bezug auf die gesamte Schöpfung anzunehmen.

We live in an age in which Science is deeply distrusted. The post-war scientific triumphalism has evaporated in the face of nuclear disaster and environmental degradation. Governments have lost confidence in funding scientific research and fewer undergraduates