

continuation of this: 'and I give you as a light to the nations . . .' The review of interpretation, phrase by phrase, is compendious.

In this detailed exegesis, a theological thesis is never far from the surface. In Koole's interpretation, salvation in Christ is at the heart of the work begun in the restoration of the tribes, the preserved of Israel. Furthermore, the 'Servant' cannot readily be identified with DI, as he thinks this would be incompatible with the worldwide reach of his ministry (i.e. not just the prophet's Babylonian hearers) (p. 25).

A further example from the same chapter, 49:22-26, is instructive. In the 'Essentials and Perspectives', Koole sees vv. 22-23 as depicting a 'festive procession to Zion' by the nations, bringing exiles back in an act of homage parallel to the 'pilgrimage' in Isa. 2:2-4 (p. 69). Vv. 24-26, in contrast, portray an enemy, still holding the children of Zion captive, and to whom God declares that he will overcome them. New Testament echoes are found in Mark 3:27 (particularly), and in Rev. 16:6 (pp. 69-70).

The Scholarly Exposition begins with a discussion of the unity of the passage (which is defended, pp. 70-72). Vv. 22-24 are then interpreted as portraying the willing tribute of the nations. Here a problem is encountered because of the strong language of v. 23b, which seems to put the tributaries in the position of defeated enemies; but Koole sees this merely as a recognition of Yahweh's lordship, because of v. 23c (p. 76). He then contrasts this group with the 'oppressors' of v. 26 (p. 83). The uniting theme is the eventual recognition by all that Yahweh is God.

In this passage it is true that there is a different tone in vv. 24-26 from vv. 22-23. But the transition is perhaps not so sharp as Koole argues (against others who think vv. 22-23 depict the nations in servile role, cf. D. van Winkle, VT 35 [1985], 450ff.). It is possible that the theological thesis of the messianic message of salvation to all nations has influenced the exegesis too much at this point.

On the fourth Servant Song (Isa. 52:13-53:12), Koole offers a traditional Christian interpretation. The Servant now proclaims a new salvation: 'The suffering, dying Servant shares in the divine glory' (252). The New Testament fulfilment is always in view. For example, in 53:1, Israel admits its wrong; is Rom. 11:25-26 anticipated? At the same time the interpretation takes a broad view of the imagery here. The author shows a sympathy with all the human suffering that is evoked. In it, Israel is not excluded, but rather Auschwitz is

involved in what is portrayed (p. 251). And the Suffering Servant is rightly appropriated by the synagogue as well as the Church. However, the theological commitment is clear. On 53:12a, the 'many' (not the 'great') are those who are reconciled, after having turned away in 52:14: 'These have already accepted the Servant as Saviour (49:7). For them he was the only way to salvation' (p. 257).

There are two areas in which a reader might take issue with the commentary. One arises from the comprehensiveness itself. The lexicographical material in particular does not always feed directly into the interpretation offered. The author avoids the well known dangers of philology in interpretation, because he is sensitive to the contexts of words, but this means that sometimes one feels the discussions are redundant. The second area is the theological interpretation itself. As is clear from the above examples the commentary falls definitely into the Reformed tradition of interpretation, in its conviction that the prophetic text articulates in essence the message of the Gospel. Readers may sometimes quibble on the theological grounds over his reading of texts.

Nevertheless, this is a monumental work, the fruit of a lifetime's scholarship. It is both scholarship and theology, a celebration of the purpose of God to show his salvation to the whole world by means of the most painstaking labour on the Old Testament text. The intended comprehensiveness—from text-criticism and philology to theology—is sometimes challenging to the reader. Yet this work goes beyond most commentaries in its insistent concern to scrutinize the text of Scripture out of a theological conviction, and with a host of theological and hermeneutical questions in mind. In that sense it is a model. Not that it compels assent on every point, but that it manifests the devotion of a Christian scholar.

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Paul and Perseverance: Staying In and Falling Away

Judith M. Gundry Volf

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Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe, 37.
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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die vorliegende Tübinger Doktorarbeit widmet sich dem Problem der Perseveranz im Corpus Paulinum. Die Verfasserin teilt die untersuchten Texte in vier Kategorien ein, die die eschatologische Dimension des Problems, den Lebenswandel, den Glauben und das Ziel der paulinischen Mission betreffen. Ihre Lösungsvorschläge sollten nicht nur von Neutestamentlern und Systematikern beachtet werden, sie sind vielmehr auch Pastoren eine Hilfe im Umgang mit den Passagen bei Paulus.

This book began life as a doctoral dissertation, directed by Prof. Dr. Otfried Hofius and accepted in 1988 by the Evangelisch-Theologische Fakultät of the University of Tübingen. As the title indicates, it is a comprehensive study of "the perseverance of the saints" in Paul's undisputed letters (including, however, 2 Thessalonians). Gundry Volf arranges the texts relevant to her subject in four broad categories. Under the first category ("The Eschatological Tension and Staying In") she examines such passages as Romans 5:1–11, Romans 8:29–30 and Philippians 1:6. She concludes that in these texts and others like them Paul unambiguously affirms God's faithfulness to bring his chosen people to final salvation despite the onslaughts of present evil. Her's is the most natural reading of these passages, as the classic Reformed confessions recognize, and her exegesis of them is unexceptionable. Other texts, however, have always been difficult to harmonize with these passages, and Gundry Volf tackles these passages in her next three categories. Her second category ("Conduct and Falling Away") examines passages in which, according to many, Paul assumes that the sinful conduct of the wayward among his congregations has placed their salvation at risk. In every instance, Gundry Volf's exegesis attempts to demonstrate that something other than ultimate salvation is at stake. The weak who violate their own convictions in 1 Corinthians 8:11 and Romans 14:15 are not "destroyed" in any ultimate way, but merely unedified. The judgement which, in 1 Corinthians 11:27–34, falls on those who are abusing the Lord's Supper is pedagogical rather than condemnatory in nature. The incestuously immoral man of 1 Corinthians 5:1–5 is only a falsely professing believer, as Paul demonstrates when he expresses the hope that expulsion will lead the man to repentance and salvation. Similarly, the person who thinks he stands in 1 Corinthians 10:12 show take heed lest he fall from the appearance of salvation

rather than from salvation itself. Finally, the vice lists in 1 Corinthians 6:1–11 and Galatians 5:19–21 do not threaten Paul's sinful readers with loss of salvation. In the first, Paul shows the Corinthians that their behavior is incompatible with their eternal destiny and in the second he demonstrates to the Galatians that he is not, despite slanders to the contrary, a libertine.

The third category ("Faith and Falling Away") examines four passages in which Paul has often been understood to describe failure of the elect to persevere in saving faith. Gundry Volf argues that two of these texts refer not to the final "falling away" of those whom God has chosen, but to a temporary hardening (Israel in Romans 9–11) or expulsion (Gentile Christians in Romans 11:17–24) of the unfaithful as part of God's wider, merciful purposes (Romans 11:26). A third passage (Galatians 5:1–4) is a hypothetical statement intended to force Paul's readers to grapple with the consequences of their flirtation with another gospel. The final text (2 Corinthians 13:5), similarly, implies that rejection of Paul's apostolic authority is equivalent to confessing that one is not a believer after all. These passages demonstrate, says Gundry Volf, that Paul did not view perseverance in salvation as "automatic" but as constantly in need of God's active, sustaining grace.

The fourth category ("Final Outcome of Mission") covers passages in which Paul seems to express doubt about the saving outcome of his mission. Does Paul claim that his own salvation depends upon the success of his mission to the Gentiles (1 Corinthians 9:27, 1 Corinthians 9:23, or Philippians 3:11–12)? Do Paul's references to laboring in vain mean that he thought his converts might fail to persist in their faith and lose their salvation (Philippians 2:16; 1 Thessalonians 3:5; and Galatians 2:2; 4:11)? Does Paul's talk of believing in vain and receiving God's grace in vain reveal a fear that some recipients of God's grace among his congregations might lose their grip on salvation (1 Corinthians 15:2 and 2 Corinthians 6:1)? According to Gundry Volf, some of these texts do not have salvation in view at all (1 Corinthians 9:23, 27). Others are best read as expressions of confidence in ultimate salvation (1 Corinthians 15:2; Philippians 3:11–12). But some of them, if taken alone, might be understood as expressions of doubt about the perseverance of believers (2 Corinthians 6:1; Galatians 2:2; 4:11; Philippians 2:16; 1 Thessalonians 3:5). The stance of this last group on the question of perseverance, how-

ever, is not unambiguous and should not upset the overwhelming evidence of other texts that Paul held to the perseverance of believers.

Gundry Volf's ambitious volume has many strengths. It is carefully crafted, proceeding logically from the passages where her thesis is most secure to those where its footing is less certain. Although the book is highly technical, her frequent summaries both of the problem she is about to tackle at the beginning of a section and of her conclusions at the end make her argument easy to follow. It is also thorough, treating with care every text pertinent to her subject and often shedding new light on shopworn debates over difficult texts. For example, she correlates the term "good work" in Philippians 1:6 with 2 Corinthians 8:9 and the notion of God's beneficence in such texts as the Testament of Joseph. She then draws the conclusion that Philippians 1:6 speaks of God's completion of his own "good work" among the Philippians. The statement does not refer, as is commonly thought, to some "good work" of the Philippians themselves. Similarly, she helpfully illuminates the meaning of the term "judgment" in 1 Corinthians 11:29 and 34 when she correlates it with the notion of pedagogical judgment found in such texts as Deuteronomy 8:5; Proverbs 3:11–12; and Wisdom 11:10.

Her argument seems weakest when treating the problem of Jewish unbelief, and the potential for Gentile unbelief, in Romans 9–11. Here she claims that the temporary nature of the hardening or the cutting off leaves room for subsequent salvation and so does not impugn God's faithfulness to the elect. This perspective is promising enough at the national level, but Gundry Volf does not adequately address the nagging question of how God's faithfulness to the elect remains in tact when the individuals who fall in the present differ from those who experience God's mercy in the end.

This, however, is a small matter in light of the book's overall usefulness. Systematic theologians, New Testament scholars, and pastors who have puzzled over the difficult texts that Gundry Volf treats will all find this an indispensable volume.

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Trinität und Gemeinschaft. Eine ökumenische Ekklesiologie.

Miroslav Volf

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Miroslav Volf, ein weit bekannter Theologe aus Kroatien, hat mit dieser Monographie seine Habilitationsschrift veröffentlicht, die 1993 in Tübingen angenommen wurde. Die Arbeit stellt einen nicht unbedingt leicht lesbaren hochstehenden Beitrag zur Ekklesiologie der Gegenwart dar. Sie versucht, der historischen Tiefendimension der Kirche genauso gerecht zu werden wie ihrer gegenwärtigen ökumenischen Weite, die die freikirchliche Ekklesiologie in in Darstellung einbezieht.

Miroslav Volf, als Sohn eines freikirchlichen Pastors in Novi Sad im ehemaligen Jugoslawien aufgewachsen und jetzt am Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Kalifornien, lehrend, legt mit diesem Buch seine Habilitationsschrift vor, die er 1993 an der Evang.-Theol. Fakultät der Universität Tübingen einreichte und von Jürgen Moltmann betreut wurde. Die Arbeit ist nicht nur deswegen interessant, weil Miroslav Volf den Ruf auf einen Lehrstuhl in Heidelberg erhielt, sondern weil diese Ekklesiologie zugleich eine Programmschrift für die Zukunft der Kirche darstellt. Volf will mit seiner Untersuchung "zu der Neuentdeckung der Kirche beitragen" (10). Dies ist um so wichtiger, da der kirchlich gelebte Glaube immer mehr "durch einen diffusen, in sich die Elemente der multiplen Religiositätsformen einschließenden und sich ständig ändernden individualistisch gelebten Glauben ersetzt" wird (11). Volf kontrastiert in dieser Arbeit das freikirchliche Kirchenverständnis, das er anhand des Gründers der Baptisten, John Smyth, aufzeigt, mit den ekklesiologischen Positionen von Kardinal Ratzinger und dem orthodoxen Metropoliten Johannes Zizioulas und zieht dann seine eigenen Folgerungen.

Zunächst wird Joseph Kardinal Ratzingers Verständnis der Kirche dargestellt, für den es unverzichtbar ist, daß eine Ortskirche in Gemeinschaft mit der ganzen Kirche stehen muß, daß sie entweder katholisch ist oder keine Kirche im echten Sinne sein kann. Diese eine Kir-