

logical concerns which both Pannenberg and Moltmann respond to in their respective views of history, how they try to account for the God-world relation within their intellectual heritage (which basically amounts to accounting for God in history after Troeltsch). In this way the contemporary theological question Gilbertson desires to tackle has been set out in the open. In chapters 3-5, after he has methodologically defended the move in chapter 2, he then proceeds to show how Revelation accounts for the God-world relationship through the way it uses spatial and temporal categories. In the last chapter he then returns to Pannenberg and Moltmann, considering how his interpretation of Revelation may inform their respective views of history. This last chapter, although competent, is somewhat of an anti-climax of an otherwise brilliant study, diffused in comparison to the tight argument of the rest of the book.

Gilbertson has convincingly shows that despite vast conceptual differences, the fundamental concerns of the book of Revelation and those of Pannenberg and Moltmann are not simply consonant with each other but can be greatly enriched by one another. The central chapters (3-5) are undoubtedly the high point of the book. Here Gilbertson, through an analysis of the formal characteristics of Revelation and its use of spatial and temporal categories shows how the book "sets the present earthly experience of the reader in the context of God's ultimate purposes, by disclosing hidden dimensions of reality, both spatial – embracing heaven and earth – and temporal – extending into the ultimate future." (i) Even apart from Gilbertson insightful methodological observations and his competent analysis of Pannenberg and Moltmann, the book is worth every penny of its heavy price tag just for this clear, concise and convincing analysis of how John places the difficult socio-political context of his audience within the larger purposes of God for heaven and earth.

Poul F. Guttesen, St. Andrews, Scotland

Dimensions of Baptism: Biblical and Theological Studies,

Stanley E. Porter, A. R. Cross (eds.)

JSNT 234. Sheffield: SAP, 2002. 401 pp.
£80, hb. ISBN 0-8264-6203-0

SUMMARY

This collection of essays by North American and British authors covers various aspects of baptism in the New Testament (John the Baptist, household baptisms in Acts, Paul, Hebrews, Johannine literature), contains three essays on historical subjects and gathers some aspects of baptism in contemporary theology (the latter written by Baptists). The volume does not cover all relevant aspects but reminds its readers that there is more to Christian baptism than the question of when and how people should be baptised. It is a stimulating (and expensive!) "must" for all interested

in the current scholarly and interdisciplinary discussion of baptism.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage est une collection d'essais rédigés par des auteurs nord-américains et britanniques abordant divers aspects du baptême dans le Nouveau Testament : le baptême de Jean-Baptiste, les baptêmes de maisonnée, le baptême chez Paul, dans l'épître aux Hébreux et dans la littérature johannique. Trois études sont consacrées à des sujets historiques et considèrent certains aspects de la théologie contemporaine du baptême. Cet ouvrage ne couvre pas tous les aspects, mais il contribue à rappeler au lecteur que la question de savoir quand et comment l'on doit être baptisé n'est pas la seule qui se pose concernant le baptême. C'est un ouvrage stimulant (mais aussi coûteux) que ne doivent pas négliger ceux qui sont intéressés par le débat académique et interdisciplinaire actuel sur le baptême.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Diese Sammlung von Essays aus der Feder nordamerikanischer und britischer Autoren deckt verschiedene Aspekte der Taufe im Neuen Testament ab (Johannes der Täufer, Haustaufen in der Apostelgeschichte, Paulus, den Hebräerbrief und die johanneische Literatur), enthält drei Essays zu historischen Themen und sammelt einige Aspekte der Taufe in der gegenwärtigen Theologie (letzteres aus der Feder von Baptisten). Der Band deckt nicht alle relevanten Aspekte ab, aber er erinnert den Leser daran, dass die Frage der christlichen Taufe mehr umfasst als das Wann oder Wie der Taufe. Das Buch ist ein stimulierendes (und teures!) Muss für alle, die an der gegenwärtigen wissenschaftlichen und interdisziplinären Diskussion zur Taufe interessiert sind.

* * * *

For many years G. Beasley Murray's examination of *Baptism in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962) has been the one and only in-depth study of an important but neglected NT subject. Also in church history and systematic theology baptism has not been a major subject. This situation has changed with the appearance of a good number of studies in recent years of the whole field (listed on pp. 1f). The editors of the present volume already contributed to this renewed interest with their earlier volume *Baptism, the New Testament and the Church: Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R. E. O. White* (JSNT.S 171; Sheffield: SAP, 1999).

This interdisciplinary volume contains essays by seventeen international scholars and consists of three parts. After the list of contributors the editors provide an "Introduction: Baptism – An Ongoing Debate" (1-6) in which they summarise the following essays and observe that scholars from a Baptist tradition have not studied baptism the way one would have expected: "In short, in the last thirty years, Baptists have produced very little specifically on baptism/Christian initiation, an observation which belies their numerical strength. It is of particular note, then, that a number of the essays in the present

volume are written by Baptists and deal with baptism within the Baptist and ecumenical context" (5).

The first and largest part is devoted to *Baptism in the New Testament*. It includes I. H. Marshall on "The Meaning of the Verb 'Baptize'" (8-24, a revised and expanded version of an earlier essay with the same title in *EQ* 45, 1973, 130-40). Marshall asks how we are to translate the Greek verb and its derivatives, and what kind of action or actions is referred to when these terms are used. He argues that while immersion was the rule for baptism in NT times, there is some evidence that affusion and possibly sprinkling (*Didache* 7.3) was also practiced: "In the end, however, the amount of water and the precise mode in which it is administered are surely matters of indifference" (23). Thus the exact mode of baptism and the amount of water used therein need not divide churches. B. Chilton surveys "John the Baptist: His Immersion and his Death" (25-44, "his activity and program within the terms of Judaism made him a purifier", 43) and C. A. Evans, "The Baptism of John in a Typological Context" (45-71, baptism seen as an act of eschatological purification, signifying repentance and re-entry into God's covenant with Israel). On the location of John's baptizing ministry (mentioned in John 1.28 cf. R. Riesner, *Bethanien jenseits des Jordan: Topographie und Theologie im Johannesevangelium*, BAZ 12; Giessen: Brunnen, 2002; cf. *TynB* 38, 1987, 29-64), who argues for the region of Batanaea to the North-East of the Lake of Galilee.

J. B. Green examines "She and her household were baptized" (Acts 16.15): Household Baptism in the Acts of the Apostles" (72-90; I looked in vain for F. Avemarie's *Die Taufenzählungen der Apostelgeschichte: Theologie und Geschichte*, WUNT 139; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002; cf. my review in *Jahrbuch für evangelikale Theologie* 17, 2003, 259-61). Green notes that these accounts "occur on the missionary frontier where the crossing of ideological and theological boundaries was a prerequisite for the spread of the gospel" and suggests that "The baptism of households entails the unequivocal embrace of the household as the new cultural centre for the people of God, an active centre of social order that embodies and radiates a world-order within which Jesus is Lord of all, hospitality is shared across socio-ethnic lines, and hierarchical lines that define the empire are erased" (90). While this interpretation works for the baptism of Cornelius and his household in Acts 10.48 (cf. v. 24, the first Gentile converts), and for Lydia and the Philippian jailer and their houses in Acts 16.15,33 (the first European converts), other boundaries are crossed in Acts without the specific mention of household baptisms (Acts 2.41; 8.12) or even baptism in general (cf. Acts 11.21).

S. E. Porter asks "Did Paul Baptize Himself? A Problem of the Greek Voice System" (91-109). He examines Acts 22.16 with its grammatically possible understanding of the verb in the middle voice as Paul baptizing himself, concluding "that while Paul was most probably baptized by Ananias, neither this nor his self-baptism can be determined from Luke's employment of the

middle voice form" (3). Thus Ananias' charge could be translated "Get up, experience baptism and wash away your sins" (109). H. Sherman contributes "'Getting in and Staying in': Unexpected Connections between E. P. Sanders on Paul and Expectations of Baptism today" (110-119, related to the British Baptists where baptism is understood as a transfer of allegiance to the lordship of Jesus. There is no hint in this essay that Sanders' reading of Early Judaism and Paul has been heavily criticised). A. R. Cross examines the relationship between "Spirit- and Water-Baptism in 1 Corinthians 12.13" (120-48). The phrase "we are all baptised into one body" is best taken as a synecdoche rather than as a metaphor, thus "the referent is both Spirit- and water-baptism and the rest of the conversion-initiation process" (148). In "By Water and Blood: Sin and Purification in John and First John" (149-62) J. Ramsey Michaels suggests that the problem of how to deal with post-baptismal sin caused the theology of atonement in John and 1John: "In the Johannine tradition, then, it was not the human predicament as such, but the problem of post-baptismal sin among believers that gave birth finally to a robust theology of the atonement", 162). A. R. Cross studies in another contribution "The Meaning of 'Baptism' in Hebrews 6.2" ("instructions about baptisms", 163-186) and suggests that the unusual plural formulation includes the baptism of blood, i.e. martyrdom. Cross starts with Jesus' reference to his death as a baptism in Mk 10.38f and traces this line through the NT (Paul, Revelation) and the Apostolic Fathers to the first unequivocal references to the baptism of blood in Tertullian and Hippolytus. Cross concludes: "... there is a possibility that 'baptisms' in Heb. 6.2 could include a reference to the baptism of blood/martyrdom as part of the elementary teaching given to converts ..., and the relevance of this to the immediate context of the church to whom Hebrews was written is nowhere clearer than when the writer states: 'You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood'" (186).

There are no separate essays on Jesus' baptizing activities, on the call to baptise all nations in the Great Commission, on a classic passage like Romans 6.1-11 (nine lines in Haymes' essay) or a difficult passage like 1Peter 3.20f (cf. K.-H. Ostmeier, *Taufe und Typus: Elemente und Theologie der Taufstypologie in 1. Korinther 10 und 1. Petrus 3*, WUNT II, 119; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000 and my review in *FilNT* 25-26, 2000, 126-28).

Part two deals with *Baptism in the Early Church*. While part one covers much of the relevant material in the NT, this part provides three exemplary essays (two essays in part three also deal with Patristic material). In "Out, In, Out: Jesus' Blessing of the Children and Infant Baptism" (188-206) D. F. Wright gives a fine survey how this story was understood and used in the Early Church, noting its virtual absence as a justification for infant baptism and assessing its use in the liturgies of various modern paedobaptist traditions (at times included, at other times excluded). On the liturgical use of this passage Wright

comments: "It belongs more fittingly in a non-baptismal service of thanksgiving or dedication for a newborn or adopted child. ... Its removal from services of infant baptism – out again, after being brought in at the Reformation – can only serve the rediscovery of infant baptism as an ordinance or sacrament of the gospel rather than a rite of babyhood" (206). E. Ferguson studies "Christian and Jewish Baptism according to the Epistle of Barnabas" (207-223) and also "The Doctrine of Baptism in Gregory of Nyssa's *Oratio Catechetica*" (224-34; cf. also Fergusson's *Conversion, Catechumenate and Baptism in the Early Church*, SEC 11; New York: Garland, 1993).

Baptism in Contemporary Theology is covered in part three. R. Kearsley asks "Baptism Then and Now: Does Moltmann Bury Tertullian or Praise Him?" (236-52) and indicates many similarities in the baptismal thought of both theologians. For both, baptism is a "radical decision of response to call ... and as the beginning of a new life, of a new relation to the public world along with the whole community of believers" (252). S. Holmes writes on "Baptism: Patristic Resources for Ecumenical Dialogue" (253-267; John Chrysostom, Basil, Augustine) and G. Watts on "Baptism and the Hiddenness of God" (268-279). P. Fiddes examines "Baptism and the Process of Christian Initiation" (280-303). Fiddes thinks that understanding baptism as a process of incorporation and initiation would be a "fruitful way forward for ecumenical discussion for both baptists and paedobaptists" (4). P. E. Thompson outlines the "Memorial Dimensions of Baptism" (304-324, with special reference to the North American Southern Baptist Convention). He argues that "Baptist identity has become distorted by the separation of baptism from conversion with an over-emphasis of an individual's subjective faith and loss of the communal dimension" (6). If baptism represents the point in time at which people "are saved", then salvation itself becomes something of the past. This would be the Protestant distortion of soteriology. B. Haymes writes on "The Moral Miracle of Faith" (325-332) and C. J. Ellis on "The Baptism of Disciples and the Nature of the Church" (333-53). The volume closes with a bibliography (354-79), index of references and of authors.

This is a stimulating collection of essays from an interdisciplinary perspective for scholars, church leaders and pastors alike. The whole issue of baptism has at times been reduced to the question of the mode of its administration and age of its recipients to its own detriment. This welcome collection highlights some of the many other facets of baptism hitherto often neglected. It is not a "how to"-practical handbook, nor does it cover all issues raised by baptism in the New Testament, church history of contemporary systematic theology. But discusses a number of issues of relevance to different denominations and their baptismal practices. It would have been good to see, especially in part three, also some contributions from outwith the North American and British realm, be they Baptist or not, e.g. some interaction of the many Ukrainian and Russian Baptists, who form by far the

largest Baptist Unions in Europe, with the Orthodox traditions in their countries, would be of interest.

Christoph Stenschke, Bergneustadt, Germany

A Theology of the Dark Side

N.G Wright

Paternoster Press, Carlisle, 2003 pp 195. £8.99, pb,
ISBN 1-8422-7189-X

SUMMARY

This is reasoned, balanced and well-researched book discussing the biblical material dealing with the demonic. Essentially, a updating of earlier works, Wright urges caution and the rejection of extreme views. This is a scholarly yet pastoral work of some importance.

RÉSUMÉ

Voici un excellent travail de recherche, bien argumenté et équilibré, traitant de l'enseignement biblique sur la démonologie. Essentiellement, il met à jour des travaux plus anciens, en recommandant la prudence et le rejet de points de vue extrêmes. C'est un travail académique important, qui fait preuve en même temps d'un souci pastoral.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dies ist ein durchdachtes, ausgewogenes und gut recherchiertes Buch, dass das biblische Material über das Dämonische diskutiert. Es ist im wesentlichen eine Aktualisierung früherer Arbeiten, in denen Wright Vorsicht und die Zurückweisung extremer Ansichten anmahnt. Es handelt sich um ein nicht unwichtiges wissenschaftliches und pastorales Werk.

* * * *

This book is essentially an updated re-write of Nigel Wright's earlier book *The Fair Face of Evil: Putting the Power of Darkness in its Place*. It is rooted in scholarly literature and Wright sets the theme of his book by reminding the reader that one of the most pressing questions we are facing today is, 'How can we oppose evil without creating new evils and being made evil ourselves?'. Wright who defines his position as 'thoughtful acceptance' of the New Testament teaching clearly believes in the objective existence of the devil although he reticent to speak of the devil in personal terms. He wisely cautions us therefore not to invest the devil with authority that is not rightfully his by focusing too much attention on evil and demonic powers. He warns against the paranoid worldviews of some of the extremer Charismatics who believe that everyone is demonised in some degree and that all the nations of the world are under the control of unseen princes and powers such as Jezebel, the Prince of Persia, Antichrist and co. He points out that the human psyche is neither holy nor demonic in itself, yet when it is orientated towards the devil it becomes a realm of unwholesome demonic activity.

Wright stresses that the New Testament evidence