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Editorial

Mark Elliott

When it was first announced that the theme of the 2004 FEET conference was to be 'public theology' many might have wondered: 'what is that?' The conference gave some of us the chance to find out. It is, we discovered, theology which (a) speaks out of the wisdom of the bible and Christian theology and experience about matters to do with public life, matters which touch all citizens, and (b) directs itself to be heard by persons and institutions outside the church. Each of these tasks presents its challenges. (a) involves the necessary marshalling of the counsel of biblical theology and the church's collected wisdom on any issue (e.g., 'war') and applying the appropriate hermeneutical 'lens' so that it is a theology suitable for the modern day. (b) requires that the church's voice is both understandable by the politician, the voter, the civil servant (not in any of the 'languages of Zion'), and that it declares concepts which are to some degree acceptable by those who do not accept the claims of God in Christ.

One approach to this last matter in the 1950s was to speak of 'middle axioms' – principles for policy formation which were inspired by Christian teaching and yet connected on the other side with universally accepted moral notions. This approach has been blasted from one angle – as Christians see their spokespersons too often water down the Christian message for the sake of forming partnerships in the public realm. This seems to get worse when denominations try to present a common Christian voice: the distinctive ideas are reduced to very little even before they have got beyond the walls of the churches. It has also been attacked from another angle: in other words, are there any such 'universally accepted moral notions (in the words of A. MacIntyre, Whose Justice? Which Rationality'?)?

Another way is to follow a thick strand in the Roman Catholic tradition, to speak of 'the common good': one problem here is that the church needs to show how the practice of a principle in the life of the church is indeed good for its own members before it is to stand a chance of being accepted by a wary secular society: and, of course, is the good of a Christian community which, e.g., sees the absence of pain as not always desirable, not always good for all human beings.

What have we learned then from the conference just past? Well, that public theology is properly part of an evangelical Christian theology. The gospel is not apolitical nor is it political but rather 'super-political': to summarise Oliver O'Donovan, the 'political energies' of the cry "*YHWH mlk*" get subsumed in (but not cancelled out by) 'Jesus is LORD' in the New Testament. The papers in this volume are eloquent testimony to this. Our closer links with the European Evangelical Alliance in a planned theological consideration of the European Constitution (to take place Spring 2005) was in considerable part forged through this conference and its preparation. Part of the trouble is that Christians, yes even evangelicals, disagree among themselves, often on these 'public' issues (war, wealth distribution, human rights in various aspects, etc.). So then, who is to have the standing to represent us and what are they to emphasise? Well, whoever they are and whatever they believe on any one issue, Evangelicals will in general tend to be both harder and softer. Ours is not an easy moralising, but a hard questioning of secular positions in terms of what they presuppose and what they imply in terms of action and behaviour in the face of a holy Creator, and also an affirmation in the sense of repeatedly confirming the message of God's mercy in Christ. This is our framework: not just 'the Lordship of Christ' but the saving power over all creation for those who call on him. And that is the message of the Cross. So perhaps it is not inappropriate that we shall in the next, 2006 conference, to take place in Prague (4-8 August, 2006), consider the theme of Reconciliation – the Cross of Christ and all the difference it makes. Please accept this as an (early) invitation, on behalf of the FEET committee!

Celebrating the Law?
Rethinking Old Testament Ethics

Hetty Lalleman

Dismissing the view that Old Testament law is out of date and irrelevant, Hetty Lalleman sets out a model for interpreting Old Testament laws in the context of the whole of the Bible. Interacting with scholarly literature on the subject she then provides some basic biblical principles for integrating the whole of God's word in our lives. The book then fleshes these principles out by applying them to three difficult topics in Old Testament law – food laws, the cancellation of debts and warfare. At the heart of this celebration of the law, Lalleman contends, is the wholeness, holiness, and integrity of God himself. *Celebrating the Law?* shows how God calls us to be his distinctive people displaying the same wholeness, holiness, and integrity as he himself has.

Hetty Lalleman is an Associate Lecturer in Old Testament Studies at Spurgeon's College, London.

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Robert P. Gordon

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Robert P. Gordon is the Regius Professor of Hebrew at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of St Catherine's College. He is also the author of a commentary on 1 and 2 Samuel.

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Church and State: The Contribution of Church History to Evangelical Models for Public Theology

Professor A.T.B. McGowan
Highland Theological College, Scotland

SUMMARY

Patrick Miller's excellent little book discusses the implications of the first commandment for our understanding of the relationship between politics and religion. He examines the axiomatic importance of this call to undivided devotion to the Lord and then goes on to examine two of the main challenges to such commitment—the economic god and the god of political order. Miller then goes on to discuss the positive implications of the first commandment, looking in particular at Deuteronomy's expansion of this law which focuses on love for and fear of the Lord.

* * * *

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Patrick Millers hervorragendes Buch diskutiert die Implikationen des ersten Gebots für unser Verständnis der Beziehung zwischen Politik und Religion. Er untersucht die axiomatische Wichtigkeit dieses Rufs zur ungeteilten Devotion des Herrn und untersucht darauf aufbauend zwei der Hauptherausforderungen solch einer Hingabe – der ökonomische „Gott" und der „Gott" der politischen Ordnung. Danach diskutiert Miller die positiven Implikationen des ersten Gebots, indem er sich besonders die Ausdehnung dieses Gebots in Deuteronomium ansieht, die sich auf die Liebe zu Gott und die Furcht Gottes fokussiert.

* * * *

RÉSUMÉ

Patrick Miller nous livre un excellent petit ouvrage dans lequel il traite des implications du premier commandement quant au rapport entre la politique et la religion. Il commente cet appel à une dévotion sans partage au Seigneur. Puis il considère deux idoles concurrentes qui réclament l'allégeance humaine : le dieu économie et le dieu ordre politique. Miller aborde ensuite les implications positives du premier commandement, en s'intéressant particulièrement au développement de cette loi dans le Deutéronome, en termes d'amour et de crainte du Seigneur.

* * * *

1. Introduction

The argument of this paper is that the Christian church has a right to a place in the public square. The argument is based on a particular theological understanding of the relationship between church and state and is illustrated historically by the situation of the Church of Scotland. Various problems will be addressed concerning the establishment and maintenance of this relationship between church and state and some conclusions drawn for us as Europeans.

2. Four Models of Church-State Relations

The relationship between church and state has always been a difficult question, not least since the Reformation, with the fragmentation of the Christian church into numerous denominations, congregations, fellowships, sects, cults and groups. In the history of the Christian church, however, there have essentially been four views held concerning the relationship between church and state. First, the view that the state should control the church; second, the view that the church should control the state; third, the view that there should be a separa-

tion of church and state; and fourth, the view that church and state should be in some mutually-binding relationship. Let us examine each of these in turn.

i. State controls Church

The best way to illustrate this first model is by using the example of the Church of England. Both England and Scotland were partially controlled by foreign powers at the beginning of the sixteenth century, England by Spain and Scotland by France. Various alliances were formed because of these relationships, one of the most significant of which was the marriage of Arthur, Prince of Wales to Catherine of Aragon, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. Sadly, the marriage lasted less than a year and Catherine was left a widow. Henry VIII wanted to marry his brother's widow and eventually persuaded Pope Julius II to permit this. There was considerable opposition to this marriage, not least from the Archbishop of Canterbury but Henry went ahead. The failure to produce a male heir led Henry to ask the Pope to annul the marriage, belatedly appearing to accept the Archbishop's opinion that it had never truly been a legal marriage in the first place. The Pope refused, in part at least because of the influence upon him of Emperor Charles V, Catherine's nephew. In 1529 Henry called a parliament and set about the Reformation of the Church, his main objective being that he, and not the Pope, would be the head of the Church of England, thus guaranteeing the Church's complicity in his intended divorce. In 1531 Henry forced the clergy to accept this position and from that point on the Church of England has never been able to make decisions for itself without royal approval. Parliament endorsed this and also passed other significant Acts, including one which prevented appeals to Rome. Henry did not find it easy to force through these changes and there was considerable opposition but ultimately he made acceptance of the Acts of the 'Reformation Parliament', as it was called, a test of loyalty to the Crown. A.D. Innes comments,

> This Submission of the clergy was a real act of surrender. There never had been, indeed, any practical power of promulgating constitutions which could override the ordinary law; but short of that the Church had claimed and exercised the right of enforcing her spiritual or quasi-spiritual legislation without submitting it to the approbation of any temporal authority. That right was now wiped out.[1]

Henry wanted a Reformation in which small changes were made to the theology and liturgy of the church, the main change being that the king was recognized as head, or 'Supreme Governor', of the church. Under Edward VI, however, the Reformation was carried forward in a much more positive way, with significant theological advances, but all of that was lost when Mary, daughter of Henry and Catherine of Aragon, came to the throne and reinstituted the papal supremacy. When finally Elizabeth I came to power, the Reformation was established on a permanent basis. The Elizabethan Settlement of 1559 established Protestantism in England but, as the Puritans were to protest, that Reformation was incomplete in comparison to what had been achieved in Germany in Switzerland and in France. One matter, however, was not in doubt. In 1559 the papal supremacy was completely overthrown and was replaced once again with the Royal supremacy.

The situation established in 1559 is, in almost every respect, precisely as it is today. The monarch has supremacy over the Church of England and all legislation related to the Church must have royal approval. Even with the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, the situation remains that the state controls the Church with the monarch as the Supreme Governor of the Church. The Church of England cannot change its constitution without an Act of Parliament and its bishops and other leaders are appointed by the monarch, based on recommendations from the Crown Appointments Commission, which reports directly to the Prime Minister. In practice, of course, as distinct from Act of Parliament, the Church of England enjoys a large degree of autonomy and many of the constitutional procedures are more formal than material.

ii. Church controls State

During much of the medieval period, the increasing power of the Catholic Church meant that the Church often had significant influence over monarchs and states. Indeed, for considerable periods, the Holy Roman Empire was largely under the control of the Pope. One example of the way in which the Pope tried to control nation states is found in the later Reformation period.

The Act of Uniformity, passed in 1559, whereby all citizens were to recognise the monarch as Supreme Governor of the Church of England, was

not universally accepted. Many Catholics refused to change their allegiance from the Pope to the Queen and their refusal led to their being called 'Recusants'. They demanded the freedom to worship in the old ways and rejected the Prayer Book which had been imposed. This led to persecution and even martyrdom for many. Indeed, it was not until the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829 that most of the anti-Catholic legislation was finally lifted. It is, of course, still the case today that a Roman Catholic cannot be the monarch of the United Kingdom.

This whole persecution was compounded when Mary Queen of Scots, in 1568, left Scotland and fled to England where she had some claim to the English throne. Many of the Recusants saw Mary as the one to restore the papal supremacy and Catholic worship and liturgy and so supported her claims to the throne. This led to a revolt, which began in the north of England in 1569 and which was brutally suppressed.

What is of interest to us in this present argument, however, is the response of the Pope to these circumstances. In fact, he issued a Bull called Regnans in Excelsis in which he excommunicated Queen Elizabeth, deposed her from the throne and declared that none of her subjects henceforth owed her any allegiance. Clearly, then, the pope believed that the church could exercise control over nation states and that the rulers of nations must be subject to Rome. This view that the church should control the state is less evident today, although the fact that the Vatican is an independent state must be considered a symptom of this viewpoint.

iii. Separation of Church and State

At the Reformation, as well as the magisterial Reformers there were, of course, other leaders and factions. The most significant of these was the Anabaptist movement. This movement, comprising many individuals and groups, shared some common views, not least concerning the relation between church and state. They argued for the separation of church and state. Further, it was argued that Christians should have no involvement in the state. This was spelled out later in terms of a refusal to vote or participate in any political system and a refusal to bear arms on behalf of the State.

In the main Anabaptist confession, *The Confession of Schleitheim*, drawn up by Michael Sattler in 1527, there is a strong emphasis on separation.[2] There are seven articles in the confession and Article IV is on 'Separation':

> We have been united concerning the separation that shall take place from the evil and the wickedness which the devil has planted in the world, simply in this; that we have no fellowship with them, and do not run with them in the confusion of their abominations. So it is; since all who have not entered into the obedience of faith and have not united themselves with God so that they will to do His will, are a great abomination before God, therefore nothing else can or really will grow or spring forth from them than abominable things. Now there is nothing else in the world and all creation than good or evil, believing and unbelieving, darkness and light, the world and those who are [come] out of the world, God's temple and idols. Christ and Belial, and none will have part with the other.[3]

This could be interpreted as meaning simply that Christians must not have fellowship with unbelievers but the implications for separation from state government are spelled out in Article VI on 'The Sword', where we are told that Christians ought not to serve as magistrates, the following being part of that argument:

> Lastly, one can see in the following points that it does not befit a Christian to be a magistrate: the rule of the government is according to the flesh, that of the Christians according to the spirit. Their houses and dwelling remain in this world, that of the Christians is in heaven. Their citizenship is in this world, that of the Christians is in heaven (Phil. 3:20). The weapons of their battle and warfare are carnal and only against the flesh, but the weapons of Christians are spiritual, against the fortification of the devil. The worldly are armed with steel and iron, but Christians are armed with the armor of God, with truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and with the Word of God. In sum: as Christ our Head is minded, so also must be minded the members of the body of Christ through Him, so that there be no division in the body, through which it would be destroyed. Since then Christ is as is written of Him, so must His members also be the same, so that His body may remain whole and unified for its own advancement and upbuilding. For any kingdom which is divided within itself will be destroyed (Mt. 12:25).[4]

A slightly more measured statement is to be found in the 1963 Mennonite *Brief Statement of Faith*, where we read in Article 19: 'We believe that the state is ordained of God to maintain order in

society, and that Christians should honor rulers, be subject to authorities, witness to the state, and pray for governments.'[5] Similarly, in the 1995 Mennonite Confession of Faith, where the position is spelled out in much more detail, especially in Article 23 'The Church's Relation to Government and Society':

> The church is the spiritual, social, and political body that gives its allegiance to God alone. As citizens of God's kingdom, we trust in the power of God's love for our defense. The church knows no geographical boundaries and needs no violence for its protection. The only Christian nation is the church of Jesus Christ, made up of people from every tribe and nation, called to witness to God's glory.
>
> In contrast to the church, governing authorities of the world have been instituted by God for maintaining order in societies. Such governments and other human institutions as servants of God are called to act justly and provide order. But like all such institutions, nations tend to demand total allegiance. They then become idolatrous and rebellious against the will of God. Even at its best, a government cannot act completely according to the justice of God because no nation, except the church, confesses Christ's rule as its foundation.
>
> As Christians we are to respect those in authority and to pray for all people, including those in government, that they also may be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. We may participate in government or other institutions of society only in ways that do not violate the love and holiness taught by Christ and do not compromise our loyalty to Christ. We witness to the nations by being that "city on a hill" which demonstrates the way of Christ. We also witness by being ambassadors for Christ, calling the nations (and all persons and institutions) to move toward justice, peace, and compassion for all people. In so doing, we seek the welfare of the city to which God has sent us.[6]

In the commentary which accompanies this confession, the position is clarified even further:

> Before the fourth century, about the time of the Roman emperor Constantine, most Christians thought of themselves as God's nation, made up of both Jewish and Gentile believers, living among the nations, yet strangers among them (1 Pet. 2:11-17; Heb. 11:13-16. When Christianity became the state religion, the emperor came to be seen as the protector of the faith (even by violence). Church membership was no longer voluntary. Mission efforts were primarily directed toward people outside the empire. Even now, in places where Christianity is no longer the state religion, the government is often seen as the defender of religion, and the church is expected to support government policies.
>
> We believe that Christ is Lord over all of life. Church and state are separate and often competing structures vying for our loyalty. We understand that governments can preserve order and that we owe honor to people in government. But our "fear" belongs to God alone (1 Pet. 2:17). When the demands of the government conflict with the demands of Christ, Christians are to "obey God rather than any human authority" (Acts 5:29).[7]

Although the various churches which can trace their ancestry to Anabaptism are relatively few today, arguments for the separation of Church and State are much more common, largely because of the adoption of this position by the government of the USA. Religion may not be taught in the State schools and any overt expression of Christianity is forbidden in federal buildings, witness the recent case where former Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore was forced to remove his monument of the Ten Commandments from his courtroom.

It seems clear that the founding fathers of America did not have this scenario in mind. Their great concern, following the experience of the Pilgrim Fathers and the New England Puritans, was to prevent government interference in the religious life of the people. They were concerned to avoid the situation they had left in England, whereby the church was controlled by the state and Christians were not free to reform the church according to Scripture as they interpreted it. It was certainly not their intention that schools should be prohibited from holding services of worship or teaching children about God.

More recently, however, Christians have begun to fight back against the increasing anti-religious attitude which has been fostered by Supreme Court interpretations of the *Constitution*. The Rev Dr D. James Kennedy, PCA Minister in Florida, is heading up an organisation called 'The Center for Reclaiming America', which is working to overturn the atheistic interpretation of the Constitution.[8] One example of the work of the Center concerns the recent decision of the Ninth Circuit Court of

Appeals that the Pledge of Allegiance 'One Nation Under God' is a violation of the US Constitution because it constitutes an 'establishment of religion'. The Center has now amassed just short of quarter of a million signatories to protest this matter, which is now in the hands of the Supreme Court.

Dr Kennedy is not alone in his efforts. The Rev Dr Peter A. Lillback, Presbyterian minister and theologian, has set up 'The Providence Forum'. The mission of the Forum, *inter alia*, is to 're-instill and promote a Judeo-Christian worldview within our culture.'[9] Dr Lillback has also written a short book on religious liberty which supports the arguments presented by the Forum.[10] Yet another Christian organisation which exists to campaign on the church and state issue, is the 'Alliance Defense Fund'.[11] In one of their pamphlets, they explain something of the history of the church/state controversy:

> The term "separation of church and state" was first used by Thomas Jefferson in a letter to the Danbury Baptists in 1801, when he responded to their concerns about state involvement in religion. Jefferson's letter had nothing to say about limiting public religious expression, but dealt with *government's interference* in the public expression of faith.[12]
>
> It was U.S. Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black who first inserted the term "separation of church and state" into American jurisprudence in his majority opinion of *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947). He wrote: "The First Amendment has erected a wall between church and state. The wall must be kept high and impregnable. We could not approve the slightest breach."...
>
> The First Amendment states: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion; or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." No mention is made of a "wall between church and state."[13]

If we take all of the arguments of these various organisations together, it would seem that the way in which the Supreme Court has interpreted the US Constitution is out of step with what these groups believe to be the true intent of those who originally framed it. Some Christian lawyers have been more specific and have argued that the current situation has come about because of a failure to read the *US Constitution* in the light of the *Declaration of Independence*.[14]

No matter what the outcome of these current battles may be, it does seem to me that the decision in principle to opt for a model which argues for the separation of church and state, for whatever good reason, was bound to lead to many of the difficulties currently being encountered. The New England Puritans may have intended to preserve their freedom to worship without state interference but their position was not well grounded theologically and not well worded legally. In the hands of those who are antagonistic to biblical Christianity it was almost inevitable that it would be used to marginalise and isolate Christianity and to remove it from the public square.

iv. Church and State in Relationship

The fourth model of church-state relationship argues for a relationship in which there is mutual recognition and responsibility. This has taken various forms over the centuries. The classic example is the relationship between church and state as established by Constantine. When in 324AD Constantine became supreme Caesar over both halves of the Roman Empire, he moved fairly quickly to ensure a united church in a united empire. He was instrumental in seeking to bring theological harmony to the seriously divided church by instigating and chairing the Council of Nicaea. More significantly, however, he moved to Christianise the empire, effectively creating what we now call 'Christendom'.[15] In giving freedom, protection and recognition to the church, Constantine greatly advanced its standing and made mission and evangelism much safer and easier. By declaring the empire to be Christian, however, he faced two problems. First, the risk of nominalism; and second, the creation of a somewhat unstable relationship between church and state which was always in danger of transmogrifying into model one or model two above.

Another understanding of how church and state could be in relationship was formulated by Martin Luther by means of his 'two kingdoms' doctrine.[16] This argument recognises that there is both a 'kingdom of God' and a 'kingdom of the world'. Each has a purpose under God but those purposes must be achieved separately.

> Thus did Luther simultaneously vindicate civil rule as a Christian work against the Anabaptist rejection of it *and* repudiate the direct interference of secular authority with, or on behalf of, Christian freedom... The key to Luther's

independent course was his insight that every Christian exists in both realms and is subject to both regimes, so that his inward dispositions and outward actions are structured by this dual membership.[17]

Luther's position, however, was somewhat unstable, both theologically and politically, largely because of his insistence on the separation of powers, although he still maintained that both are ordained of God. Its instability is underlined by the fact that the Anabaptists, as we have seen, developed it in such a way as to argue for separation between the kingdoms, whereas Melanchthon developed it in such a way that it became very similar to the Anglican view, as later developed by Hooker.

3. Calvin's Views on Church and State

John Calvin took up Luther's notion of the 'two kingdoms' but developed it differently. He agreed that church and state were both established by God but he did not agree with Luther's way of defining the relationship. Calvin wanted to insist that the 'two kingdoms' owed duties and responsibilities to one another and that one of those was the state's duty to recognise, protect and guarantee the liberty of the church. Calvin established, then, a more refined version of model four, one in which the relationship between church and state was more clearly established, based on a much more solid theological foundation. This was the position which was established in a preliminary way by Calvin in Geneva and more significantly by Knox in Scotland.

The remainder of this paper will consist in an exposition and defence of this particular view of church and state. My argument is that this model provides the real and proper basis for a public theology, for the Christian Church's right to a place in the public square.

In the first edition of the *Institutes*, Calvin set out his basic position.[18] There were only six chapters in that 1536 edition and it was in the last chapter that Calvin dealt with issues of church and state. The chapter covers 'Christian Freedom, Ecclesiastical Power, and Political Administration'.[19] It is the third section of this chapter which deals with the nature and functions of civil government.[20] It is interesting to note that Calvin, who had originally studied law, held to some of the views expressed in this chapter before becoming a theologian. As Battles writes,

> Throughout this essay on the civil government, there are strong echoes of the *Seneca Commentary*.... Unquestionably Calvin is here reworking from this new evangelical Christian vantage point the whole classical teaching on the monarch.[21]

The most striking feature of the section on civil government concerns the status of the magistrate as the one who executes justice and rules over the people. Calvin says that those who hold this office 'have a mandate from God, having been invested with divine authority, and are wholly God's representatives, in a manner, acting as his vicegerents.'[22] He goes on to speak in quite elevated terms, saying that the work of the magistrate is a 'holy ministry'[23] and concludes that 'no one ought to doubt that civil authority is a calling, not only holy and lawful before God, but also the most sacred and by far the most honourable of all callings in the whole life of mortal men.'[24] Later he insists that those who hold the office of magistrate have 'a jurisdiction bestowed by God', that they are to be recognised as 'ministers and representatives of God' and that no-one should 'regard magistrates only as a necessary kind of evil'.[25]

The position spelled out here in the 1536 edition of the *Institutes* directed Calvin's actions in relation to the civil rulers during his first residency in Geneva. It was after his banishment from Geneva, however, that his thought begins to mature and deepen, as represented by later editions of the *Institutes*. It has been argued that the failure of his first period in Geneva, not least because of the relationship between the Reformed church and the city authorities, led him to further thought. More particularly, it has been argued that the time he spent in Strasbourg with Martin Bucer was an important key to further development.[26]

In the final edition of the Institutes, Calvin's teaching on this subject continues to centre around his understanding of the 'two kingdoms', although the section on freedom (3/19) became separated from the section on civil government (4/20). This is how he expresses the argument:

> Therefore, lest this prove a stumbling-block to any, let us observe that in man government is twofold: the one spiritual, by which the conscience is trained to piety and divine worship; the other civil, by which the individual is instructed in those duties which, as men and citizens, we are bold to perform... To these two forms are

> commonly given the not inappropriate names of spiritual and temporal jurisdiction… Now, these two, as we have divided them, are always to be viewed apart from each other. When the one is considered, we should call off our minds, and not allow them to think of the other. For there exists in man a kind of two worlds, over which different kings and different laws can preside.[27]

In the final chapter of the final edition of the *Institutes*, Calvin underlines and expands upon what he had said in 1536.[28] Civil government is vital and is ordained by God for the well ordering of society. The magistrates are appointed by God and are to be obeyed, even sinful ones. They exercise divine authority and their authority extends to both tables of the law. They must punish evildoers and this includes the right to bear the sword.

Calvin's developed understanding of the relation between church and state has been widely influential. Indeed, it has been argued that the very establishment of democracy can be directly traced to the influence of Calvin's political thought.[29] In the 19th century Calvin's views were taken up and developed by the notable Dutch Calvinist Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920).[30] In turn, Kuyper influenced other leading figures like Herman Dooyeweerd (1894–1977).[31] In the 20th century and on into the 21st, Calvin's views on church and state have continued to be discussed and analysed, not least by those in the 'reconstructionist' or theonomic school.[32]

It was, however, in Scotland, under the direction of John Knox, that a model of church/state relationship was developed which most closely followed Calvin's political theology.

4. Church and State in Reformed Scotland

The Reformation in Scotland, unlike that in England, was a Reformation from the bottom up rather than the top down. As we have already seen, the Reformation in England (at least in its earliest phase under Henry VIII) was imposed upon the people by the monarch for his own purposes. The people of Scotland, however, fought for Reformation until the monarch, very reluctantly, gave in to their demands. There was no question of the monarch being the head (or even supreme governor) of the Church. John Knox, in his various writings, spelled out the Calvinistic version of the 'two kingdoms' model. For example, in 1558, having been condemned and burned in effigy, Knox wrote *The Appellation from the Sentence Pronounced by the Bishops and Clergy: Addressed to the Nobility and Estates of Scotland*.[33] What Knox says here about magistrates echoes very closely what we have already seen in Calvin, with the added insistence that it was the duty of lesser magistrates to oppose the rule of their superiors, if these acted contrary to God's law (by implication this included sovereigns).[34] Knox's position was also spelled out through his involvement in writing both *The Scots Confession* and the *First Book of Discipline*. The underlying argument of the Appellation, and of these other documents, confirms that Knox's general position on the relationship between Church and State is the same as that of Calvin.[35]

It was John Knox's successor, Andrew Melville, who further developed and refined the position articulated and defended by Calvin and Knox. His position was spelled out and became famous in an encounter with King James VI of Scotland.[36] Melville is said to have grasped James' sleeve, called him 'God's sillie vassal' and told him that there were two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland, in one of which (Christ's kingdom) James was 'not a king, nor a Lord, nor a head but a member'![37] Melville's attitude to the king and his views on church and state led to much conflict and Melville was finally imprisoned in the Tower of London for five years. It was, nevertheless, this 'two kingdoms' view, as clarified by Melville, which became the recognised legal position in Scotland, being known as the 'establishment principle'.

When the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland adopted the *Westminster Confession of Faith* in 1647, it made specific mention, in the Adopting Act, of the second article of chapter xxxi (on Synods and Councils), which gave magistrates the right to call synods. The Assembly argued that 'the Assembly understandeth some parts of the second article of the thirty-one chapter only of kirks not settled, or constituted in point of government'.[38] That is to say, it could understand why countries which did not have an established Reformed church might require such an article – it was not necessary in Scotland![39] It is also interesting that when the Presbyterian Church in the USA, in its Adopting Act of 1729, affirmed the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, it specifically disavowed sections of chapters xx (Of Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience) and xxiii (Of the Civil Magistrate) because of its position on the separation of church and state.[40]

It was not until the re-establishment of Presbyte-

rianism in Scotland in 1690, after years of struggle against attempts to impose episcopacy, that an Act of Parliament was passed affirming the decision to adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith. This was the *Act Ratifying the Confession of Faith, and Settling the Presbyterian Church Government*. Interestingly, although that Act guaranteed the continuing establishment of the Church of Scotland, some have interpreted it as being 'Erastian', namely, that the Church's right to independence and spiritual freedom from the State was granted by the State, rather than being an inherent right.[41]

During the political, theological and ecclesiastical debates surrounding the Disruption in the nineteenth century, the whole question of establishment became a crucial issue.[42] On the one hand, the Free Church of Scotland which was formed in 1843 out of the Disruption continued to hold to the establishment principle, even while leaving the establishment for reasons of spiritual freedom. On the other hand, when the Free Church wanted to join with the United Presbyterians at the turn of the century, this principle became something of a stumbling block. Later still, during the first thirty years of the twentieth century, a time of unprecedented reunion of the various churches, this debate over the establishment principle was crucial to the successful completion of the negotiations for union.[43] Finally, however:

> The 1921 settlement of the Church of Scotland's constitution made possible the negotiation of the 1929 union with the United Free Church. The settlement was expressed in the Articles Declaratory prepared by the Established Church between 1914 and 1919 in a number of drafts and it was effected by the very brief Church of Scotland Act 1921 to which the Articles were appended.[44]

As Dr Marjorie MacLean has demonstrated, this placed,

> the Church of Scotland in a new constitutional situation, by recovering the Melvillian version of the theory of separate kingdoms, expressing it in the modern state-like language of spheres and realms, and leaving the legal implications of it to unfold in due course. The chief of those implications was the recognition that the Act represented the first breach in the sovereignty of the United Kingdom parliament.

One aspect of this 'two kingdoms' situation is that there is no appeal to the civil courts from the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, which is regarded as the supreme court of the Church. Several years ago, there was a striking example of the effect of this in the notable case of a Church of Scotland minister who was removed from his position. Believing that the Church had acted wrongly, the minister sought a judicial review of the decision in the civil courts.[45] This was turned down on the grounds of the Church of Scotland's status in relation to the State. As Dr MacLean notes, 'since the 1921 Act recognised the pre-existing powers of the Church as inherent and uncreated by Parliament or any human authority, the Court of Session disclaimed jurisdiction.'[46]

This situation leaves the Church of Scotland in a unique situation, in terms of modern church/state relations. It is not controlled by the state, as is the Church of England; it does not itself seek to control the state nor to have any authority beyond the sphere of its own life and ministry, as the Roman Catholic Church has sometimes attempted; and it is not separated from the state as in the somewhat unhappy situation in the USA. In short, the Church of Scotland is in a situation where its constitutional position affords it entire control over its own doctrine, worship, government and discipline, together with the protection of the state, yet without any interference by the state. All of this is built on the 'two kingdoms' theological premise: that both church and state are established by God, are answerable to God and owe duties and responsibilities to one another.

In the period since the Reformation, or at least since the Act of 1690 when Presbyterianism was re-established, this relationship between Church and State, the establishment principle, has worked very well. It is interesting to note that most of the Presbyterian denominations in Scotland (with the notable exception of the United Free Church of Scotland) also advocate the establishment principle, even having withdrawn from the Church of Scotland. Naturally, the establishment principle is maintained by a careful balance of measures, such as the appointment of a 'Lord High Commissioner' by the Queen to the General Assembly. The General Assembly welcomes the Lord High Commissioner and his guests (usually including several cabinet ministers and Scottish Executive ministers). It also instructs a committee to write a 'loyal letter' to the monarch, conveying the greetings and best wishes of the Assembly but, at the same time, it affirms its independence from monarchical or state interference.

5. Modern Problems

The Church of Scotland faces at least four problems in seeking to maintain the establishment principle and its unique position in relation to the British state. The first of these concerns the interpretation and function of the 1921 Act, which supports and maintains the establishment principle. Dr MacLean, in her dissertation, argues that there are certain weaknesses in the Act which leave it open to misinterpretation or ultimate collapse. She describes the weaknesses thus,

> First, the intrinsically flawed nature of the 1921 Act and the way it has been applied in subsequent Court of Session actions imply that the state's 'grant' of spiritual independence is not final and unconditional, that the freedom of the Church is contingent on its own behaviour, and that its constitutional position is more precarious than it likes to believe. Second, the sovereignty in the civil sphere is not simple or monolithic, but fragmented, developing and complex. A spiritual jurisdiction that depends on what is effectively a treaty with a power that is no longer the only relevant secular authority is an eroding jurisdiction that has no answers to some of the modern questions being asked of it. Third, the contemporary fashion for individual human rights does not yet give privileges to the Church because it would have difficulty asserting its legal competence to be treated as a bearer of rights. The undeniable little spheres of human sovereignty produced in this model provide new partners in the co-ordination of authority and legal responsibility.
>
> The 1921 settlement survives, at least in theory, but it has lost the foundation of the understanding of Church-state relations on which it was built.

Dr MacLean then sets out to establish new 'theological, legal and constitutional foundations' for the 21st century. Among other suggestions, she argues that we need a new theological understanding of freedom, we need to make certain changes to the Articles Declaratory and we need to specify more precisely what legislation was repealed when Parliament adopted the 1921 Act. Even with these changes, she is not confident that the Church of Scotland can maintain its constitutional position.

The second problem concerns the pluralistic and multi-ethnic culture which now exists in Scotland, particularly in the cities. How is it possible to maintain that Christianity, far less the very specific denomination called the Church of Scotland, should have rights and privileges in a nation where Christians attending worship are in a small (albeit significant) minority? Professor David Fergusson, of the School of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh, has recently addressed this issue.[47] After analysing the Reformational context for the traditional Scottish view of church and state and having noted the dramatic changes which have taken place in civil society since the Reformation, he concludes,

> In the western context of dechristianization, where does this leave us? It is time to recognise that models of establishment derived from early modern Geneva and Scotland have to be abandoned. We can no longer assume nor aspire towards co-extensive membership of church and civil society, and shifting patterns of establishment in western Europe confirm this. In this limited respect, the secularization thesis which recognises the differentiation of civil and religious spheres must be accepted. The separation of the state, the market economy, and science from the influence of religious institutions is an undeniable feature of modernity. Yet, this entails neither the decline of religion nor its confinement to a private or sectarian sphere.[48]

This might initially seem like a counsel of despair. Given the rising tide of pluralism and the modern secular mentality, we must simply give up on the theology of the 'two kingdoms'. This is, however, not Fergusson's last word on the subject. Instead, he wants to reinterpret certain key affirmations in the traditional Reformed view, namely, the importance of the state, the fact that public service is a calling from God, that Christians are called upon to be involved as salt and light in the transformation of society and so on. Towards these ends, he calls for,

> the maintenance of a distinct Christian subculture that nurtures and equips individuals for authentic service at a time of increasing moral fragmentation and confusion. While there may no longer be an organic unity between church and secular society, the Reformed vision of social transformation and critical support for the state is still relevant. It continues to offer a badly needed perspective in its intent to make common cause in search of a positive social contribution, in a hopeful though sober vision of political possibilities, in the affirmation of public service, and in the dignity of political office which, though frequently demeaned, remains a gift and calling

of God.[49]

The third and related problem concerns the interpretation and implementation of the European Union Charter on Human Rights. There is a danger that this will change the situation vis-à-vis the Church of Scotland, since it could be argued that any limitation of the sovereignty of the state in favour of a group of Christians (albeit the national, established Church) is discriminatory and damaging to the human rights of those who are neither Christians nor Presbyterians. It is interesting to speculate on what attitude would have been taken to the Logan case referred to above, had it been referred to the European Court of Human Rights. One encouraging sign in this matter, however, is the reassurances which were given to a group of senior churchmen from a range of Scottish denominations when they met with judges from the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg in 2001. They were told that just as individuals had rights, so too did bodies (such as churches) and it was not the intention of the court to interfere in issues relating to the churches.

The fourth problem and perhaps ultimately the most serious, concerns the Church of Scotland's own self-identification. This view of Church and State which has been outlined above and which has been established in Scotland for almost 450 years, is neither properly understood nor valued by most of the members of the Kirk. Writing some time ago in *Life & Work*, the monthly magazine of the Church of Scotland, I addressed the changing situation in our understanding of Christianity as public religion. Let me quote from that article:

> I was listening to the radio a few days ago and heard a woman making sarcastic and derogatory remarks about the Prime Minister. Was it because of some political decision he had made, or perhaps because of some failure in an important matter of state? No, it was because he had dared to mention his faith and his relationship with God. 'We like our religion to be kept private in this country' the woman trumpeted and went on to make it very clear that politicians (and everyone else) should keep their religious views to themselves and should not bring them into public life. This is a fairly common opinion today, one which regards religion as a matter of personal devotion, a private communion between an individual and God. Those who take this view argue that one's faith should never be spoken of publicly, since it has no bearing on public issues and will in any case probably cause embarrassment!

In the article I went on to demonstrate that this view is of relatively recent origin and stands in marked contrast to the position adopted in the Church of Scotland from the time of the Reformation onwards. It does seem to me, however, that we are in danger of throwing away this heritage, not least because of ignorance. Most members (perhaps even most ministers) in the Church of Scotland would struggle to articulate the precise relationship between church and state. Many would happily dispense with it rather than seeing it as an inspired piece of theology! Indeed, many would consider the whole argument to be somewhat arcane, of minor interest to historians perhaps but of no real interest or consequence for the Kirk today.

6. Conclusion

Where then do we go from here? It seems to me that we must establish whether or not the doctrine of the 'two kingdoms', as spelled out successively by Calvin, Knox and Melville, is the best way to understand and interpret Scripture. If it is, then we must continue to argue for such a model, even in the face of a secular world which rejects our presuppositions. After all, there is every reason to believe that Knox held to his position on church and state even during the time when Mary Queen of Scots was reigning in Scotland and the Catholic Queen Mary was reigning in England. He understood his objectives even when they must have seemed quite impossible. If something is soundly based biblically and theologically then we must seek to put it into practice, whatever stands against us.

Furthermore, it seems to me that we must look at this matter in a European context. It is clear that the nation states which make up the European Union will have a future which is much more integrated, even if not fully united. What will be the relationship between the European Union and the Christian church? Discussions leading to the new constitution for the European Union, including the debate as to whether or not there should be any mention of God, point up the difficulties. We cannot allow these questions to go begging; we must discuss them and reach our own conclusions before seeking to influence others across the continent.

This paper has sought to present a theological case and an historical example to support a particular

understanding of the relationship between church and state as the basis for a public theology, that is, for the right of the Christian church to speak and to be heard in the public square. If we reject the 'two kingdoms' model of church/state relations, which was established within Reformed theology and has been evidenced by the situation historically in Scotland, then wherein lies the theological basis for our public theology? What right do we have to speak to the nations, apart from the right which is bestowed upon us by the one who created both church and nations, and to whom both are answerable?

We ought not to be fighting for a small place in the public square, it is ours by right.

Notes

1 *Cranmer and the English Reformation* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1900) 62.
2 The copyright to the English version of the Schleitheim Text is held by Herald Press, Scottdale, PA 15683. It is also available on the web at: http://members.iquest.net/~jswartz/schleitheim/
3 Idem.
4 Idem.
5 http://www.bibleviews.com/BriefSF.html
6 http://www.mennolink.org/doc/cof/art.23.html
7 idem.
8 http://www.reclaimamerica.org/
9 http://www.providenceforum.org
10 *Proclaim Liberty* (Bryn Mawr, PA: The Providence Forum, 2001).
11 http://www.telladf.org
12 http://www.telladf.org
13 *The Truth about Separation of Church and State*
14 I am grateful to Mr Robert C. Cannada, former Chairman of the Board of Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, for this insight.
15 For an argument in favour of the notion of Christendom see Oliver O'Donovan *The Desire of the Nations: Rediscovering the Roots of Political Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). For a critique of O'Donovan's position see Craig Bartholomew, Jonathan Chaplin, Robert Sonmg and Al Wolters (eds) *A Royal Priesthood? The Use of the Bible Ethically and Politically: A Dialogue with Oliver O'Donovan* Scripture and Hermeneutics series (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002).
16 For an exposition of Luther's position, together with extracts from Luther's writings, see Oliver O'Donovan and Joan Lockwood O'Donovan (eds) *From Irenaeus to Grotius: A Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999) 581-608.
17 Ibid, 582-583.
18 Translated and annotated by Ford Lewis Battles (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986).
19 Ibid, 176ff..
20 Ibid, 207ff..
21 Ibid, lix.
22 Ibid, 209.
23 Ibid, 210.
24 Ibid, 209.
25 Ibid, 220.
26 O. O'Donovan and J.L. O'Donovan (eds) *From Irenaeus to Grotius*, 663.
27 *Institutes* 3/19/15.
28 *Institutes* 4/20.
29 Douglas F. Kelly *The Emergence of Liberty in the Modern World: The Influence of Calvin on Five Governments from the 16th through 18th Centuries* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1992).
30 A. Kuyper *Lectures on Calvinism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1931). See especially chapter three 'Calvinism and Politics'.
31 Herman Dooyeweerd *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought* Vol. I-IV (Ontario: Paideia Press, 1975); Herman Dooyeweerd *Roots of Western culture; Pagan, Secular and Christian options* (Toronto: Wedge Publishing Company, 1979).
32 See, for example, R.J. Rushdoony *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1973); G.L. Bahnsen *Theonomy in Christian Ethics: Expanded Edition with Replies to Critics* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1984; G.L. Bahnsen *No Other Standard* (Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1991).
33 *Selected Writings of John Knox: Public Epistles, Treatises and Expositions to the Year 1559* (Dallas: Presbyterian Heritage Publications, 1995) 471-532.
34 Ibid, 488,489.
35 It may be, however, that Knox's constant references to the way in which God governed Israel, leave him liable to the charge of seeking to establish a theocracy. This charge was also laid against Calvin but may be successfully rebutted: see R.C. Gamble Calvin's *Thought on Economic and Social Issues and the Relationship of Church and State* Articles on Calvin and Calvinism vol.11 (New York & London: Garland Publishing, 1992).
36 J.H.S. Burleigh *A Church History of Scotland* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960) 204-205.
37 Ibid, 204.
38 J. Ligon Duncan III 'Owning The Confession: Subscription in the Scottish Presbyterian Tradition' in David W. Hall (ed) *The Practice of Confessional Subscription* (Lanham, ML: University Press of America, 1995) 81.
39 In the Confessional statement we see the influence of Samuel Rutherford whose *Lex Rex* was hugely influential, not least in relation to arguments over the legitimacy of the execution of Charles I.

40 George W. Knight 'Subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms' D.W. Hall, op cit., 121.
41 I am grateful to the Rev Dr Marjorie MacLean, Depute Principal Clerk of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, for making available to me the relevant chapters of her PhD dissertation, not least the section in which she quotes this argument from A.I. Dunlop: M.A. MacLean The Crown *Rights of the Redeemer: A Reformed Approach to Sovereignty for the National Church in the 21st Century* (PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2004) 107.
42 Ibid, chapter 3.
43 Ibid, chapters 3 and 4. See also D.M. Murray *Freedom to Reform: The 'Articles Declaratory' of the Church of Scotland 1921* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993); D.M. Murray *Rebuilding the Kirk: Presbyterian Reunion in Scotland 1909-1929* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 2000).
44 Ibid, 104.
45 Logan v. Presbytery of Dumbarton (1995 SLT 1228).
46 MacLean, 123.
47 David Fergusson, 'Church, State, and Civil Society in the Reformed Tradition' in Wallace M. Alston Jr. & Michael Welker (eds.), *Reformed Theology: Identity and Ecumenicity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) 111-126
48 Ibid, 125.
49 Ibid, 125-126.

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Evangelicals and European Integration

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SUMMARY

This article surveys the way in which evangelicals, through bodies such as the Evangelical Alliance, engaged in pan-European co-operation in the nineteenth century. It explores the tensions that arose in the first half of the twentieth century, but shows that since the end of the Second World War important initiatives have been taken to link evangelicals across Europe. The new situation that has been faced by evangelicals as a result of the end of communism and the enlargement of the EU is analysed. The article argues in favour of an important role for evangelicals in the new Europe since they are well equipped by virtue of their sense of common identity to reach out across traditional divides.

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ZUAMMENFASUNG

Dieser Artikel untersucht die Wege, auf denen Evangelikale auf gesamteuropäischer Ebene im 19. Jahrhundert zusammenarbeiteten. Er beleuchtet die Spannungen, die in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts auftraten, aber zeigt dann, dass seit dem Ende des 2. Weltkriegs wichtige Initiativen ergriffen wurden, um Evangelikale in ganz Europa zu verbinden. Die neue Situation, der sich die Evangelikalen in der Folge des Endes des Kommunismus und der EU-Erweiterung stellen mussten, wird analysiert. Der Artikel plädiert für eine wichtige Rolle der Evangelikalen im neuen Europa, da sie aufgrund ihres Sinnes für eine gemeinsame Identität gut ausgerüstet sind, jenseits traditioneller Trennungen zu wirken.

* * * *

RESUMÉ

Cet essai retrace de quelle manière les Évangéliques se sont engagés dans des coopération pan-européennes au XIXe siècle, notamment dans des organisations comme l'Alliance Évangélique. Il présente les tensions qui ont surgi dans la première moitié du XXe siècle, mais montre que, depuis la fin de la seconde guerre mondiale, des initiatives importantes ont contribué à l'établissement de liens entre les Évangéliques à travers l'Europe. L'auteur offre une analyse de la situation nouvelle qui résulte de la fin du communisme et de l'élargissement de l'Union Européenne. Il considère que les Évangéliques ont un rôle important à jouer dans la nouvelle Europe dans la mesure où leur sens d'une identité commune peut leur permettre de surmonter des barrières traditionnelles.

* * * *

In this study I first of all give a brief historical overview, from the mid-nineteenth century, of evangelical Christian co-operation across Europe, especially as expressed in the Evangelical Alliance, which was formed in 1846. The Alliance brought together individuals and groups from different countries who were committed to the evangelical distinctives of personal conversion, the authority of the Bible, the message of the cross of Christ and a desire to be active in spreading the Christian message in word and deed.[1] I then analyze the recent past in Europe – the post-Communist period. I give particular attention to the Baptist contribution to the idea of European integration, since the European Baptist Federation is a well-organised pan-European body within the wider evangelical community. Evangelicals are, however, to be found in all Protestant denominations. In Britain the denominational

affiliation of those evangelicals who worked most closely together in the nineteenth century was typically Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Presbyterian and Methodist. All had been affected by the evangelical revivals of the eighteenth century across Europe and North America and were part of a growing, influential movement.[2] Pentecostal and charismatic groups have typically affiliated to Evangelical Alliances in more recent years. The issue of European integration has been brought to the forefront of the thinking of many European evangelicals through the enlargement of the European Union and this is an issue which has received considerable attention from the European Evangelical Alliance.

Europe and Evangelical Alliance beginnings

There was a distinct European dimension present from the time of the formation of Evangelical Alliance in London in 1846. Of the 922 attendees at the inaugural conference, 84% came from Britain, 8% from the United States, 7% from Continental Europe and the rest from other areas of the world.[3] Continental European leaders included Adolphe Monod, a university theological Professor in France, August Tholuck, Professor at Halle University, Germany, and Johann Oncken, the powerful leader of the German Baptists.[4] Baptists were emerging and in some instances expanding rapidly in Europe, often drawing from existing renewal movements.[5] The French representatives present in London committed themselves to forming a branch of the Alliance in France, Belgium and French-speaking Switzerland. Branches of the Alliance were also formed in North and South Germany. In Spain, many of the leading evangelicals within the Protestant community united in forming an Alliance. An Alliance was formed in Constantinople, Turkey, in 1855. In Bulgaria, Baptists, Methodists and Congregationalists came together to found an Alliance in 1867. These are examples of the evangelical expansion that was taking place.

Probably the most creative thinker within the Evangelical Alliance movement of this early period was Philip Schaff. The roots of Schaff's spirituality were in German pietism. Schaff emphasised in 1872 that the kind of evangelical union he had in view was 'as far removed from indifference to denominational distinctives as from sectarian bigotry and exclusiveness'.[6] In other words, he did not wish to play down the unique traditions of different Christian bodies, but neither did he wish denominational features to be exalted above the beliefs that all Christian held in common. Two years later Schaff indicated more fully his real priorities. He urged the cultivation of 'a truly evangelical, catholic spirit' towards all Christians – 'all who love our Lord Jesus Christ' as he put it – of whatever creed. It was not that Schaff wanted to give up the creeds of the Church. Indeed he spoke of an 'ecumenical consensus' being expressed in the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds. Rather he wished for liberality of spirit. 'We must subordinate denominationalism', he argued, 'to catholicity, and catholicity to our general Christianity'.[7] On several occasions, Schaff expounded his dream of a universal Church that brought together Protestantism, Orthodoxy and Catholicism.[8]

During the nineteenth and early twentieth century national Evangelical Alliances across Europe worked together on several issues, such as evangelism, education and religious freedom. Many evangelicals were not part of the State churches in their countries and so they felt deeply about the needs of religious minorities. Also, the fact of not belonging to state churches encouraged them to reach out in fellowship across national boundaries. A number of Evangelical Alliance conferences were held in different cities in Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century, each attracting several thousand people. In Copenhagen, in 1884, the King and Queen of Denmark attended an Alliance conference and E. B. Underhill, secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, praised the protection given by a former king of Denmark to William Carey's Baptist mission in the Danish settlement of Serampore, India.[9] The First World War hindered pan-European evangelical fellowship, since German-British evangelical co-operation, which had been close, was dealt a heavy blow. Although some evangelicals were pacifists, many supported their own country's troops.[10] In late 1914 Henry Martyn Gooch, the General Secretary of the British Evangelical Alliance, noted that Evangelical Alliance leaders in Germany were writing and speaking in favour of the German military cause. He made it clear that he respected their devotion to Christ and their honest convictions, and his conclusion was that they did not know the full story of the events that led up to the war. Gooch warned against believing evil of German brothers in Christ.[11]

Tensions in Europe

Following the end of the First World War, evangelicals tried to reach out in fellowship across Europe and to resolve the tensions created by war. Developments in Russia from the Revolution onwards heightened Evangelical Alliance socio-political concerns. In 1923 the British Alliance asked whether the time had come for a 'step towards closer Christian Unity which would save England and the world from the tragedy of Russia under a Bolshevist Government'.[12] It was not obvious how this closer unity would be achieved, but there was a clear desire to come together against the common foe of atheism. There was probably a wish, also, to achieve closer unity with evangelicals in the USA.[13] It was the anti-Christian measures of the Soviet government rather than the system of socialism itself that were condemned. The Evangelical Alliance was heavily involved in campaigning for religious freedom – for Orthodox Church believers as well as evangelical Christians – in Russia. Adam Podin from Estonia, a significant Baptist leader and evangelist who was the British Evangelical Alliance's main link with Russia in the 1920s, met regularly with Orthodox Church leaders.[14]

One part of Europe in which the British and other national Evangelical Alliances took a particular interest was Czechoslovakia. In the 1920s, at a time of strong Czech nationalism, evangelicals in the Hussite tradition were welcoming many new people into their congregations. At the invitation of the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren, Henry Martyn Gooch visited Czechoslovakia in 1922, travelling by the Orient Express from Paris. He had been to Prague twenty-five years before, and was delighted to see the evangelical progress that had taken place since then. He suggested that a new Reformation was in the making.[15] Czech leaders were invited to Britain. These links continued during the later sufferings of the Czech people. Moving on from Czechoslovakia, Gooch visited Hungary and spoke at Evangelical Alliance meetings, along with other speakers from across Europe. In 1931 Gooch travelled to Albania and spoke to groups made up of people from Islamic, Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant backgrounds. The hopes of evangelicals for reconciliation between peoples seemed to be in line with wider aspirations for peace. In 1931 one British Baptist minister, Henry Cook, who has a deep interest in European Baptist affairs, led his 1,000 strong congregation in an affirmation of the role of the League of Nations in the search for peace.[16] This period saw great interest in the possibility that countries in Europe would see spiritual renewal and greater unity between diverse nations. These hopes were difficult to fulfil.

The rise of Nazi power, the treatment of Baptists in Eastern Europe and then the Second World War constituted further massive set-backs to the instinctive pan-Europeanism of many evangelicals. Some evangelicals wanted to stress continuing solidarity with German evangelicals, who were mostly Lutherans and Baptists. This was the stance of committed Europeans such as Henry Martyn Gooch and the British Baptist leader, J. H. Rushbrooke, who was General Secretary and then President of the Baptist World Alliance. Both travelled extensively in Germany and met leaders of the Confessing Church.[17] Rushbrooke also invested a great deal of time in seeking freedom for Baptists in Romania. When almost all the approximately 1,600 Baptists churches in Romania were closed through Government decree in 1938, Rushbrooke organised an international campaign.[18] The British Alliance was actively involved in helping refugees from central and Eastern Europe – especially Poles, Czechs, Armenians and Greeks. It also assured the Chief Rabbi in Britain, J. H. Hertz, of the desire of the Alliance to relieve the plight of Jewish refugees and it called on the British government 'to offer the widest possible asylum'.[19] The British Alliance had a deep interest in Karl Barth's stand against the Nazis and in the courageous leaders of the Confessing Church in Germany such as Martin Neimïller. It quoted Barth's statement that what was at stake in Germany was the call to practice 'the truth that God stands above all other gods'.[20]

New initiatives

After the Second World War two important pan-European developments took place. The first was the founding of the European Baptist Federation. There had been many earlier contacts between the various Baptists in Europe, especially because of the German connections. For example, Karl Johann Scharschmidt was baptised by Johann Oncken in Hamburg in 1845, and came to Romania in 1856 with his wife, Augusta. Other German Baptists, and one English woman, Elizabeth Peacock Clarke, found themselves in Romania and began to meet together. Scharschmidt baptised enough converts to plant a church among the German-speaking population of Bucharest. This church became an important base for Baptists in Romania.[21] Many

European Baptist groups belonged to the Baptist World Alliance, founded in 1905 and conferences were held which drew together European Baptists. Thoughts about a Baptist organisation with a specific European focus came into focus at a Baptist World Alliance European Conference held in London from 13-17 August 1948. Representatives from ten countries, all Western European, met in Paris in October 1950 to take part in the formation of the European Baptist Federation (EBF).[22]

The second important development in the post-war period was the founding of the European Evangelical Alliance. As a result largely of American initiatives, a meeting was held in Holland in 1951 at which a World Evangelical Fellowship was formed. Although most delegates at that conference affirmed the need for a worldwide fellowship of evangelicals, there was not unanimity. When the vote was taken, representatives from Germany abstained, and France, Denmark, Norway and Sweden opposed the idea of a world body. There was some hesitation among representatives of the British Evangelical Alliance, but they decided to join nonetheless.[23] The background was that the World Council of Churches had been formed in 1948 and there was a fear among some Europeans that American evangelicals wanted to form a rival, anti-ecumenical body.[24] The European Baptist Federation leadership was wary of the World Evangelical Fellowship. An EBF minute from 1952 reads: 'Dr Petersen [F. Bredhal Petersen from Denmark, one of the founders of the EBF] spoke of a plan to form a World Evangelical Fellowship which would embrace Continental branches of the World's Evangelical Alliance and certain Evangelicals in America. He feared this might tend to introduce American controversies into Europe.'[25] Petersen seems to have led opposition to the American scheme. It was in part under his leadership that a European Evangelical Alliance (EEA) was set up in 1952, independent of any American organization.[26] The two bodies, WEF and the EEA, did not come together until 1968.

The 1950s saw a determined effort on the part of evangelicals in Europe to cross over the boundaries created by the cold war. In many Eastern European countries there was enormous pressure on evangelicals. Some freedom to engage with evangelicals in the West was, however, at times allowed. The Hungarian and Romanian Baptist Unions joined the EBF in 1956 and two years later the Russian Baptists were received into membership at a meeting in West Berlin.[27] An EBF report in 1963 encouraged European Baptists to 'think continental'. More than 50% of European Baptists were by that time in Eastern Europe.[28] By then some Baptists were involved not only in the European Baptist Federation and the European Evangelical Alliance but also in the Conference of European Churches (CEC/KEK), a body bringing together Protestant (State Church and Free Church) and Orthodox Churches based in Europe.[29] For Lutheran and Reformed churches the idea of a European Ecumenical body to serve as a vehicle for pan-European fellowship was important and they were instrumental in the formation of CEC in 1959. Baptists were invited to participate but at first few did so. It was only after a Welsh Baptist, Glenn Garfield Williams, was appointed General Secretary of CEC in 1962, that Baptist involvement became more evident.[30] In the late 1960s the Roman Catholic Council of European Bishops' Conference became a partner in dialogue with CEC. Baptist minister, Keith Clements, present General Secretary of CEC, has asked: 'Is there really one Europe,.... or would it be more honest to admit that in reality there are two: historically, the Latin (both Catholic and Protestant) West, and the Orthodox East, both now overlain with very different social, cultural and political values?'[31] Evangelicals would answer 'no', since they are found equally in East and West.

Evangelical bridges from East to West

Fellowship across Europe continued and developed in the 1970s and 1980s despite the many continuing restrictions faced by evangelicals living in communist countries. In the West there were signs of evangelical growth after some set-backs in the 1960s over ecumenical issues.[32] Internal disputes began to seem less important than the needs of the world. A terrible earthquake hit Romania in 1977 and the Baptist Seminary was badly damaged and in need of rebuilding. At the Vienna Council of the European Baptist Federation in 1978 it was decided to allocate substantial money towards the reconstruction of the Seminary.[33] Gerhard Claas, a German Baptist and visionary international Baptist leader (General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance), was active in the 1980s to bridge East and West within Europe. He worked with Alexei Bichkov, General Secretary of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in the Soviet Union, to bring about a situation in which Baptists were given permission to print or import to Russia thousands of Russian New Testaments plus

thousands of hymn books and concordances.[34] The Baptist World reported in 1985 that the government of the Soviet Union had also granted a permit to import New Testament Commentaries that were being translated into Russian. Baptists in Poland and Hungary had been given authorization to proceed with construction of facilities for seminaries.[35]

At the eighth European Baptist Congress in Budapest in 1989, a year which represented an historic turning point for European Baptists and other evangelicals (not to say for the whole continent of Europe) as it coincided with the fall of the communist governments across Eastern Europe, Alexei Bichkov from Russia was also able to announce that he had been notified by the Council of Religious Affairs in Moscow that the Seminary which the Baptists had dreamed of could now go ahead and that other longed-for freedoms were coming. This 1989 EBF Congress was the first Congress to be held in Eastern Europe and had great symbolic significance, representing as it did the hopes for a new Europe. It was by far the biggest EBF Congress ever. The President of the Hungarian parliament gave the Baptists a welcome and said that the Baptist emphasis on individual faith and the responsibility of every member to share in government would be key to the building of a new Europe. The climax of the Congress was an ecumenical rally in Hungary's largest stadium at which Billy Graham preached. The stadium's offical capacity was 73,000. An estimated 90,000 came. Newspapers, radio and TV gave the event maximum coverage for days. Many thousands responded to Graham's appeal for public witness to Christian commitment.[36]

A new evangelical impetus took place across Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In the East, national Evangelical Alliances that had been outlawed were formed once more. In Albania, for example, an Alliance which had first been formed in 1892 was re-established in 1992. By 1998 it was playing an active part in the formation of a new constitution for the country. Similarly, Bulgarian evangelicals, who had suffered severe repression during the communist period, came together again and the Bulgarian Alliance became a member of the EEA in 1993.[37] A Bulgarian Baptist pastor, Nik Nedelchev, became the President of the EEA. It was clear that evangelicals from Central and Eastern Europe were going to play a crucial role in the new European home. At a European Church Growth conference held at London Bible College in March 1992, Paul Negrut from Romania, who was then pursuing PhD studies at London Bible College, spoke about two possibilities: either that spiritual advance in Eastern Europe would affect the rest of Europe, or that Western secularism would penetrate Eastern countries. He considered that Europe was at a cross roads and that the churches had a crucial part to play.[38] This view was shared by the leaders of the EBF, and after the Theology and Education Division of the EBF met in Moldova in 1993 a paper was issued which has continued to form an important document seeking to express a European Baptist identity.[39] This sense of pan-European identity has encouraged many Baptist churches in countries such as Britain to embrace partnership with churches in, for example, Romania, and this has assisted mission work.

In the early 1990s a great deal of energetic leadership was offered to the EBF. Karl-Heinz Walter, who was a pastor of the German Baptist Union, became EBF General Secretary at the EBF Congress in Budapest in 1989. The ten-year ministry of Karl Heinz Walter was marked by dramatic expansion in the number of member bodies of the EBF and by concerted attempts to build a new fellowship across Europe and in particular to provide support and relief for the newly-freed communities of central and eastern Europe. Karl-Heinz called together European Baptist in January 1992 at the German Free Church Conference Centre, Dorfweil, to share first hand information about the changing situation. Baptist Relief-Europe aid projects were set up. Countries that were given practical help by the wider Baptist family included Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine (Chernobyl children), Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Yugoslavia. In the various projects there was concern to see Europeans working in partnership with other Europeans. This was at a time of worry that evangelicals were part of the process of Americanization. Baptists wished to show that they were not beholden to America, although they appreciated American Baptist partnership, and also they could and did co-operate within Europe with other Christians. In 1991 the Pope invited fifteen leaders of other Churches to meet with the European Catholic Bishops at the Vatican to consider the theme 'The Re-evangelization of Europe'. Karl-Heinz Walter represented the European Baptists. He pointed to the strong Baptist concern for evangelism, for the Bible and *diakonia* and showed that Baptists were not an American church but had their roots in Europe.[40] Evangelical theologians such as James Packer, an Anglican, explored the common ground between

evangelicals and Catholics. An 8,000-word declaration was produced 'Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium'.[41] New bridges were being built.

United witness

Since the early 1990s there has been an increasing awareness on the part of Baptists and other evangelicals that there is a remarkable opportunity to express again a united witness across Europe. This has largely been embodied in co-operative mission, in aid, in prayer and in education. The place of prayer is indicated by the fact that in 2001 400,000 German evangelicals met together during the Evangelical Alliance Week of Prayer.[42] Evangelicals are not only seeking spiritual renewal; they are also looking outwards at the political situation in the new Europe.[43] The EBF has set up a network of lawyers across Europe to specialize in human rights issues and this group has been involved in strategic issues. Across Europe there is an emerging younger leadership among Baptists and other evangelicals which is prepared to engage socially and politically. The EEA set up an office in Brussels in 1994, with Julia Doxat Purser from Britain, who has a degree in European Studies, as the EEA representative. Before then, it often seemed that every other worldview except evangelical Christianity was seeking to influence the European political agenda. The EEA insists that it is neither 'pro' nor 'anti' the EU as such.[44] Rather the EEA encourages those with influence in Brussels to act in ways that promote justice, peace, generosity and righteousness. It works particularly on religious freedom issues. It is also concerned about questions like immigration and treatment of refugees.[45]

European Baptists also saw new possibilities in the 1990s for strengthening witness through pan-European theological education. In most former communist countries evangelical seminaries had not been permitted. Throughout the 1990s Baptists were often at the forefront among those who grasped hold of the new opportunity and established national seminaries and also many smaller Bible Schools. In the early 1990s, in the light of the number of new national Baptists seminaries being founded and the de-funding of the International Baptist Theological Seminary (IBTS) in Switzerland by the Trustees of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, there was a search for a new home and a new role for this seminary, which was owned by the EBF. A statement of 1993 clarified some of the prime objectives for a re-shaped IBTS. This included focusing on a two-year Master of Theology degree to be offered to those who had done initial ministerial formation in their home Baptist Union seminary; developing the profile of lay education; promoting IBTS as a place for Baptists and others to confer; developing the possibility of doctoral studies and engaging in specialised training in youth work, mission and evangelism and Baptist identity. The European Baptist Unions agreed that IBTS should be relocated to Prague, as a central city in the new Europe and a much cheaper place than Zürich, and this move happened in May 1994.[46]

A site on the edge of the city of Prague, in the historic Šárka Valley, which was in need of a great deal of work, was developed for the seminary. The re-focused IBTS now offers a variety of courses, including Master's degrees in the fields of Biblical Studies, Baptist and Anabaptist Studies, Mission and Evangelism, and Applied Theology – including human rights, Christian education and spiritual formation. Degrees offered are validated by the British University system and the Czech higher education authority. There are 140 students from over forty countries, eighty-six doing MTh study and thirty working towards Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy degrees.[47] The IBTS teaching team is drawn predominantly from the former communist countries, with teachers on the full-time staff coming from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia and Russia, as well as from the West. A conference held in the summer of 2002 at IBTS illustrates the way in which evangelicals from the East are having an impact across Europe. The conference was on the theme of Baptists and the Orthodox Church, and three of the main speakers – Dr Oti Bunaciu, Dr Emil Bartos and Dr Octavian Baban – were Romanian Baptist academics.[48] This is also an example of the way in which seminaries across Europe are working in a united way in partnership. There has been co-operation in evangelical theological education across denominations, for example in Bulgaria. IBTS works in particularly close co-operation with Spurgeon's College, London – a mirror of the connection in the nineteenth century between C. H. Spurgeon, the foremost British Victorian preacher, and Johann Oncken, the 'father' of the continental European Baptist movement.[49]

Evangelicals and European politicians

Politicians in Europe are in many cases willing to

listen to the EEA because they know that the EEA represents a large pan-European, pan-denominational alliance of Christian voices. It was in November 1990 that Jacques Delors, the President of the European Commission at the time, made his famous call to church leaders to help Europe find its soul. Christians have continued to respond to that call.[50] The following examples illustrate that there has been evangelical influence within the European Union. First, there was the issue of 'sects'. After the tragic deaths of sixteen members of the Order of the Solar Temple in the Alps at the end of 1995, the EEA worked on the 'sect' issue. Across Europe, media and politicians panicked about the threat posed by minority religious groups. They were determined to bring about control in order to ensure that no more crimes were committed. Unfortunately, the desire to protect society was at times stronger than the desire to maintain the principle of religious freedom. In 1996, the European Parliament determined to pass a resolution on the issue and the signs were that this would be a bad move for religious freedom. However, by working with Christian parliamentarians, the EEA succeeded in changing the text. The final resolution was amended to make specific reference to the importance of religious freedom and the European Convention of Human Rights. In 1997, the 'sect' issue returned to the European Parliament and an official report was commissioned. Again, the EEA helped influence this and the final report was moderate. In the end, in July 1998, the Parliament decided to drop the issue completely.[51]

A second issue has been employment law. The EEA's campaigning work in 2000 was largely dominated by the EU's proposed anti-discrimination directive.[52] In general, this directive could be seen as helpful in promoting justice in areas of employment. However, it also contained some potential problems for religious organisations. Could a church insist that its pastor was a Christian or was this discriminatory? Could a Christian children's home have only Christian caring staff? Originally, the European Commission had been against granting any flexibility towards religious groups within the legislation. However, the EEA and national Evangelical Alliances across Europe, working with other groups, were able to convince European politicians that the directive had to be amended. Now, if a national government wants to, it can make sure that religious groups are free to employ people of the faith where there is some justification to do so. Christian employers can also expect their staff to behave in a way which upholds Christian values. The EEA has indicated that Christians in each European country will need to continue talking to their governments to persuade them to be aware of the situations of the faith communities.

One of the most important debates that has taken place in the context of the Convention on the Future of Europe focused on the mention of God and Christian or Judeo-Christian values in article 2 of the draft Constitutional treaty.[53] This article stated: 'The Union is founded on respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, the rule of law & human rights, values which its Member States have in common. The Union aims to be a peaceful society, practising tolerance, justice & solidarity.' Many Churches, religious communities and others considered this article to be too general. They argued that it should mention the Christian culture that has shaped Europe and which has been based on faith in God. The European Evangelical Alliance added its voice to those of other believers on this matter. Evangelicals want the European Union to be, above everything else, a community in which, in the name of justice and fairness, everyone is free to believe and practise their faith. Evangelicals do not demand a privileged place for believers but want their voices to be heard in the public arena along with every other member of civil society. The campaign resulted in a watering down of the humanist nature of the documentation. Christianity is not mentioned, but people of religious faith, not just humanists, are acknowledged as having contributed to European values. The text of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe was signed on 29 October 2004.

Romano Prodi, as European Commission President, said to the European Parliament in April 1999: 'The search for a European "soul" is increasingly proving to be the major problem facing our continent as it looks to the future.' He went on to explain what he meant by the term 'soul'. His definition was the following: 'How to gradually build up a shared feeling of belonging to Europe.'[54] Like Jacque Delors, Prodi was seeking to highlight the contribution of faith communities to this process. At a conference on inter-cultural dialogue in March 2002, he said: 'Religions can – and must – make an essential contribution to goals we all share: a future free of fear; peaceful progress for the good of all; defence of human values against violence, hatred and discrimination.' This was reinforced at a conference on 6-8 December 2002 on 'Politics and Morality' which took place in Vienna, Austria,

organized by the Institute for Human Sciences jointly with Project Syndicate, Prague/New York. Against the background of protests from religious leaders in Europe that they were not being heard, Prodi emphasised: 'At a time when we are reflecting on the future of Europe, we cannot overlook its spiritual, religious and ethical dimensions.'[55]

In the opinion of the many European evangelicals, there needs to be an increase in openness in dialogue about such issues. There are certainly Members of the European Parliament who believe that faith belongs only in the private sphere.[56] In 2002 a European Parliament resolution on 'Women and Fundamentalism' which argued that secularisation was a precious feature of Europe passed with a slim majority. The resolution deplored 'the interference of the Churches and religious communities in the public and political life of the state'. Partly in response, the Pope, in a speech to the Italian Parliament on 15 November 2002, expressed his hope that 'the new foundations of the European "common house" will not lack the "cement" of that extraordinary religious, cultural and civil patrimony that has given Europe its greatness down the centuries.' He pleaded: 'Europe, at the beginning of the new millennium, open once again your doors to Christ!'[57] In the same month, Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad spoke in Oslo at the inaugural meeting of the European Council of Religious Leaders, of the necessity to respect religious ideals. Evangelicals, through the EEA and other bodies, also contributed to the debate.[58] In March 2003 the EEA published this statement: 'Motivated by a desire to preserve and protect this diversity, we reject the idea of a purely secular society where religious belief would be relegated to the strictly private sphere. Instead we favour the idea of a pluralist society where different faith and philosophical streams can exist and express their opinions, thus encouraging real democracy.' Freedom for faith was called into question in the minds of many by the rejection in 2004 of Rocco Buttiglione as the new Justice Commissioner. The Buttiglione affair, as Julia Doxat-Purser of the EEA commented, exposed a classic worldview clash: Enlightenment inspired Humanism versus Christianity. Rocco Buttiglione, a conservative Catholic, was at odds with MEPs who are secular humanists and for whom religiously inspired views are anathema.[59] It remains to be seen what implications this has for the future.

Conclusion

Given the long history of evangelical co-operation across Europe, what hopes do evangelicals have for the enlarged European Union? There are Christian groups that are strongly anti-EU. The Hungarian Reformed Church struggled to distance itself from the Justice and Life Party which has an extreme anti-EU and anti-Semitic stance and which has supporters in the Church. There are anti-EU evangelical voices in Britain.[60] The debate about Europe's Christian values is on-going. Some evangelicals are apathetic when it comes to these matters. But many evangelical communities across Europe approach this issue in the light of the instinctive pan-Europeanism that has been an important part of the evangelical story. They see the possibility of a stronger, more united European witness as integration proceeds in Europe. It can be argued that in a unique way evangelicals can act as a bridge across Europe, linking East and West. Over much of the twentieth century and over the past few years especially, there have been many examples of pan-European evangelical linking for the purposes of relationship, sharing of resources and working together in mission. The European Baptist Federation includes Baptist communities that are relatively strong – Ukraine, Britain, Romania, Russia and Germany – as well as small (but growing) Baptist Unions in countries such as Armenia or Bosnia.[61] The same growth is seen in other evangelical groups, for example Pentecostals. Evangelical believers, who have this wider view of the European family, are nonetheless often worried about a 'Fortress Europe' created by the European Union. What many evangelicals want is not simply an enlarged European Union but the fulfilment of a bigger vision reaching across traditional divides. Michail Gorbachev spoke of a 'common European house'. The European Union cannot in itself bring about that aim. Indeed it could contribute to 'two Europes'.[62] Long before the talk of European integration, evangelical Christian believers across Europe saw themselves not as having two foundations, East and West, but as built together on one foundation – Jesus Christ.

Notes

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52 The publication of the British Evangelical Alliance, IDEA, has given attention to this issue.
53 For more see www.european-convention.eu.int
54 Quoted in a paper by Julia Doxat-Purser, 'Enlargement from a faith perspective', 20 June 2002; cf. R Prodi, *Un idea dell Europa* [*An Idea of Europe*] (Bologna, 1999).
55 Conference notes, 6-8 December 2002.
56 For background see Grace Davie, *Europe: The Exceptional Case* (Darton, Longman & Todd, 2002).
57 For an interesting discussion of whether Europe was ever Christian see A. Wessels, *Europe: Was it Ever Really Christian?* (London: SCM, 1994).
58 Jean-Pierre Herman, from Belgium, took on EEA work in Brussels and Julia Doxat-Purser has focussed on pan-European socio-political issues: *EEA News,* No. 5 (March 2002), pp. 1-2.
59 http://www.europeanea.org/TheButtiglioneAffair.htm.
60 See A. Hilton, *The Principality and Power of Europe* (Dorchester House, 1997). Books of this kind indicate an evangelical fear that Roman Catholicism and liberal humanism will work in alliance to dominate Europe.
61 For statistics on Baptists and other evangelicals see P. Johnstone and J. Mandryk, *Operation World* (Carlisle: Paternoster Publishing, 2001, 6th ed.)
62 Clements, 'Into the new Millennium', p. 88.

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Towards a public theology of religious pluralism

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SUMMARY

In this article the author deals with the challenge of religious pluralism. In the introduction the author suggests what he considers to be an appropriate methodology for public theology: a careful application of the method of correlation between the questions raised by contemporary situation and answers found in Revelation. In the first part of the paper the author describes the contemporary situation of religious pluralism at local, national and international levels and points out the issues raised by this situation. The next section of the paper deals with the theoretical response to religious pluralism: different paradigms of the so called theology of religions. The next part of the paper moves from theory to practice: it deals with the different types of actual encounter with religious others, i.e. interreligious dialogue. The concluding section of the paper moves back from practice to theory and suggests topics, themes and questions which have been raised (by the actual involvement in inter-faith dialogue and cooperation) for Christian public theology. The social-ethical type of dialogue is suggested as the most promising and most appropriate type of dialogue, both for biblical-theological reasons and because of the contemporary political, economic and ecological world situation.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In diesem Artikel behandelt der Autor die Herausforderung des religiösen Pluralismus. In der Einleitung schlägt der Autor vor, was er für eine angemessene Methodologie für öffentliche Theologie hält: Eine sorgfältige Anwendung der Methode der Korrelation zwischen den Fragen, die die gegenwärtige Situation aufwirft, und den Antworten der Offenbarung. Im ersten Teil des Artikels beschreibt der Autor die gegenwärtige Situation des religiösen Pluralismus auf lokalen, nationalen und internationale Ebenen und verweist auf die Problemkreise, die dadurch erzeugt werden. Der nächste Abschnitt behandelt die theoretische Reaktion auf diesen Pluralismus: verschiedene Paradigmen der so genannten Theologie der Religionen. Der nächste Abschnitt bewegt sich von Theorie zur Praxis: er befasst sich mit den verschiedenen Typen tatsächlicher Begegnung mit dem religiösen Anderen, d. h. mit interreligösem Dialog. Der abschließende Teil geht zurück von der Praxis zur Theorie und schlägt Themen und Fragen vor, die (durch tatsächliche Teilnahme am interreligiösen Dialog und Kooperation) für eine christliche öffentliche Theologie aufgeworfen werden. Der sozialethische Dialog wird als verheißungsvollste und angemessenste Art des Dialogs sowohl aus biblisch-theologischen wie auch aus Gründen der gegenwärtigen politischen, ökonomischen und ökologischen Weltsituation vorgeschlagen.

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RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur se penche sur les problèmes que pose le pluralisme religieux. Dans son introduction, il propose ce qu'il considère comme une méthodologie appropriée pour la théologie socio-politique : une application rigoureuse de la méthode de corrélation entre les questions qui surgissent dans le monde contemporain et les réponses fournies par l'Écriture. Dans sa première partie, l'auteur décrit la situation contemporaine de pluralisme religieux, au plan local, national et international, et signale quels sont les problèmes posés par cette situation. La section suivante examine quelle réponse théorique on apporte au pluralisme religieux : les paradigmes différents de la soi-disant théologie des religions. Ensuite, il passe de la théorie à la pratique et s'intéresse aux différentes approches du dialogue inter-religieux. La dernière partie revient à des questions théoriques et indique des sujets, des thèmes et des questions qui se posent en matière de théologie socio-politique chrétienne par suite de l'implication dans le dialogue et la coopération avec des gens se réclamant d'autres convictions religieuses. Le dialogue sur les questions sociales et éthiques est présenté comme le type le plus prometteur, à la fois pour des raisons bibliques et théologiques, et à cause de la situation politique, économique et écologique contemporaine.Introduction

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As a way of introduction, before I focus on the main topic of this article, I want to make some methodological comments on how I understand the appropriate method of doing theology. These methodological ideas will then be applied on the theme of this paper.

The three essential sources for systematic theology are the Scripture, tradition and contemporary context or situation.[1] In a sense the second and especially the third source need some justification. There is no question concerning the validity of the Reformation principle *sola scriptura*. Yes, theology has only one norm: God's revelation as recorded in God's written Word, the Bible.[2] Yet, we have no unmediated access to the Bible and its meaning. Without disregarding the illuminating activity of the Holy Spirit as a necessary factor in biblical interpretation, we must take seriously the testimony of our ancestors in faith,[3] in other words, the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the biblical text over the centuries, giving rise to multiple forms of worship, church structures, creeds, patterns of Christian life, witness and spirituality. Tradition gives shape to our preunderstanding, forms our communal and individual Christian experience and therefore determines the particular quality of our hermeneutical circle, of our interpretive horizon.[4]

Moreover, as the Christian community moves across the centuries towards the *eschaton* and as it grows into new territories and environments, it encounters differing cultural contexts and different kinds of *Zeitgeist*. This fact is related to its incarnational character – in one sense, the church as the body of Christ is the continuation of Christ's incarnation, of God's descent into history. The differing cultural and historical contexts must be taken seriously, just as Christ took seriously the culture of his contemporaries. This is why, in a sense, every generation of Christians has to develop its own systematic theology,[5] under the authority of the Scripture, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, drawing on the tradition of its predecessors, and (last but not least) drawing on its contemporary historical and cultural situation.[6] In this sense we can legitimately say that situation is a necessary third source for systematic theology, or, in other words, that theology must be construed in correlation with the particular context, surrounding Christian community in a given time and place.[7] Every new generation comes to the Bible with new eyes, the shifting historical horizon of believing readers interacts with biblical message, bringing out new and fresh dimensions of its meaning.[8]

This fact forces us to rethink the common understanding of the relationship between theory and practice in theological work. The work of a theologian is not just the deductive ordering and organizing of abstract biblical principles into systematic wholes.[9] It starts with careful exegesis, but it does not end there. The relation between theory and practice is dialectical.[10] We need to be involved in practice in order to do sound theory, application is a necessary component of understanding.[11] Christian theology rises from the dynamic interaction between practice and theory, between our practical involvement in contemporary world and theoretical reflection in light of Scripture and tradition. This is true, I believe, about systematic theology as a whole. It is even more important for public theology. By definition, public theology must interact with the particularities of contemporary situation, both in the church and in the world.[12] It must be incarnational in the fullest sense of the word, otherwise it betrays its task.[13]

In this paper I want to focus on one particular feature of our contemporary situation, which until recently, has not been taken seriously enough in Evangelical theology,[14] namely the progressive globalizing of contemporary world[15] and the related multi-cultural and multi-religious character of most contemporary societies,[16] both eastern and western. Religious pluralism is, I think, one of the most urgent topics for contemporary theology. We, Christians of the 21st century, have to be ready to deal with this significant and growing phenomenon on both theoretical and practical levels. It is not just about who can be saved and under which conditions. The theological discussion about non-Christian religions has been overloaded and preoccupied with this particular soteriological concern for several decades, unfortunately.[17] The soteriological concern is very important, perhaps the most important, but it is certainly not the only relevant concern. We must do much more than ask who and how can be saved, we must build a solid theological foundation for a truly public theology of religions, which will give us practical quidelines for interaction, cooperation and dialogue with religious others on local, national and international levels.[18] We need to reflect deeply (in light of the Scripture) on how to relate to our non-Christian yet religious neighbours, colleagues, schoolmates

and family members. We have to develop theological basis for interreligious dialogue and mission,[19] for solving ethnic and/or international conflicts with religious background. It is the most practical and most public issue.

So after illustrating briefly the contemporary situation of religious pluralism (Section I.), I want to focus on the various theoretical responses to that situation, i.e. on the diverse theologies of religions, which have been developed (Section II.). After dealing with the theoretical responses I want to focus on the practical response to the situation of religious pluralism, i.e. the various types and forms of interreligious dialogue (Section III.). Finally, I want to move back to theoretical considerations, which (I suggest) must be enriched and partially shaped by the insights gained from practical involvement in interreligious dialogue (Section IV.).

I. Situation: religious pluralism

Let me give three examples of interreligious issues on local, national and international levels for which we need to find adequate theological criteria. In my country, Christians are divided concerning the attitude to Muslim attempts to build an islamic centre and mosque in Teplice, a place where there are virtually no local Muslims. Of course, the situation after September 11th and the attacks of Muslim fundamentalist terrorists worldwide add to the heat of the debate. Some argue out of fear and xenophobia, some Christians would not even grant Muslims the religious freedom they themselves enjoy. There are petitions initiated and signed by Christians addressed to the local government asking to forbid building of the mosq. Are we ready (theologically) to respond to such situations?

In an international Christian educational organisation for which I used to work (IICS), the leaders had to deal (practically and theologically) with a particular interfaith issue in Nigeria. In that country, AIDS is a terrible problem. Both Muslim and Christian religious leaders eventually decided to join forces and design a common educational program helping to prevent the fast spreading of the HIV virus. They refer in their materials to spiritual principles, carefully formulated in such a way as to apply to both Muslim and Christian believers without offending anybody. How should we operate in such situations, so that we don´t compromise our faith and at the same time, meet the needs of our neighbours?

The most urgent and also best known are the international conflicts with (at least to some extent) religious background. To mention just one: the highly complex Near Eastern conflict, complicated by the sacredness of the Holy Land, which makes both Christian and Jewish Zionists and fundamenalists as well as Muslim fanatics to approve of or even use violence and terrorism and employ the rhetorics of holy war. Are we moving towards a clash of civilisations (Huntington)? What theological criteria should we apply on this issue, which is at the same time political, religious and global? Let us look briefly at the relevant traditional resources and contemporary options for a Christian theology of religions.

II. Theoretical response: theologies of religions

The topic of non-Christian religions is not new. It is addressed in both Old and New Testaments, it has been discussed and variously dealt with in the patristic period, medieval times, Reformation and afterwards.[20] It has grown in importance since the Enlightenment, partly because of a growing interest of intellectuals in non-European cultures, partly because of the missionary movement of the last two centuries.[21] Yet, as I already mentioned, until relatively recently the discussion of non-Christian religions focused primarily on speculation about the possible eschatological destiny of those who, by no fault of their own, have not received the Gospel. This concern also gave rise to the basic categories or types of Christian theology of religions, namely exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism.[22]

Exclusivism[23] has been the traditional view of non-Christian religions over most of the church history.[24] It builds on the exclusive claims of both Old and New Testaments, particularly on the anti-idolatrious critique and polemics of Israelite prophets,[25] the Old Testament notion of chosen people and the central idea of *Heilsgeschichte* against the background of general world history. In the New Testament, the exclusive claims of Christ ("I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me", John 14, 6, see also John 10, 7-9 etc.) and the apostles ("Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved", Acts 4, 12 etc.) are used to support the exclusivist paradigm,[26] as well as the claims of Christ's uniqueness in mediating between sinful humankind and God ("For there is one God and

one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus", 1Tim 2, 5 etc).

In the patristic period, the exclusivist view was combined with ecclesiological and sacramental considerations (Cyprian, Augustine) which gave rise to the well known principle *extra ecclesiam nulla sallus*,[27] confirmed officially at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) and at the Council of Florence (1442). The Reformation preserved this generally negative view of other religions, though it loosened the tie between the salvation and (visible) church, so the Protestant dictum would rather sound "outside of Christ no salvation". The exclusivist view was and still is one of the strongest motivational factors in the world-wide missionary movement – it is the desperate lostness of non-Christians which makes evangelism particularly urgent and necessary.[28] Exclusivism, perhaps better called particularism (because the exclusivist label has negative connotations and was coined not by exclusivists but by their despisers) is well biblically founded and remains the most common view among Evangelicals.

The second paradigm, inclusivism,[29] has become the official view of the Roman Catholic Church, particularly after the II Vatican Council.[30] The proponents of this view claim to have a solid biblical support for their more soteriologically optimistic perspective.[31] They point to the common origin of all humankind in God's creative act, to the universal dignity of man as a bearer of God's image (Gen 1-3), to the universal horizon of God's covenant with humankind (particularly Noahic covenant,[32] which for believing Jews constitutes the theological framework for a Jewish form of inclusivism). They also point to the so called pagan saints of the Old Testament (Danielou), i.e. the individuals who have (in some cases most likely salvific) knowledge of God yet they don´t belong to the chosen people of Israel and didn't even receive any previous instruction from God's people (see Job, Melchisedek, Jethro, Bileam, Abimelech, and in a sense Abram himself[33]). Inclusivists also point to prophetic utterances about God's self-communication and providential care for non-Israelites (Amos, 9, 7, Malachi, 1, 11, Isaiah, 19, 23-25, and particularly Jonah with his mission to the Ninivites etc.[34]), to the universalist tendency of wisdom literature, suggesting universal accessibility of (divine) wisdom and of "desire after eternity" (Eccl 3, 11). Similar claims about God's providential activity and self-communication can be found also in the New Testament ("The true light that gives light to every man was coming to the world" John 1, 9, "...the living God who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them. In the past He let all nations go their own way. Yet he has not left Himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving You rain from heaven and crops in their seasons, He provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy." Acts 14, 15b-17, "God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. For in him we live and move and have our being. As some of your own poets have said, We are his offspring." Acts 17, 27-28, "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse", Rom 1, 20, "Indeed, when the gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them." Rom 2, 14-15) as well as the insistance on God's universal salvific will ("...God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of truth." 1 Tim 2, 4 etc.).

Inclusivists also draw on patristic resources,[35] such as Justin Martyr's notion of universally present *logos spermatikos*, which allows him to speak about "Christians before Christ" (he names Heracleitos and Socrates). Clement of Alexandria and Origenes put strong emphasis on the omnipresence and universal though limited accessibility of divine truth. Their ideas are also employed by inclusivists, just as Aquinas' notions of *fides implicita* and baptism by desire, used by the Tridentine Council.

Among the cross-cultural missionaries of the 19th century, there arose the so called fulfillment theory of the relation of Christian faith to non-Christian religions.[36] These are viewed not as the lies of the Devil or human errors and idolatry, but rather, as providential preparations of cultures and peoples to receive the Gospel when it eventually arrives (*praeparatio evangelica*).[37] There are, therefore, in this kind of inclusivism, many *Anknüpfungspunkte* or elements of truth, goodness and beauty in non-Christian religious traditions (of course mixed with human errors and idolatry). Some inclusivists therefore believe that non-Christians can be saved (because Christ died also for them), yet in a sense in spite of their religion. Other (more

radical) inclusivists say that non-Christian religions in their social reality are God's providential instruments of salvation.[38] So non-Christians are saved not in spite of, but by means of their religiosity. Saved by Christ, of course, this is why they can be called anonymous Christians or anonymous candidates for baptism.[39]

This is the point which presents a stumbling block to the proponents of the third paradigm of interreligious relations, namely pluralism.[40] Why should Buddhists or Muslims be saved by Christ, however unconsciously? This is an arrogant, imperialistic and paternalizing claim. We have no right to such claims, say the pluralists. All human knowledge is situated, it is historically and culturally conditioned and limited.[41] There is no central or normative universal religious doctrine, no privileged access to divine truth and/or revelation. All religions are basically equal, all fulfilling their redemptive-transformational role for their respective adherents.[42] Religious traditions are symbolic responses to ultimate Reality, bearing marks of the geographical, historical and cultural circumstances of their birth and development. Jesus is the only Savior, yes, but only for Christians.[43] Other traditions have their own founders and salvific figures. Needless to say, pluralism cannot really claim biblical support for its presuppositions, in spite of such attempts as Hick's *Myth of God Incarnate*, his *Metaphor of God Incarnate*, Stendhal's notion of love language accounting for biblical exclusivist claims for Christ's uniqueness,[44] Ariarajah's *The Bible and People of Other Faiths* etc. The core of the pluralist argument is not and doesn't even try to be exegetical, but rather it is the ethical (humanistic) argument based on God's justice, love and universal salvific will.[45]

III Evaluation and proposals

Let me offer now some evaluative comments: Besides the fact that there are differences among all three paradigms in exegetical plausibility (Exclusivism being strongest in this regard and pluralism the weakest), all three paradigms have one in common: they all deal primarily with the soteriological question (who will be saved?) and, unfortunately, they don´t really take seriously the other religions themselves, in their particularities and differences.[46] All three paradigms are essentially aprioristic, their proponents have no reason to study what the other religions actually teach and how they understand themselves.

The alternative typology, which attempts to be more theological (i.e. less soteriological) doesn´t really solve this problem. It suggests the label ecclesiocentrism for the traditional approach, christocentrism for (Christian) inclusivism, and theocentrism for pluralism[47] (later the pluralists realized the monotheist assumption behind the label theocentrism and so they suggested Reality-centrism or soterio-centrism[48] in its stead).

In the last decade, many theologians became understandably dissatisfied with these and similar labels and propose several significant shifts in theology of religions, with which I wholeheartedly agree:

1) preventing the soteriological concern (though it is very important) from dominanting the entire discussion and determining its framework.

2) studying carefully the non-Christian religions in the particularities of their creeds, ethical codes, patterns of common life and worship, spirituality, religious art etc.[49]

3) taking seriously the differences, or, in other words, the otherness of the Other.[50]

4) reflecting theologically on the various interfaith encounters which are already going on around the world, such as interreligious dialogue sessions on all levels, common social and humanitarian action, mutual witness in cross-cultural contexts.[51]

5) listening carefully to Christians living in countries where they are a religious minority.[52]

6) taking seriously the dialectical relationship of practice and theory – i.e. not just doing a theology for dialogue, but also a theology of dialogue – taking the interreligious encounters as a given contemporary global situation and working also inductively, not just deductively.[53]

IV. Practical response: interreligious dialogue

Let us look now a little bit more closely on the interreligious encounters going on in contemporary world. They can be classified into three basic types:

1) interreligious dialogue on doctrinal, conceptual level,

2) common spiritual practice, or as some call this, dialogue on spiritual, experiential level,[54]

3) dialogue on social and ethical issues and pressing needs of contemporary world.

Ad 1) In both formal and informal contexts adherents of different religions meet to discuss about their respective beliefs. All religions make implicit or explicit truth claims, some of these truth claims are of course similar or convergent, but many are conflicting or mutually exclusive. On this level of dialogue, there is space for polemics, apologetics and mutual witness.

Ad 2) Some religious believers organize multi-religious prayer and worship meetings. They say that common spiritual experience helps the participants, representing different traditions to focus on what is common, i.e. the spiritual or mystical depth of religion,[55] which is more important, they say, than the surface of seemingly conflicting doctrinal statements.[56]

Ad 3) Some believers emphasize the social-ethical level of interreligious dialogue. It is an indirect dialogue, since it doesn't really focus on the doctrinal or spiritual content of respective religions, but rather on their ethical resources necessary to solve actual needs and crises of contemporary world. The goal of this kind of dialogue is not creating a syncretistic global religion, but rather to join forces to implement highest ethical ideals of religious believers like peace, justice, solidarity, or, in Christian terms, to implement the principles of God's kingdom (while respecting and actually insisting on the irreconcilable divergencies and differences of participant religions).

V Evaluation and proposals

At this point, I would like to offer some evaluative observations on all three levels of interreligious dialogue. I will start with the second: the spiritual. I must say that I see no scriptural basis for this activity and no actual meaning in common worship of people, some of which worship the one Creator-God, some many gods, some no god at all. It makes sense only with the highly questionable pluralist assumption, that all religions refer to the same absolute reality, which some call Allah, some Brahma, some Tao, some Yahweh etc. However, I see no problem in praying to the God of the Bible while people of other faiths are present (this could actually be an effective form of witness[57]). But it must be understood by all that we are not engaging in a syncretistic common worship addressed to the one (common) Absolute beyond all symbolic expressions.

Concerning the first type of dialogue, i.e. dialogue on doctrinal – conceptual level, I think it is meaningful and desirable, but we must be very careful here. And we should not be over-optimistic concerning its possible results. Some scholars assume that religions can meet on a common platform, that their adherents can speak a common language, or rather an interreligious meta-language. They suggest that religious creeds are mutually translatable and comparable. So they want to develop an "interreligious Esperanto"[58] or construe an interreligious "global theology".[59] Yet I think this is highly questionable. I think we have to respect the idiomatic character of each religion's particular linguistic system.[60] We have to respect the otherness of the Other, not to translate it (too quickly) into just another case of the Same. It is desirable to look for trans-contextual criteria of truth and meaning,[61] but we must be aware of the limits which the idiomatic nature of religious linguistic codes puts on such efforts.

The most common (and to a large extent justified) criticism of these attempts to establish an interreligious common platform or meta-language is that it is not "pluralist" enough. Indeed, it presupposes an all-inclusive theory which gives account of the vast diversity of world religions, putting them all under the same umbrella of a universal notion of religion (i.e. religion as a generic term). Many contemporary thinkers question (and rightly so, I suggest) the common presupposition of most proponents of this approach, that the core ("essence") of religion is a prereflective and preverbal religious experience, which only secondarily takes a verbal, externalized form.[62] Cultural anthropologists like C. Geertz suggest that the externalized and verbalized tradition is actually not secondary, it is one of the decisive and most important factors in every religious community.[63] Religions are systems of symbols that give meaning, sense of identity and direction for the individual's life and for the community. Religion is a socially construed reality, says the sociologist P. Berger[64] (without excluding the possibility of revelation from above, of course). It is a symbolic universe or semantic code which shapes the lives of religious believers, including their life style, ethics and patterns of religious experience. Some scholars fruitfully apply on religions (rightly so, I think) the Wittgensteinian concept of language games.[65] A religious tradition is a particular use of language, with its own depth grammar, and with a corresponding form of life which it encourages and shapes in religious believers.[66]

It is interesting and surprising to many that the

work of some of the most influential philosophers, sociologists and anthropologists of the twentieth century (Wittgenstein, Berger, Geertz and their followers) supports what has been traditionally known as religious (Christian) particularism.

The famous Protestant theologian K. Barth also insists (though for different, i.e. theological reasons) on the decisive importance of proclaimed message (*verbum externum*).[67] The shared linguistic paradigm, the common meta-narrative or the particular verbalized vision of reality is the defining factor of each particular religion. And it is exactly this *verbum externum* that creates corresponding inner experience and shapes the forms, patterns and structures of religious practice. From the perspective of this cultural-linguistic view of religion[68] it is impossible to assume a priori a common essence of all religions in the depths of mystical experience.[69] Such an assumption is speculative and aprioristic. Religions are as different and incompatible as the languages they speak. Their languages are to a large extent idiomatic, and so are their corresponding life forms.

What does this imply for mutual translatability? One cannot take a religious claim (such as the Buddhist *karuna* doctrine) out of context and compare it with another seemingly corresponding context ridden concept (such as the Christian *agape*) or translate one into the other. All religious claims derive their meaning and actually only make sense in the context of the entire symbolic universe (language world) of the particular religious tradition. One cannot divorce the alleged prelinguistic experiential (spiritual) stratum of religious life from its linguistic (outward) stratum (as the pluralists do), these two are closely tied and actually inseparable.

The doctrinal-conceptual dialogue therefore has serious limits and our expectations concerning its success should be rather modest. But I believe Christians should engage in it. We have to know religious others well, from first hand experience, in order to be able to share the Gospel in a way that is meaningful (and not unnecessarily offensive) for them and in order to be able to cooperate with them in common tasks.

To conclude my evaluation of different types of interreligious dialogue, I have to say that I see the third type, i.e. the social-ethical (indirect) dialogue as the most fruitful and necessary kind of dialogue[70] and the one that is most relevant for public theology: its goal is not to establish a common platform of all religions, to undermine differences, to create a common meta-language or to move towards a syncretistic unity of religious believers. Its goal is to join forces to work for peace and justice on local, national and international levels, broadly in terms of Niebuhr's famous notion of "Christ transforming culture".[71] In other words, to cooperate in transforming the world in accordance with the principles of God's kingdom. Therefore, the eschatological regno-centric (Kingdom-centered[72]) approach seems to be the most appropriate paradigm concerning the goals of interreligious dialogue. This approach allows Christians to face and to respond to the urgent needs of contemporary world without compromising in the area of doctrine and without waiting for basic agreement with other religions on doctrinal level. In other words, if we are able to find agreement concerning basic human rights and ethical guidelines[73] (Golden Rule for example), it doesn't matter that the justification for this consensus will be tradition-specific, what is important are the ethical and motivational resources of living religious traditions (i.e. their high and noble ethical standards and ideals[74]). If we are able to agree with Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists on basic principles of global ethics (in the sense of H. Küng's now famous notion of global ethics, see the documents of the Parliament of World Religions, Chicago, 1993, and following meetings in 1999 and 2004), we can join forces in implementing these principles without compromising the integrity of participating religious traditions.

Moreover, the rich motivational resources of religions are not just creative and positive. They can actually be very violent and destructive[75] (terrorism, opressive fundamentalism etc). Encouraging interreligious dialogue on the social-ethical level has therefore a double purpose: addressing the needs of contemporary world and pacifying or taming the potentially destructive power of religions, which very often derives its appeal from xenophobia (either we engage in dialogue, or we shoot at each other[76]).

VI Reshaping theory in light of practical involvement in dialogue

But it is not enough to just cooperate with the non-Christian believers on common ethical and social issues. Such encounters are necessarily transformational, as those who are involved in them unanimously witness. That is why I want to dedicate the final paragraphs of this paper to suggestions and claims made by Christian theologians, who are actively involved in interreligious dialogue. This is

what is meant by the dynamic dialectics of practice and theory or, by doing not just theology for dialogue, but also a theology of dialogue. What follows then are some of the most important themes of systematic theology which may perhaps need some rethinking in light of the ongoing interreligious encounter in our fastly globalizing world. This is at least what the systematic teologians involved in interreligious dialogue suggest as they reflect on what is going on.

Revelation: what is the scope and possible salvific value of general relevation,[77] or original revelation,[78] or revealed types[79] and what is the relation between this and special revelation?

Trinity: does the trinitarian plurality in deity provide a basis for an inclusivist theology of religions?[80] How should we respond to the claim that the trinitarian doctrine is just a particularly Christian expression of the universal cosmotheandric reality?[81]

Anthropology: what are the implications of humankind's unity and dignity based in being created to God's image? What is the nature of human cognitive capacity after the Fall and what is the nature of man's perceptivity towards God's universal self-communication (Tillich contra Barth, Netland contra Plantinga)

Hamartiology: does the biblical doctrine of the Fall and human depravity allow for the soteriological optimism of Evangelical inclusivists?[82]

Soteriology: are the Roman Catholic notions of implicit faith and baptism by desire (Tridentinum) or even anonymous Christianity[83] biblically defensible? Can we speak of universal translatability and presence of the Christ principle (orig. "the name of Christ"[84])?

Christology: is the proposed shift from traditional Christology to sacramental Christology or Spirit Christology biblically defensible?[85] How should we respond to the proposal to demythologize the myth of God incarnate and decipher the metaphor of God incarnate?[86]

Pneumatology: can we defend biblically an independence of the Spirit on the Word or even reject the filioque phrase in our trinitarian creed?[87]

Ecclesiology: who belongs to the invisible church?[88] What is the balanced biblically founded relation of its mission and dialogue?[89] How should we develop a contextual, incarnational theology in non-European contexts?

Eschatology: can we legitimately join forces with responsible adherents of other religions in the eschatological movement of implementing the principles of God's kingdom and work on transforming the world to its likeness and prepare thereby its eschatological coming?[90]

As we can see there is a lot of work ahead of us.[91] In fact, I believe that developing an Evangelical public theology of religions and interreligious dialogue is one of the most important tasks for Evangelical theologians in the next decades.[92] As I tried to show, it concerns all main topics of systematic theology, not just minor revisions of missiological strategy.[93]

Conclusion

I think it is safe to conclude in light of what has been said so far that we certainly *should* engage in interreligious dialogue. And we should do it on both doctrinal-conceptual and social-ethical levels (not on the spiritual level in the syncretistic sense, I suggest). We need to know and study other religions well, not just from textbooks, but from first hand experience, in order to witness to their adherents effectively and cooperate with them in common tasks. Moreover, dialogue meetings are actually a good opportunity for our witness to take place. Yet we must not be naively optimistic about the mutual translatability of the languages different religions speak. We must respect the otherness of the Other.

And finally, I think the many problems, tensions and crises of contemporary world should motivate us to join with all people of good will[94] to work for justice, peace, love and solidarity (i.e. to develop and apply a solid public theology) on local, national and international levels. In this effort, we should be open and able (i.e. qualified) to work with honest adherents of other religions, because religious traditions have ethical and motivational resources, usually much stronger and more effective than those of secular humanism. These motivational resources are ambivalent,[95] they can be both very positive and very negative. The desirable outcome of the social-ethical dialogue is therefore twofold: 1) to address together the needs of contemporary world and 2) to reduce xenophobia and tame the related interreligious animosity and work thereby for global peace. This should all be done within the eschatological horizon of *missio Dei*, of God's command to implement the principles of His eternal kingdom, until He comes.

As we are faithful in this engagement, the foundations for a public theology of religions will gradually emerge and take shape, as we interact with

our neighbours of other faiths and reflect on that interaction in light of Scripture.

Notes

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4 Thiselton A.C.., *The Two Horizons*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1980, 314ff.
5 Thiselton, *The Two Horizons*, 306.
6 Grenz, Franke, *Beyond*, 130ff.
7 Tillich P., *Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality*, The Univ. Of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1955, 1ff, 85, see also on Tillich's notion of correlation Grigg R., *Symbol and Empowerment*, Mercer UP, Macon, 1985, 53ff.
8 Lundin R., Thiselton A., Walhout C., *The Responsibility of Hermeneutics*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1985, 79ff, Thiselton, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1992, 515ff.
9 Dupuis J., *Christianity and the Religions*, Orbis, New York, 2002, 10.
10 Dupuis, *Christianity*, 8.
11 Thiselton, *The Two Horizons*, 308.
12 Stackhouse M., *Public Theology and Political Economy*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1987, xi.
13 Atherton J., *Public Theology for Changing Times*, SPCK, London, 2nn, 13ff.
14 Netland H., *Encountering Religious Pluralism*, IVP, Downers Grove, 2001, 309. A short history of the Evangelical debate on the issue of religious pluralism (till 2000) see in McDermott, *Can Evangelicals Learn from World Religions?*, IVP, Downers Grove, 2000, 21ff.
15 About these trends see Atherton, *Public Theology*, chap. 3.
16 About these trends see Hexham's essay 'Evangelical Illusions', in Stackhouse, *No Other Gods Before Me?*, Baker, Grand Rapids, 2001, 137ff.
17 Dupuis, *Christianity*, 3, Netland, *Encountering*, 308.
18 Stackhouse, *Public Theology*, 157ff.
19 Anderson N., *Christianity and World Religions*, IVP, Leicester, 1984, 176ff.
20 For the historical survey of these developments see Dupuis J., *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, Orbis, New York, 1997, and also Kärkainen V., *An Introduction to the Theology of Religions*, IVP, Downers Grove, 2003.
21 Netland, *Encountering*, chapters 1.-4.
22 For the (as many suggest) first formulation of these three paradigms see Race A., *Christian and Religious Pluralism: Patterns in the Christian Theology of Religions*, London SCM Press 1993, 10ff.
23 Knitter P., *Introducing Theologies of Religions*, Orbis, New York, 2002, 19ff.
24 Netland, *Encountering*, 24nn, see also Richard R.,, *The Population of Heaven*, Moody Press, Chicago, 1994.
25 Rommen E., Netland H., *Christianity and the Religions: A Biblical Theology of World Religions*, W. Carey Library, Pasadena, 1995, 56ff.
26 Rommen, Netland, *Christianity*, 72ff.
27 See Kärkkainen, *Introduction*, 63ff.
28 Netland, *Encountering*, 29.
29 Knitter, *Introducing*, 63ff.
30 On the development of Catholic official teaching on this issue see Fornberg T., *The Problem of Christianity in Multi-religious Societies Today*, E.Mellen Press, Leviston, 1995, 15ff.
31 Pinnock C., A Wideness in *God's Mercy*, Grand Rapids, 1992, Sanders J., *No Other Name*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1992, for a response to these two proponents of Evangelical inclusivism see Richard, *The Population of Heaven*.
32 Heim M., *The Depth of the Riches*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 2001, 83-84.
33 Daniélou J., *Holy Pagans of the Old Testament*, Longman, Green and Co., London, 1957.
34 See Ariarajah, *The Bible and People of Other Faiths*, WCC, Geneva, 1993, 6ff.
35 Dupuis, *Toward*, 53ff.
36 Farquhar J.N., *The Crown of Hinduism*, Oxford UP, London, 1913.
37 Boublik V., *Teologie mimok es anskych náboženství*, Karm. Nakl., Kostelni Vydri, 2000, 237.
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39 Boublik, *Teologie*, 320.
40 Knitter, *Introducing*, 109ff.
41 Hick's essay in Hick and Knitter, *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness*, Orbis, New York, 1989, 16ff.
42 Hick in Hick and Knitter, *The Myth*, 23, 30.
43 Ariarajah, *The Bible*, 19ff, and also Samartha, *Courage for Dialogue*, Orbis, New York, 1981, 88ff.
44 See Stendhal's essay in Anderson G. and Stransky T., *Christ's Lordship and Religious Pluralism*, Orbis, New York, 1981, 14.
45 On this idea see Hillman E., *Many Paths*, Orbis, New York, 1989, 24ff.
46 Heim, *The Depth*, 17ff.
47 See more on this alternative typology in Kärkkainen's *Introduction to the Theology of Religions*.
48 Dupuis, *Toward*, 193f.
49 Netland, *Encountering*, 325ff
50 This basic principle of Lévinas' philosophy is taken into theology of religion by David Tracy, see his *Dialogue with the Other*, Eerdmans, New York, 1991.
51 Knitter, *Introducing*, 222.
52 Adams D., *Cross-cultural Theology*, John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1987.
53 Dupuis, *Toward*, 9.

54 Dupuis, *Christianity*, 236nn, see also in this context Cornille, *Many Mansions? Multiple Religious Belonging and Christian Identity*, Orbis, New York, 2002.
55 Hick and Knitter, *The Myth*, 53ff.
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59 See W.C. Smith's essay in Swidler, *Toward*, 51ff.
60 Lindbeck G., *The Nature of Doctrine*, Westminster John Knox Press, Philadelphia, 1984, 129.
61 Thiselton, *The Two Horizons*, 379nn, see also Netland, *Encountering*, 284ff.
62 Lindbeck, *The Nature*, 52ff.
63 See his 'Religion as a Cultural System', in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Basic Books, 1973, 87-125.
64 See his and T. Luckmann's *The Social Construction of Reality,* Doubleday and Co., 1967.
65 Lindbeck, *The Nature*, 33.
66 For an example of how Wittgenstein's linguistic philosophy applies on religion (Christianity) see Thiselton, *The Two Horizons*, 386ff.
67 See a similar view in the Barthian study of interreligious relations in D. Lochhead, *Dialogical Imperative*, Orbis, New York, 1988, 31ff.
68 Lindbeck, *The Nature*, 32ff, see also Hillman, *Many Paths*, 4-23.
69 McGrath A., *Intellectuals Don't Need God*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1993, 110ff.
70 See Atherton, *Public Theology*, 10-12.
71 Niebuhr, R.H., *Christ and Culture*, Harper Torchbooks, New York, 190ff.
72 See Dupuis, *Toward*, 193n, Knitter, *Introducing*, 143.
73 Atherton, *Public Theology*, 14ff.
74 See Küng H., *Global Responsibility*, SCM Press, London, 1991, 55ff.
75 Samartha, *Courage for Dialogue*, 121ff.
76 Küng, *Global Responsibility*, 71ff, 107ff.
77 See Demarest B., *General Revelation: Historical Views and Contemporary Issues*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1982.
78 The so called *Urmonotheismus* (W. Schmid), see W. Corduan, *Tapestry of Faiths*, IVP, Downers Grove, 2002.
79 On this notion see McDermott's book *Can Evangelicals Learn from World Religions?*, and also McDermott's essay in Stackhouse, *No Other Gods*, 17ff
80 For this question see particularly D'Costa's *The Meeting of Religions and the Trinity*, Orbis, New York, 2000 and Heim's *The Depth of the Riches: A Trinitarian Theology of Religious Ends*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 2001.
81 See Panikkar R., *The Trinity and the Religious Experience of Man*, Orbis, New York, 1973.
82 See particularly from the above mentioned books Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy* and Sanders, *No Other Name*.
83 See Pandiapallil J., *Jesus the Christ and Religious Pluralism*, Crossroad Pub. O., New York, 2001, 91ff.
84 See Dawe's essay in Dawe D. and Carman J., *Christian Faith in a Religiously Plural World*, Orbis, New York, 1978, 13ff.
85 See Knitter, *Introducing*, 150ff.
86 Hick, *The Metaphor of God Incarnate,* Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, 1993, 99ff.
87 About this proposal, see the book by A. Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions*, Baker, Grand Rapids, 2003.
88 See the ecclesiological shift of post II Vatican Roman Catholic Magisterium.
89 See especially the book *Mission and Dialogue* by M. Nazir-Ali, SPCK, London, 1995.
90 See Knitter, *Introducing*, 134ff.
91 Netland, *Encountering*, 313. For a proposal or a project of an Evangelical theology of religions see Stackhouse, *No Other Gods*, 189ff.
92 Similarly Burkhardt, *Ein Gott in allen Religionen?*, Brunnen/Verlag, Giessen, 1993, 8.
93 Similarly Tracy, *Dialogue with the Other,* xi.
94 Küng, *Global Responsibility*, 36ff.
95 See Küng, *Global Responsibility*, 36.

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Book Reviews – Recensions – Buchbesprechungen

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Geschichte des Pietismus, Bd. 4 Glaubenswelt und Lebenswelten

Hartmut Lehmann (Hrsg.)

Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2004, 710 pp., Ln., 86,– ISBN 3-525-55349-8

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der letzte Band der vierbändigen Geschichte des Pietismus erschließt das Thema in thematischen Längsschnitten in vielfältiger Weise. Viele Aspekte des Pietismus wurden dabei behandelt, besonders auch seine Interaktion mit Psychologie, Medizin, Literatur, Musik und anderen Gebieten. Es wird aber auch bewusst, dass in vielen Bereichen auch grundlegende Forschungen erst noch zu leisten sind. Insgesamt ist die nun abgeschlossene Herausgabe des Werkes sehr zu würdigen.

SUMMARY

The final volume of the four-volume history of Pietism unfolds the theme by thematic sections in a variety of ways. Many aspects of Pietism are treated in this manner, and of particular interest is its interaction with psychology, medicine, literature, music and other areas. The work is also aware that in many areas the research work of a groundlaying sort still awaits. Overall this now completed edition of the work is to be much appreciated.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce quatrième et dernier volume de la série consacrée à l'histoire du piétisme comporte plusieurs sections thématiques variées. De nombreux aspects du piétisme sont ainsi abordés. On notera les interactions avec la psychologie, la médecine, la littérature, la musique ainsi que d'autres domaines. Les auteurs sont aussi conscients que des travaux de recherches restent à faire dans de nombreux domaines. Dans l'ensemble, l'édition complète de l'ouvrage sera fort appréciée.

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Mit dem 4. Band kommt die von der „Historischen Kommission zur Erforschung des Pietismus" inaugurierte „Geschichte des Pietismus" zu ihrem Abschluss. Damit liegt ein wahrhaft voluminöses Werk vor! Die Verlagsankündigung spricht zurecht von „der ersten großen allgemeinverständlichen und internationalen Zusammenfassung der Geschichte des Pietismus in diesem Jahrhundert". Bescheidenheit in allen Ehren: aber dies gilt nicht nur im Hinblick auf das gerade angefangene Jahrhundert, sondern für die bisherige Geschichte der Erforschung des Pietismus insgesamt. Dass dieses Projekt nur als Gemeinschaftswerk von Wissenschaftlern aus den verschiedensten Fachgebieten durchgeführt werden konnte, liegt auf der Hand. Neben Theologinnen und Theologen waren vor allem Historiker, Germanisten, Pädagogen, Musikwissenschaftler etc. maßgeblich beteiligt.

Was für das Werk als Ganzes gilt, trifft auch für den letzten Band zu. Gerade er stellt ein interdisziplinäres Gemeinschaftswerk dar. Darin liegt eine erste Ursache für seinen besonderen Reiz, weil auf diese Weise zum Teil ganz neue Perspektiven auf das Phänomen des Pietismus eröffnet werden. Das führt z. Bsp. dazu, dass noch unbeackerte Forschungsgebiete erkennbar werden, wozu die Bedeutung des Pietismus für Medizin und Psychologie, für Naturwissenschaft und Technik, für Musik und Kunst, für Sprache und Literatur gehört (vgl. S. 15). Bisweilen führt der interdisziplinäre Blickwinkel auch zu einer Vertiefung von Erkenntnissen zu theologischen und frömmigkeitsgeschichtlichen Aspekten des Pietismus. Schließlich erfolgt in einzelnen Fällen sogar eine Revision traditioneller Ergebnisse der theologischen Pietismusforschung. Das zeigt sich besonders eindrücklich, wenn man das vorliegende Buch mit Albrecht Ritschls 1880–1886 erschienenen dreibändigen „Geschichte des Pietismus" vergleicht. Während Ritschl sich darum bemühte, den Nachweis zu führen, dass der Pietismus eine Entartung reformatorischen Christentums darstellt, begründet der 4. Band, dass der Pietismus tatsächlich die bedeutendste religiöse Erneuerungsbewegung im Protestantismus seit der Reformation ist.

Besonders anregend ist der 4. Band zweitens wegen seines von den drei übrigen Bänden abweichenden Aufbaus. Während die ersten drei Bände die Entwicklung des Pietismus in chronologischer Perspektive darstellen, d. h. die großen Epochen des Pietismus nacheinander behandelt werden, verlässt der letzte Band dieses Ordnungsschema. Er geht nach systematischen Gesichtspunkten vor. „Das heißt, dass hier das Selbstverständnis und die Eigentraditionen des Pietismus ausführlich dargelegt und dessen Wirkungen und Ausstrahlungen in den unterschiedlichen Bereichen des historischen Lebens untersucht werden" (so der Herausgeber Hartmut Lehmann in seinem Vorwort S. V). Dadurch wird es möglich, wesentliche Themen aus der Geschichte des Pietismus ausführlicher zur Darstellung zu bringen als das in den ersten drei Bänden der Fall war. Zudem wird dadurch die Relevanz des Pietismus für Glauben und Leben in der Moderne deutlicher erkennbar.

Noch aus einem dritten Grund verdient der letzte Band der „Geschichte des Pietismus" gewürdigt zu werden: Es ist wohl nicht zuletzt das Verdienst des Herausgebers, dass dieser Band nicht nur den Abschluss eines Forschungsprojekts markiert, sondern auch unerledigte Aufgaben der Pietismusforschung für die Zukunft vor

Augen stellt. Das geschieht explizit und implizit in vielen Einzelbeiträgen des Bandes, speziell aber in der Einführung von Hartmut Lehmann unter der Überschrift „Probleme und Aufgaben der Pietismusforschung". Zunächst nennt Lehmann das Problem der Sprache bzw. Sprachen des Pietismus, dann die Frage nach dem Verhältnis des Pietismus zu anderen religiösen Bewegungen. Heute ist besonders seine Stellung zum christlichen Fundamentalismus brisant. Gerade an dieser Stelle werden die unterschiedlichen theologischen Positionen der Mitarbeiter und Mitarbeiterinnen der vorliegenden „Geschichte des Pietismus" erkennbar. Manche ordnen den Pietismus selbstverständlich unter die fundamentalistischen Bewegungen ein. Lehmann ist vorsichtiger, indem er feststellt: „Bislang ist offen, ob der Begriff Fundamentalismus zu mehr taugt als zu Polemik" (S. 11). Eine weitere ungeklärte Frage ist nach Lehmann die nach den Ursachen von Ausbreitung, Entfaltung und partiellem Niedergang des Pietismus und die Frage, welche Rolle dabei bestimmte pietistische Zentren wie Halle, Herrnhut und Basel gespielt haben. Weiterer Erforschung bedürfen auch viele anthropologische Aspekte des Pietismus wie zum Bsp. der Umgang mit Geburt und Tod, mit beruflichem Stress, mit Erfolg und Versagen, mit Leiden. Dazu kommt schließlich, wie Lehmann zurecht feststellt, die noch weithin ausstehende ethnologisch orientierte Aufarbeitung des Materials aus Missionsarchiven zur Geschichte und Kultur jener Regionen, in denen pietistische Missionen seit dem 18. Jahrhundert gearbeitet haben.

Das vorliegende Werk stellt in formaler Hinsicht eine redaktionelle Großleistung dar. Auch die graphische Gestaltung des letzten Bandes ist ansprechend und gediegen. 27 Abbildungen stellen eine zum Teil unerlässliche Illustrationshilfe zum geschriebenen Text dar (das gilt besonders für den Abschnitt über Architektur und Kunst – S. 457ff). Die ausgewählten Literaturhinweise am Anfang jedes Unterabschnitts und die in den Anmerkungen nachgewiesene Literatur stellen eine gute Zugangsmöglichkeit zu den wichtigsten neuen und alten Veröffentlichungen zum Thema dar. Gewünscht hätte man sich neben dem Personenregister ein ausführliches Sachregister. Immerhin stellt das ausführliche Inhaltsverzeichnis eine gute Erschließungshilfe des Buches dar.

Das Buch ist inhaltlich so reich an Erkenntnissen und Entdeckungen, dass an dieser Stelle nur eine knappe Skizze von Aufbau und Inhalt vorgelegt werden kann. Auch muss eine kritische Würdigung der einzelnen Unterkapitel unterbleiben. Das Buch weist sechs, unterschiedlich lange Kap. auf. Dabei stellen die Kap. 2 – 4 die inhaltlich entscheidenden dar. Ihnen ist das bereits behandelte Kap. 1 (Einführung) vorgeschaltet. Das 5. Kap. enthält einen knappen Essay zur bleibenden Bedeutung des Pietismus. Das sich anschließende letzte Kap. thematisiert die Geschichte der historischen Kommission zur Erforschung des Pietismus, die für das Gesamtwerk verantwortlich zeichnet. Die Darstellung lässt erkennen, dass die Arbeit der Kommission in den genau vierzig Jahren ihres Bestehens (die konstituierende Sitzung fand 1964 statt) nicht ohne Spannungen erfolgte. Umso erfreulicher, dass rechtzeitig zum Jubiläum die vierbändige „Geschichte des Pietismus" ihren Abschluss gefunden hat. Die Hauptkapitel 2 – 4 enthalten insgesamt 25 Tiefenbohrungen, in denen die Themenfelder behandelt werden, die für den Pietismus entscheidend waren bzw. noch sind. Kap. 2 umfasst sieben Untersuchungen zu theologischen, religiösen und kirchengeschichtlichen Aspekten des Pietismus (es geht dabei um die Zukunftserwartung, um Bekehrung und Wiedergeburt, um Frömmigkeit und Gebet, um die Bibel, um Gesangbuch, die Stellung zu den Juden und die Mission). Kap. 3 thematisiert geistige, wissenschaftliche und kulturelle Aspekte (unter den Überschriften: „Eigenkultur und Traditionsbildung", „Pfarrer und Theologen", „Philosophie", „Pädagogik am Beispiel August Hermann Franckes", „Psychologie", „Medizin und Pharmazie", „Naturwissenschaft und Technik …", „Die Literatur des Pietismus …", „Die Sprache Canaan …", „Musik", „Architektur und Kunst"). In Kap. 4 schließlich geht es um ethische, soziale, wirtschaftliche und politische Aspekte (die Themen sind: Absonderung und neue Gemeinschaft, Ehe, Familie und Kinder, Frauen, Weltverständnis und Handeln in der Welt, Wirtschaft, Soziales, Politik). Dass die einzelnen Unterkapitel von unterschiedlicher Qualität sind, versteht sich beinahe von selbst. Alle Autoren bemühen sich jedoch um eine gerechte Darstellung, indem sie die positiven, der Zukunft zugewandten Seiten des Pietismus hervorheben, ohne seine Schwächen zu verschweigen.

Zum Schluss seien noch einige wenige kritische Bemerkungen erlaubt. Etwas erstaunt ist der Leser, dass nur eine Autorin, die Hamburger Privatdozentin Ruth Albrecht, an dem vorliegenden Band beteiligt war, und zwar beim Thema Frauen. Wie verträgt sich damit die Erkenntnis, dass zumindest der ältere Pietismus eine „frauenbewegte Erscheinung" (Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel) war und der Frau erstmals im Protestantismus in größerem Maßstab zu eigenverantwortlicher Mitarbeit in der Gemeinde verholfen hat. Beinahe durchgängig lässt sich außerdem beobachten, dass die Versuche des Pietismus, an neutestamentlichen bzw. urchristlichen Erkenntnissen anzuknüpfen, keine angemessene Berücksichtigung findet. Viele Erscheinungen des Pietismus lassen sich m. E. nur auf diesem Hintergrund interpretieren und angemessen würdigen. Schließlich frage ich mich, ob angesichts des Umfangs des Gesamtwerks ein fünfseitiger Essay wirklich ausreicht, um die Zukunftsfähigkeit des Pietismus zu thematisieren. Ich stimme durchaus mit Martin Kruse überein, wenn er an der Bibelbegeisterung, der Gemeinschaftspflege und der Orientierung am allgemeinen Priestertum wesentliche Aspekte dieser Zukunftsfähigkeit festmacht. Nur kann das angesichts der Fülle der im 4. Band neu ausgebreiteten Erkenntnisse und Einsichten nicht das abschließende Wort in dieser Angelegenheit bleiben.

Peter Zimmerling, Mannheim, Deutschland

Theologie des Neuen Testaments I: Die Vielfalt des Neuen Testaments. Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums

Theologie des Neuen Testaments II: Die Einheit des Neuen Testaments. Thematische Darstellung

Ferdinand Hahn

Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002. Vol. I: 858 pp., 49,--, pb. ISBN 3-16-147950-5; Vol. II: 869 pp., 49,--, pb. ISBN 3-16-147951-3

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die beiden umfangreichen Bände (zusammen 1728 S.) sind die Zusammenfassung des theologischen Denkens und Alterswerk eines der führenden deutschen Neutestamentler. Im ersten Band erarbeitet Hahn die Theologiegeschichte der urchristlichen Schriften. Im zweiten Band werden nach einführenden Kapiteln über die Bedeutung des AT die zentralen Inhalte des NT themenorientiert und unter dem Leitgedanken des Offenbarungshandelns Gottes dargestellt (Christologie, Soteriologie, Ekklesiologie und Eschatologie). Während andere NT Theologien sich bemühen, die Unterschiedlichkeit und auch Unvereinbarkeit der einzelnen neutestamentlichen Schriften und ihrer Theologie zu betonen, zeigt Hahn, dass das NT sehr wohl eine einheitliche Theologie hat, bei Unterschieden im Detail. Das Zusammenkommen und wechselseitige Bezogensein beider Darstellungsformen neutestamentlicher Theologie in einem Entwurf ist einzigartig. Gerade im zweiten Band können evangelikale Leser viel lernen und den großen Linien des NT nachspüren. Dort finden sich auch wertvolle Vorarbeiten für die Systematische Theologie.

SUMMARY

The two capacious volumes (amounting to 1728 pages) are the collection of the theological thinking and later work of one of the leading German New Testament scholars. In the first volume Hahn studies the history of theology of the early Christian scriptures. After introductory chapters on the significance of the Old Testament the second volume gives room for the central content of the New Testament and represents it under the key idea of the Revelatory activity of God (Christology, Soteriology, Ecclesiolog and Eschatology). While other New Testament theologians are keen to emphasise the diversity and also non-unifiable nature of the individual NT writings and their theologies, Hahn shows that the NT does indeed have a unified theology with differences in details. The bringing together and interacting of both ways of describing NT theology in an outline is exceptional. In the second volume the evangelical reader can learn much and trace the great lines of the NT and in that encounter a valuable preparatory work for Systematic Theology.

RÉSUMÉ

Ces deux énormes volumes (totalisant 1728 pages) recueillent la pensée théologique et les dernières œuvres d'une figure de proue des spécialistes allemands du Nouveau Testament. Le premier volume est une étude de l'histoire de la théologie des premiers écrits chrétiens. Le second volume comporte des chapitres d'introduction au rôle de l'Ancien Testament, puis l'auteur se penche sur le contenu central du Nouveau Testament qu'il aborde à l'aide de la notion clé de l'action révélatrice de Dieu (la christologie, la sotériologie, l'ecclésiologie et l'eschatologie). D'autres spécialistes du Nouveau Testament insistent sur la diversité des différents écrits du Nouveau Testament et de leur théologie, voire sur l'impossibilité d'en obtenir une vision unifiée, Hahn montre que le Nouveau Testament a véritablement une théologie unifiée, même s'il présente des différences quant aux détails. La présentation et l'examen des deux manières de décrire la théologie du Nouveau Testament est exceptionnelle. Dans ce second volume, le lecteur de conviction évangélique peut apprendre beaucoup et retrouver les grandes lignes du Nouveau Testament, ce qui peut constituer pour lui une préparation utile à la théologie systématique.

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Nachdem die *Theologie des NT* von Rudolf Bultmann mehrere Jahrzehnte die deutschsprachige, aber auch die internationale Diskussion bestimmt hatte (10. Aufl., 2002), meldeten sich L. Goppelt und J. Jeremias (neben den kleineren Beitragen von H. Conzelmann, W. G. Kümmel, E. Lohse, L. Morris, G. E. Ladd, etc.) mit alternativen Zugängen und Ergebnissen zu Wort. Zu diesen Standardwerken gesellen sich seit Anfang der neunziger Jahre eine ganze Reihe größerer deutschsprachiger ntl Theologien verschiedener Ausrichtungen. Während G. Strecker bewusst eine *Theologie des NT (Bearbeitet, ergänzt und herausgegeben von F. W. Horn,* GLB; Berlin, New York: WdG, 1996; vgl. meine Rez. *NT* 39, 1997, 200-202) vorlegte, wollen P. Stuhlmacher (*Biblische Theologie des NT, I: Grundlegung, Von Jesus zu Paulus*, 2. Aufl.; Göttingen: V&R, 1997; *II: Von der Paulusschule bis zur Johannesoffenbarung*, 1999) und H. Hübner (*Biblische Theologie des NT I-III*; Göttingen: V&R, 1990-95) bewusst eine *Biblische Theologie* des NT betreiben (vgl. auch G. Kittel und J. Gnilka, *Theologie des NT*, HThKNT.S 5; Freiburg, etc: Herder, 1994). Die neuesten Beiträge sind die auf mehrere Bände angelegte *Theologie des NT* von U. Wilckens (*I: Geschichte der urchristlichen Theologie: Teilband 1. Geschichte des Wirkens Jesu in Galiläa*; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2002; *Teilband 2: Jesu Tod und Auferstehung und die Entstehung der Kirche aus Juden und Heiden*, 2003; meine Rez., *JET* 17, 2003, 287-91; 18, 2004, 277-290 und C. Böttrich, *EvTh* 64, 2004, 228-234) und die vorliegenden Bände von F. Hahn, einem der Altmeister deutscher universitärer ntl Wissenschaft (vgl. auch die interessanten gesamtbiblischen Theologien von B. S. Childs, *Die Theologie der einen Bibel I-II*; Darmstadt: WBG, 2003 und C. H. Scobie, *The Way of Our God: An Approach to Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids, Cambridge, U.K.: Eerdmans, 2003, rez. P. Stuhlmacher, *ThLZ* 129, 2004, 777-779).

In ihrer Unterteilung und gegenseitigen Zuordnung

sind Hahns Bände einzigartig. H. bietet im ersten Band „Die Vielfalt des NT" eine historisch orientierte Darstellung der *Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums* (so wie die oben erwähnten Werke). Im zweiten Band „Die Einheit des NT" versucht H. eine thematische Darstellung ntl Theologie, wie sie auf Deutsch sonst nur mit K.-H. Schelkle, *Theologie des NT I-IV* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1968-1974) und E. Stauffer, *Die Theologie des NT* (4. Aufl., Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1948) und auf Englisch mit D. Guthrie, *NT Theology: A Thematic Study* (Leicester/ Downers Grove: IVP, 1981) und G. B. Caird, *NT Theology* (L. D. Hurst, Hrsg., Oxford: Clarendon, 1995; vgl. meine Rez. *EJT* 9, 2000, 96-98) vorliegen. Meines Wissens gibt es kein vergleichbares Unternehmen eines Autors.

H.s Ziel ist es, nicht nur die Vielfalt des urchristl. Zeugnisses zu berücksichtigen, sondern anhand einzelner Themen auch dessen Einheit zu erfassen:

> Eine Behandlung der verschiedenen Überlieferungskomplexe kann nicht mehr sein als eine Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums. Auf diese Weise werden zwar die Besonderheiten und die ganze Vielfalt innerhalb des NT berücksichtigt, aber es wird nur bedingt die innere Zusammengehörigkeit erkennbar. Es genügt nicht, in einem kurzen Schlusskapitel lediglich nach der Mitte des NT zu fragen, sondern es muss anhand der zentralen Themen aufgezeigt werden, wie sich die Einheit bestimmen läßt. So ergibt sich eine Zweiteilung, bei der auf die Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums eine thematisch orientierte Darstellung des urchristl. Zeugnisses folgt (vii).

(I) Im *ersten Band* zeichnet H. die Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums nach. Er beginnt mit einem Forschungsüberblick, umschreibt die Grundsatzfragen, ob Verkündigung, Wirken und Geschichte Jesu Bestandteil der ntl Theologie sein sollen oder nicht und die Frage nach dem Verhältnis von Vielfalt und Einheit im NT. H. bejaht die erste Frage und sieht im zweiten Anliegen den Schwerpunkt seiner Arbeit:

> Die Einheit des NT darf keinesfalls einfach vorausgesetzt werden; sie muss kritisch erarbeitet werden aufgrund der Analyse der verschiedenen Traditionen. Sie muss von Vielfalt und den bisweilen durchaus vorhandenen Widersprüchen ausgehen. Das ist aber nur dort möglich, wo anhand aller behandelten Themen die Einheitsfrage gestellt und beantwortet wird. Das kann nicht im Zusammenhang einer Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums geschehen, sondern erfordert einen eigenen Arbeitsgang, bei dem nach thematischen Gesichtspunkten vorzugehen ist. ... ein themenorientierter Entwurf, der nach den Gemeinsamkeiten und der Einheit des urchristl. Zeugnisses fragt. Gerade dieses Nebeneinander soll sicherstellen, dass die Frage nach der Einheit nicht vorschnell beantwortet wird, sondern dass dabei die durch die Vielfalt der Zeugnisse sich ergebenden Probleme Berücksichtigung finden. Umgekehrt soll durch den theologiegeschichtl. Teil das je eigene Gewicht der verschiedenen urchristl. Traditionen und Schriften zur Geltung kommen" (26).

Der erste Teil untersucht die „Verkündigung und Wirken Jesu und die Rezeption der Jesus-Überlieferung durch die Urgemeinde" (30-125). Teil zwei gilt der „Verkündigung und Theologie der ältesten christl. Gemeinden" (128-178). Dem folgen „Die Theologie des Apostels Paulus" (180-329) und die Theologie der Paulusschule (332-384). Der fünfte Teil widmet sich den „theologischen Konzeptionen der von Paulus unabhängigen hellenistisch-judenchristl. Schriften des Urchristentums" (386-475; Jak, 1Petr, Hebr, Off). Dann beschreibt H. die „theologischen Konzeptionen der synoptischen Evv und der Apg" (478-583). Teil sieben zeichnet die johanneische Theologie nach (586-732). Abschließend beschreibt H. den „Übergang zur Theologiegeschichte des 2. Jh." (734-62), den er im Judas- und 2. Petrusbrief sieht (mit einem knappen Überblick über die *Apostolischen Väter*). Der erste Band schließt mit einem Rückblick auf die Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums (763-770; Literaturübersichten 771-834 – in denen H. auch auf seine vielfältigen „Vorarbeiten" zu dieser umfassenden Darstellung hinweist -, Register 835-858).

Methodisch bleibt bei diesem traditionellen Aufriss die Trennung von hist. Jesus und der Evangelienüberlieferung, von Urgemeinde und Apg sowie die Trennung des pln Befundes nach den Kriterien der krit. Einleitungswissenschaft fragwürdig. Im übrigen ist sie nicht nur von Evangelikalen an vielen Stellen überzeugend hinterfragt worden. Im gängigen hist.-krit. Paradigma hat H. jedoch einen gut verständlichen Überblick gegeben.

(II) Interessanter als der in der Konzeption und Durchführung traditionellen Bahnen folgende erste Band ist die thematische Darstellung „Die Einheit des NT" im *zweiten Band*, die zeigen möchte, „wie die vielfältigen urchristl. Zeugnisse inhaltlich zusammengehören" (vii). Aus der Perspektive der Exegese geht es darum, die Einheit durch die zusammenfassende Aufarbeitung zentraler Themen unter dem Überbegriff des Offenbarungshandelns Gottes zu eruieren. H. beschreibt zunächst in der Aufgabenstellung (1-36) die Möglichkeit einer solchen Darstellung und ihr methodische Durchführbarkeit. Dann folgt ein hervorragenden Überblick, wie man in der Forschung die Frage nach der Einheit des NT behandelt hat, nämlich Verzicht auf die Bestimmung der Einheit, prinzipielle und /oder faktische Unmöglichkeit, die Einheit aufzuzeigen, bedingter Verzicht auf die Bestimmung der Einheit in der Suche nach einem Kanon im Kanon und in der Orientierung an der „Mitte" des NT sowie verschiedene Bemühungen um eine Bestimmung (B. Weiß, A. Schlatter und P. Feine, O. Cullmann; M. Albertz und K. H. Schelkle, H. Schlier – dem sich H. in vielem verpflichtet weiß, ja dessen Forderung nach einer inhaltlich-thematischen Darstellung umsetzt, „dass die ntl Botschaft als konkretes Zeugnis einer an den Einzelaussagen aufzeigbaren Zusammenfassung und einer Darlegung der inneren Einheit bedarf, ist nicht nur

berechtigt, sie läßt sich auch durchführen", 806, auch W. Thüsing und weitere Beiträge). Ferner umreißt H. die Durchführung einer nach der Einheit fragenden Theologie des NT (23-29: Verhältnis zur Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums, ntl Kanon als Grundlage, das Offenbarungshandeln Gottes als Leitgedanke, Aufbau und Gliederung), behandelt Sprache und Denkvoraussetzungen des NT (AT und Frühjudentum) und die sich stellenden fundamentaltheol. Aufgaben. Unter Gottes Offenbarungshandeln versteht H.:" Gott ist es, der alles geschaffen hat, der sich der Welt und den Menschen zuwendet und sich dadurch zu erkennen gibt. Gott ist es, der alle Geschicke der Welt leitet und sie zu seinem Ziel führt. Gott ist es, der sich der Menschen, die aus der Gemeinschaft mit ihm herausgefallen sind, annimmt und ihnen in der Geschichte und Person Jesu Christi den Weg zur Rettung öffnet" (27).

Im ersten Teil geht es um „Das AT als Bibel des Urchristentums" (38-142; das AT als Heilige Schrift und als Kanon, das AT als Zeugnis früheren und kommenden Gotteshandelns und die *interpretatio Christiana* des AT). Im NT ist „die Grundkonzeption theol. Denkens aufgrund der atl-frühjüd. Tradition beibehalten worden. Es ist nicht das von einer metaphysischen Ontologie herkommende Verstehen und Argumentieren, sondern ein Denken, für das Relationen und Funktionen, Partizipieren und Stellvertretung eine entscheidende Rolle spielen" (802). Auch ohne dass H. von einer *Biblischen* Theologie des NT spricht (vgl. Stuhlmacher und Hübner) wird in beiden Bänden durchgehend deutlich, dass er dem atl-frühjüd. Traditionsrahmen großes Gewicht beimisst. Hilfreich ist auch, dass H. immer wieder auf die Bedeutung der ntl Aussagen für den jüd.-christl. Dialog hinweist (vgl. sein *Die Verwurzelung des Christentums im Judentum: Exegetische Beiträge zum christl.-jüd. Gespräch*, Hrsg. C. Breytenbach; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1996).

Weitere vier Teile gelten zentralen Themen des NT. Zuerst beschreibt H. das „Offenbarungshandeln Gottes in Jesus Christus" (144-308) in seiner ntl Darstellung: der sich offenbarende Gott, die Verwirklichung der Herrschaft Gottes, Jesus Christus als Offenbarer Gottes, das Wirken des hl. Geistes und die implizit trinitarische Struktur des ntl Zeugnisses („Beabsichtigt ist, anhand des ntl Textbefundes zu zeigen, welche bibl. Voraussetzungen jeder Entwurf einer Trinitätslehre hat. Es soll sichtbar gemacht werden, dass sich die Frage nach einer Trinitätslehre aufgrund des urchristl. Zeugnisses gestellt hat und stellt. Es geht um die Beschreibung eines innerntl Befundes, und zwar im Blick auf die Fragen, die sich von dorther ergeben, aber nur ansatzweise beantwortet sind", 289).

Der dritte Teil untersucht die „Soteriologische Dimension des Offenbarungshandelns Gottes" (310-439: „Gottes Offenbarungshandeln ist Heilsgeschehen, wobei es im NT um das endgültige, wenn auch unabgeschlossene Heilsgeschehen geht", 800f). Dazu gehören Abschnitte zum Menschen und zur Welt in ihrer Geschöpflichkeit und Sündhaftigkeit, das Problem des Gesetzes, die geschehene Errettung von Mensch und Welt sowie das Evangelium als Proklamation und Vergegenwärtigung des Heils. Der Teil über die ekklesiologische Dimension des Offenbarungshandelns Gottes (442-736) umfasst viele Unterthemen: Nachfolge und Glaube, das Selbstverständnis der Jüngergemeinschaft, die christl. Taufe, das Mahl des Herren, Gebet, Bekenntnis und Gottesdienst, Charismen und Gemeindeleitung, die Verkündigung des Evangeliums unter Juden und Heiden und abschließend die ntl Ethik (Grundlagen für das christl. Leben, Leben in christl. Verantwortung). Im fünften Teil zeichnet H. die eschatologische Dimension des Offenbarungshandelns Gottes nach (738-798). Dazu gehören die bleibende Gegenwart des Heils und die Bedrängnis in der Welt sowie die zukünftige Vollendung des Heils. Der Band schließt mit einem „Rückblick auf die Erwägungen zur Einheit des NT" (799-806), Literaturübersichten (807-844) und Register (845-869).

Bei der Darstellung will H. die jeweils einschlägigen Texte nebeneinander besprechen und vergleichen: „Bei dem Vergleich müssen jeweils drei Aspekte berücksichtigt werden: Es sind die erkennbaren Gemeinsamkeiten festzustellen; sodann ist nach vorhandenen Spannungen und Widersprüchen zu fragen; und schließlich ist zu klären, wieweit gegebenenfalls offene, noch ungelöste Probleme bestehen. Insbesondere soll nach den theol. Konsequenzen gefragt werden, die sich aus der Gemeinsamkeit, dem ggf. spannungsreichen Nebeneinander oder aus noch offenen Problemen ergeben" (29). Ferner stellt H. an vielen Stellen bewusst die Frage nach der heutigen Bedeutung der ntl Aussagen (oft in den „Abschließenden Überlegungen" zu den einzelnen Abschnitten).

Bei den Einzelthemen zeigt sich nach H. „ein hohes Maß an Gemeinsamkeit. Soweit nicht dieselben Traditionen und Bekenntnisaussagen verwendet werden, liegt zumindest eine deutlich erkennbare Konvergenz vor. Das gilt vor allem dort, wo ein für den Glauben wesentl. Sachverhalt mit verschiedenen Motiven und Vorstellungen expliziert wird, wie etwa in der Christologie oder in den Aussagen über die ein-für-allemal geschehene Errettung vorliegt. Es trifft aber häufig auch dort zu, wo vordergründig eine erheblich abweichende Aussage gemacht wird, die gleichwohl dieselbe Intention erkennen läßt" (803). Spannungen und Widersprüche sieht H. dagegen in der Frage der Gotteserkenntnis und im Sündersein des Menschen, im Gesetzesverständnis, im Verhältnis von Glaube und Werke und in der Eschatologie (803f), wobei H. auch hier jeweils Gemeinsamkeiten hervorhebt. Beim ersten geht es um die vermeintlichen Unterschiede zwischen Lukas und Paulus. Hier bleibt H. dem Dibelius-Vielhauer-Conzelmann'schen Verständnis lukan. Theologie verhaftet, das an vielen Stellen überzeugend widerlegt wurde. Auch bei den anderen Punkten läßt sich m. E. zeigen, dass es sich nicht um unüberwindbare Gegensätze oder Widersprüche handelt, sondern um unterschiedliche Akzente, die auf verschiedenen Situationen und theol. Anliegen beruhen (so

auch H.:"Zu klären ist jeweils, ob bei vordergründigem Gegensatz nicht doch eine verwandte Tendenz zur Geltung kommt", die Spannungen weisen auf noch nicht hinreichend gelöste Sachverhalte hin) und „Die Divergenzen stehen in einem Gesamtrahmen, bei dem die Konvergenzen eindeutig dominieren" (805). Die einheitsstiftenden Komponenten sind der atl Gottesglaube, das Offenbarungshandeln Gottes in Jesus Christus und die erwartete Heilsvollendung. Die Einheit besteht nicht in Gleichförmigkeit, „sondern in einer vielgestaltigen Entfaltung der urchristl. Botschaft" (805). Ihr entscheidendes Kennzeichen ist, dass sie den Gottesglauben und Verheißungstradition des alten Bundes voraussetzt: „Auch dort, wo die unmittelbare Verbindung zur atl Tradition nicht mehr vorliegt, ist diese Grundintention weitergeführt worden. Die Erfahrungen, die mit Jesu irdischer Person, mit seinem Sterben und Auferstehen und seinem Wirken durch den Hl. Geist gemacht worden sind, wurden in die zentralen Strukturen des Glaubens Israels integriert" (805). Diese Bindung an das atl Zeugnis ist ein wesentlicher Aspekt der Einheit der urchristl. Botschaft. Und zugleich gilt:

> Die Integration des gegenwärtig gewordenen endzeitl. Heils in die atl Verheißungsgeschichte bedeutete umgekehrt eine qualitative Transformation. ... Es liegt eine weitgehende Einschmelzung des Glaubens und der Hoffnung Israels in die christl. Zeugnisse vor. Die Rezeption des atl Zeugnisses und dessen Neuinterpretation gehören zusammen, wobei das Christusgeschehen entscheidend ist. Das bereits im AT bezeugte Offenbarungshandeln Gottes kulminiert in Person und Geschichte Jesu Christi, die eine durchgängige Leitfunktion für das urchristl. Zeugnis besitzt (806).

Ferner weist das NT über sich hinaus. Es ist die Grundlage für alle christl. Verkündigung und bleibt zugleich nach vorne offen: „Es hat seine innere Einheit auch darin, dass das bezeugte Offenbarungsgeschehen noch unabgeschlossen ist und auf ein und dasselbe Ziel zuläuft. Insofern wird das vielfältige urchristl. Zeugnis nicht zuletzt dadurch zusammengehalten, dass es auf ein für uns unverfügbares Zukunftsgeschehen bezogen ist" (806). Obwohl diese Einheit für H. nicht unmittelbar vorliegt – viele schlichte Bibelleser mögen das anders empfinden -, so kann und muss sie doch aufgezeigt werden: „Das NT erweist sich dabei durchaus als ein in sich geschlossenes Ganzes, ermöglicht aber gleichzeitig eine weitergehende theol. Reflexion und Erkenntnis und fordert zu stets neuem Nachdenken auf" (806).

H.s Bände bieten viele interessante Einsichten und teilweise hervorragende Zusammenfassungen der ntl Sachverhalte. Es ist ihm gelungen, „ein Gesamtbild zu entwerfen, das einen in sich geschlossenen Einblick in die Theologie des NT zu vermitteln sucht" (viii). In der Zuordnung der beiden Zugangsweisen zur ntl Theologie liegt die Stärke dieser Bände. Angesichts neuerer Tendenzen, die Theologie des NT durch religionsgeschichtl. Alternativen zu ersetzen, ist H.s bewusstes Festhalten an einer theol. Zielsetzung zu begrüßen. Im Vergleich zu anderen Darstellungen fallen die vielen längeren Zitate des griech. Textes mit jeweiliger Übersetzung auf, mit denen H. an den Urtext heranführen möchte, „da vieles erst voll verständlich wird, wenn die Eigenart der urchristl Sprache erfasst wird" (I, viii). (zu H. vgl. ferner die Würdigung von T. Söding in *EvTh* 64, 2004, 235-238).

Die im ersten Band *heraus*gearbeitete Vielfalt beruht teilweise auf hist.-krit. Prämissen (siehe oben) und erweist sich teilw. als eine *„hinein*gearbeitete" Vielfalt. Das begrüßenswerte Anliegen H.s nach der Einheit des NT zu fragen, stellt sich damit viel dringender, als wenn man aufgrund anderer – nicht weniger historischer!- Prämissen schon im theologiegeschichtl. Teil stärker von einer einheitlichen Entwicklung ausgeht, z. B. nach einem Entfaltungsmodell, das die einzelnen ntl Schriften und *Corpora* als Wirkungsgeschichte des Lebens und der Verkündigung Jesu betrachtet (so in Ansätzen bei Stuhlmacher). Hier liegen weitere Aufgaben für evangelikale Forscher, die freilich vom Erfassen der Einheit nicht entbunden sind (ein beispielhafter Beitrag ist D. Wenhams, *Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995; dt. Paderborn: Schöningh, 1999).

Als Lehrbücher für den evangelikalen Kontext sind H.s Bände nur bedingt geeignet, da H. auf die Forschungsgeschichte nur selektiv eingeht, auf eine Auseinandersetzung mit abweichenden Auffassungen weitgehend verzichtet (viii) und in einem größeren Umfang als Stuhlmacher und Wilkens den Axiomen hist.-krit. Forschung verhaftet bleibt. Der zweite Band ist davon weniger betroffen und sowohl Muster als auch Fundgrube für die themenorientierte Darstellung ntl Theologie. Hier wird auch wie in wenigen anderen ntl Beiträgen der Systematischen Theologie zugearbeitet.

Eine evangelikale deutschsprachige NT Theologie ist nach wie vor ein Desiderat, die freilich an vielen Stellen auf H.s Bände zurückgreifen und durchaus auch der H.'schen Konzeption und Zeitteilung folgen könnte, bzw. andere Wege genau reflektieren müsste. Hinzuweisen wäre noch auf den Aufsatz von G. Sellin, „Zwischen Deskription und Reduktion: Aporien und Möglichkeiten einer Theologie des NT" (*EvTh* 64, 2004, 172-86), den Band von P. Balla, *Challenges to NT Theology: An Attempt to Justify the Enterprise* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998) sowie die neue *NT Theology* von I. H. Marshall (Downers Grove: IVP, 2004).

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Mission to Frontier Texas: Biographies of the St. Chrischona Missionaries to German Lutheran Immigrants.

Carl F. Wolf & Leonora Stoll Wolf (Eds.)

Seguin / USA: ELCA Region IV-South Archives, 2002, 3rd ed. 2004, 2 vols., Spiralbdg., 750 pp., als Manuskript gedruckt, pb., ca. Euro 70,–

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Kirchen konzentrieren sich heutzutage auf Innere Mission, Evangelisation und äußere Mission. Stark in Vergessenheit geraten ist im Bewusstsein und in der kirchlichen Geschichtsschreibung, dass es zwischen diesen Bereichen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert lange Zeit auch noch die seelsorgerliche Betreuung von Auswanderern gab. Carl und Leonora Wolf haben Lebensläufe und weiteres Material von 121 Pastoren gesammelt, die aus Deutschland und der Schweiz zur pastoralen Arbeit nach Texas entsandt wurden. Sendende Organisation war die Pilgermission St. Chrischona mit Sitz in Bettingen bei Basel. Durch diese Zusammenstellung ist es möglich, menschliche Schicksale und pastorale Probleme der Auswandererseelsorge auf der Grundlage archivalischer Forschungen kirchengeschichtlich nachzuzeichnen.

SUMMARY

These days churches focus on home mission, evangelisation and foreign mission. Both in awareness and in the church's writing of history it tends to be forgotten that taking its place alongside these there was in the 19th and 20th Centuries a pastoral dedication to looking after emigrants. Carl and Leonora Wolf have collected short biographies and extra material concerning 121 pastors who were sent from Germany and Switzerland to Texas to work as pastors. The sending organisation was the Pilgermission St. Chrischona, located in Bettingen near Basel. Through this assembling of information we are able on the basis of research done in the archives to follow in a church-historical way the human fortunes and pastoral problems of the pastorate to emigrants.

RÉSUMÉ

Les Églises d'aujourd'hui sont préoccupées par la question de la mission intérieure, de l'évangélisation et de la mission à l'étranger. On tend à oublier, à la fois dans la mémoire collective et dans les travaux d'histoire de l'Église, qu'il y a eu, à côté de cela, une œuvre pastorale auprès des immigrants, au XIXe et au XXe siècle. Carl et Leonora Wolf ont rassemblé de courtes biographies ainsi que d'autres textes concernant 121 pasteurs qui ont été envoyés d'Allemagne et de Suisse pour exercer un ministère pastoral au Texas. Ils étaient rattachés à la mission de St Chrischona, basée à Bettingen, près de Bâle. Grâce aux informations rassemblées dans cet ouvrage et au travail de recherche effectué dans les archives, on peut retracer l'histoire du ministère pastoral auprès des immigrants.

* * * *

Ein besonderes Werk ist hier vorzustellen. Zahlreich sind heutzutage die Wissenschaftler, die sich mit der neueren Kirchengeschichte beschäftigen. Einige Spezialisten beschäftigen sich mit Missionsgeschichte. Doch wer denkt daran, dass im 19. Jahrhundert hunderttausende von Europäern als Kolonisten, Handwerker und in anderen Berufen auswanderten und mit der Zeit auch seelsorgerlich betreut wurden? In dieser Auswandererarbeit überschneiden sich Interessen der inneren und der äußeren Mission. Heute ist das Thema – mangels größerer Auswandererzahlen – an den Rand gedrängt worden. Auswandererbetreuung war eine eigenständige Missionsleistung und nicht nur Vorgeschichte der Kirchen, die in den Kolonien entstanden.

Sofern die sendenden Institutionen noch existieren, wird in gewissem Umfang die Geschichte der Auswandererseelsorge geschrieben. An etwa zwanzig Orten Deutschlands und der Schweiz: Hermannsburg, Breklum, Neuendettelsau, Basel, St. Chrischona, Berlin, Wuppertal, Hamburg, Duisburg und anderswo existierten evangelische Auswanderermissionen. Johann Hinrich Wichern (1808–1881) widmete in seiner berühmten *Denkschrift* zu Inneren Mission von 1849 der Auswandererarbeit einen eigenen Abschnitt (Sämtliche Werke, Bd. 1, 1962, 303–310). Der bayerische Erweckungsprediger Wilhelm Löhe (1808–1872) legte auf eine rein lutherische Betreuung der deutschen Kolonisten Wert (Gesammelte Werke, Bd. 4, 1962).

Die Geschichtswissenschaft interessiert sich inzwischen für die Briefe von Ausgewanderten, da die schriftlichen Zeugnisse im Lauf der Zeit verlorenzugehen drohen (www.Auswandererbriefe.de). Auch in den entstehenden Kirchen der Auswandererländer ist das Interesse an dem Thema größer als in der ehemaligen Heimat. So veröffentlichte Hinrich Pape 1986 und 1991 zwei Bände mit 335 Berichten ehemaliger Auslandseelsorger (*„Hermannsburger Missionare in Südafrika: ein Beitrag zur Südafrikanischen Missionsgeschichte"*, hrsg. von Hinrich Pape, Montana, RSA: im Selbstverlag, 346 S., zahlr. Abb.).

Die Arbeit von Missionaren der Pilgermission St. Chrischona hat in dem vorliegenden Werk eine ähnliche Darstellung erfahren. Leonora Wolf, ELCA-Archivarin im Ruhestand, und ihr Mann Carl Wolf haben in über zehnjähriger Arbeit Material aus Büchern und Archiven zusammengetragen, um ein wichtiges Stück der Pilgermissionsgeschichte dem Vergessen zu entreißen. Oft entstehen Werke dieser Art, weil sie eigene Vorfahren betreffen, und nicht nur kirchengeschichtliche, sondern auch genealogische Interessen sind sicherlich mit der Publikation verbunden. In Fall des vorliegenden Buches verhält es sich anders, aber doch ähnlich: Zwei Vorfahren der Wolf-Familie wurden durch den Chrischonapastor Michael Haag in Texas angeregt, den Pfarrerberuf zu ergreifen. So wurde das Interesse erweckt, sich mit der Geschichte der sendenden Institution zu beschäftigen.

Die Pilgermission hatte zwischen 1846 und 1907

insgesamt 280 Absolventen nach Nordamerika entsandt. Die Vereinigten Staaten waren somit das größte Pilgermissions-Arbeitsfeld in deren ersten sechzig Jahren. Erst nach 1900 ließen die Nachfragen nach Seelsorgern für die Ausgewanderten nach, weil inzwischen die Kirchen der USA selber für die Ausbildung von Nachwuchs sorgten. 121 Lebensläufe texanischer Missionsseelsorger wurden von Carl und Leonora Wolf erfasst, also etwa die Hälfte der in die USA entsandten Chrischona-Absolventen. Andere arbeiteten unter Auswanderern in den verschiedensten Regionen: Illinois, Iowa, Kalifornien, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Washington und besonders in Wisconsin. Schwerpunkt der Arbeit war jedoch Texas.

Die Autoren stellen in den zwei Bänden Auskünfte zusammen, die sie aus dem Chrischona-Archiv, kirchlichen und staatlichen Archiven in den USA erhalten haben. Dazu kommen Nachrichten aus der amerikanischen Kirchengeschichtsschreibung, aus Passagierlisten der Einwanderungsschiffe, Einbürgerungsunterlagen, Beerdigungslisten, Briefen und Nachrufen. Einigen Lebensläufe konnten auch durch Mitteilungen von Nachkommen angereichert werden. Doch sollte die Vermehrung genealogischer Erkenntnisse nicht der wichtigste Zweck dieses Unternehmens sein: Seine Bedeutung liegt darin, als eine Vorarbeit die Grundlagen für einen wichtigen Abschnitt der Auswandererseelsorge und der Pilgermissionsgeschichte gelegt zu haben. Dieser Bereich kann jetzt dank der umfangreichen Arbeit von Carl und Leonora Wolf effektiver erforscht werden. An einer ersten Geschichte der Arbeit von Chrischona-Pastoren in den USA arbeitet derzeit der Schweizer Gerhard Krampf, der die Pioniere ausführlich aus ihrer Korrespondenz zitiert.

Jochen Eber, Schriesheim bei Heidelberg, Deutschland

Jesus
Klaus Berger

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der Heidelberger Neutestamentler Prof. Dr. Klaus Berger legt als Summe seiner exegetischen Arbeit und seines persönlichen Glaubensweges ein Buch über Jesus vor, das die Geschichtlichkeit der in den Evangelien berichteten Fakten anerkennt und die Relevanz des Gottessohns für den Menschen heute aufzeigen will. Er durchbricht die Engführung der liberalen Bibelwissenschaft, die sich in die Gefangenschaft innerweltlicher Logik begeben hat. Als „mystische Fakten" bezeichnet er den realen Einbruch transzendenter Wirklichkeit in irdische Gegebenheiten. Dennoch ist sein Buch kein „evangelikales" Werk. B. wählt nicht den Weg, eine Summa der neutestamentlichen Christologie zu erarbeiten. Oft nimmt er einzelne Aussagen aus den Evangelien und bringt ihr provokantes Anliegen zu Gehör. Jesus soll nicht auf ein modernes Jesusbild reduziert werden. Der postmoderne Mensch soll ihm in seiner Fremdheit und Herausforderung (als Ärgernis) begegnen und einen Zugang zu ihm, dem Sohn Gottes, gewinnen.

SUMMARY

The Heidelberg NT Professor Dr Klaus Berger presents as the summa of his exegetical work and his personal journey of faith a book on Jesus which acknowledges the historicity of the facts reported in the gospels and intends to show the relevance of the Son of God for people today. He breaks through the constriction of liberal bible scholarship which has stayed trapped in the prison of this-worldly logic. He describes as 'mystical facts' the real in-breaking of transcendent reality into earthly actualities. Yet his book is no 'Evangelical' work. Berger does not choose the route of elaborating a New Testament Christology. He often takes individual sayings from the gospels and brings their provocative content to expression. Jesus ought not to be reduced to a modern image of Jesus. The postmodern person should meet him in his strangeness and demand (as offence) and so gain access to him the Son of God.

RÉSUMÉ

Klaus Berger, professeur du Nouveau Testament à Heidelberg, livre ici, comme la quintessence de son travail exégétique et de son parcours personnel de foi, un ouvrage sur Jésus dans lequel il traite les événements rapportés dans les Évangiles comme des faits historiques et cherche à montrer ce que le Fils de Dieu a à apporter aux gens d'aujourd'hui. Il rompt avec les approches libérales des études bibliques qui se sont engluées dans la logique de ce monde. Il désigne les interventions réelles de la réalité transcendante dans les affaires de ce monde comme des « faits mystiques ». Pour autant, ce livre n'est cependant pas un travail « évangélique ». Berger n'emprunte pas la route de l'élaboration d'une Christologie du Nouveau Testament. Il prend souvent des énoncés isolés des Évangiles pour en faire ressortir le contenu provocateur. Jésus ne devrait pas être réduit à une image moderne de Jésus. L'homme postmoderne doit le rencontrer dans son étrangeté et avec ses exigences, et ainsi avoir accès au Fils de Dieu.

* * * *

Der Heidelberger Neutestamentler Prof. Dr. Klaus Berger ist als Publizist wissenschaftlicher wie populärer Bücher bekannt. Bei aller exegetischen Auseinandersetzung und dem Ringen um ein Verständnis des Neuen Testaments (das er 1999 zusammen mit seiner Frau Christiane Nord neu übersetzte) bekennt sich Berger als spiritueller Mensch, der dem zisterziensischen Weg (Bernhard von Clairvaux) nahe steht. Bereits in seinen früheren Veröffentlichungen offenbarte B. seine Skepsis gegenüber etablierten Mainstreams (Bultmann, Markuspriorität). Hier legt er quasi die Summe seines Arbeitens vor, nicht als exegetisches Fachbuch (dafür „Wer war Jesus wirklich?", 1999), sondern indem er die Relevanz der Person Jesu für den modernen Menschen aufzeigt (Was habe ich von Jesus?). Dazu lässt er das Jesusverständnis der

historischen Kritik mit seiner Frage nach der Authentizität und dem Urteil der kritischen Vernunft hinter sich. Stattdessen wählt er den kongenialen Erkenntnisweg der Mystik. Dieser vom alten Judentum und der altkirchlichen monastischen Tradition gewählte Weg sucht die existenzielle Nähe zu Jesus über das Herz.

In den ersten drei der insgesamt 20 Kapitel behandelt Berger grundlegende methodische Fragen (17-52). Ausgehend von der Annahme, dass den frühchristlichen Aussagen kein einheitliches und stimmiges Jesusbild abzugewinnen sei (ein „offenes Mosaik"), legt Berger in Kap. 1 die Jesusbilder seiner Biografie offen. Kap. 2 nennt vier Wege zu Jesus: die Bibel, die anderen, die Zeit und das Leiden. Beim Zugang über die Bibel wendet sich B. gegen jeden eindimensionalen Ansatz (speziell den rationalistischen) und fordert ein Sich-Einlassen (persönliches Hören und „Pflügen" im Miteinander der Kirche) auf die Fremdheit und die eigene (nicht aristotelische) Logik des Textes. In Kap. 3 „Über die Erfindung Jesu" bemängelt B. die leichtfertigen und eines Historikers unwürdigen Kriterien, mit denen die Berichte der Evangelien als Legenden eingeordnet werden, weil sie der normalen Alltagserfahrung und dem gesunden Menschenverstand widersprechen (41-45). Die Kerygma-Theologie übergehe die historische Frage und damit das, was den Evangelisten zentral war. Zugunsten der Historizität der Evangelien führt Berger an: die Fülle von inzwischen historisch verifizierten faktischen Einzelangaben; den Arbeitsgrundsatz, die Berichte des NT als wahr anzunehmen, bis das Gegenteil erwiesen ist und die Evangelien gemäß ihrem eigenen Selbstverständnis als nachprüfbare Zeugnisse zu verstehen. Weiter liege die Entstehungszeit näher am irdischen Leben Jesu als früher vermutet (B. datiert das JohEv nah an Jesus und hält es für historisch wertvoll.). Schließlich erwähnt er die Kategorie der „mystischen Erlebnisse". Mit diesem für B. zentralen Begriff beschreibt er Fakten, deren Ursache und Zustandekommen verborgen sind, die aber konkrete Auswirkungen in Raum und Zeit haben. Er bezeichnet sie als objektiv, zugleich aber „weder allgemein zugänglich noch objektiv nachprüfbar oder wiederholbar" (68). Er vertritt ein Wirklichkeitsverständnis, das umfassender ist als das (natur-)wissenschaftlich Feststellbare und von „der Existenz Gottes und der Annahme der Möglichkeit von Interaktion mit allen ‚Personen' und Mächten der unsichtbaren Welt" (68) ausgeht. Diese mystischen Erfahrungen können dann nicht als physikalische Realität bezeichnet werden, sind aber eine Erfahrung in Raum und Zeit und mit Mitteln der Kausalität nicht zu erklären (70).

In den Kapitel 4-20 entfaltet B. christologische Fragen (53-685). Er beschränkt sich dabei nicht auf die klassischen dogmatischen Fragestellungen, sondern zeigt – gemäß der Intention seines Buches – immer wieder auch die Relevanz Jesu für eine postmoderne Zeit. Die Themenvielfalt kann anhand der Inhaltsübersicht nur skizziert werden: „Ganz Mensch? Halb Mensch/halb Gott? Oder was?" (Kap. 4), „Wie denkt J. über Gott?" (Kap. 5), „J. und das menschliche Glück (Kap. 6), „J. und die Frauen" (Kap. 7), „Der dämonische Kontext Jesu" (Kap. 8), „J. und das menschliche Leid (Kap. 9), „Das politische Konzept Jesu" (Kap. 10), „J. in Aktion" (Kap. 11), „J. und die Juden" (Kap. 12), „J. und das Geld" (Kap. 13), „Wie hält es J. mit der Wahrheit?" (Kap. 14), „J. und die Kirche" (Kap. 15), „Die großen Zeichen Jesu" (Kap. 16), „Kann man mit J. sterben?" (Kap. 17), „Der Sieg des Lebens über den Tod" (Kap. 18), „Was könnte J. heute bewirken?" (Kap. 19), „Das Finale" (Kap. 20).

B.s Gedankenfülle kann hier nur auszugsweise beleuchtet werden. Kap. 4 „Ganz Mensch? Halb Mensch / halb Gott? Oder was?" (53-98) gibt einen exemplarischen Einblick in das Jesusbild B.s, zeigt gleichzeitig seine Abgrenzungen gegen etablierte Forschungsergebnisse und verdeutlicht sein Rechnen mit „mystischen Erfahrungen". Im ersten Abschnitt widerlegt B. für die jungfräuliche Empfängnis Jesu den Verdacht einer heidnisch inspirierten Legendenbildung, indem er auf die vom Alten Testament ausgehende jüdisch-palästinischen, schriftgelehrten Linie hinweist: Berufung eines Propheten „vom Mutterleib" her wird bei Johannes dem Täufer (von Mutterleib erfüllt mit dem Heiligen Geist) und vollends bei Jesus (Zeugung durch den Heiligen Geist, neuer Hoheitstitel als Sohn Gottes) intensiviert (54f). Dass B. nicht bloß eine heidnische gegen eine jüdische Legende austauschen will, sondern ein reales historisches Ereignis annimmt, macht er wiederum an dem Begriff „mystisches Widerfahrnis" fest. Es handelte sich um einen realen Einbruch des Göttlich-Anderen in die Normalität dieser Welt. B.s Deutung dieses Ereignisses als unüberbietbare Nähe Gottes, der einen Menschen (Maria) berührt und als Dimension der leibhaftigen Nähe Gottes in der Person Jesu, belässt den Rezensenten vom Standpunkt der Zweinaturenlehre her mit dem Empfinden einer mangelnden Präzisierung.

Auch im folgenden Abschnitt „Nobody is perfect – but Jesus?" (57-59) beschränkt sich B. für die Taufe Jesu auf den Gedanken der Begegnung mit dem lebendigen Gott. Ihre Bedeutung liege in der Erfüllung Jesu mit dem Heiligen Geist und seiner öffentlichen Einsetzung als Sohn. Auf die im synoptischen Text gegebene Begründung („Denn so gebührt es uns, alle Gerechtigkeit zu erfüllen.") geht B. ebenso wenig ein wie auf weitere neutestamentliche Angaben über die Sündlosigkeit Jesu. Ein dritter Abschnitt widmet sich der Frage nach der Gottessohnschaft (59-63). B. erklärt den Terminus „Sohn Gottes" als (kontextuell zu füllende) größtmögliche Nähe und engste Beziehung. Die Gottessohnschaft Jesu, die sich durch das Wirken des Heiligen Geistes (Empfängnis, Auferstehung) erweise, stellt ihn als besonders Auserwählten vor, der Anteil hat an Gottes kraftvollem, unzerstörbarem und ewigem Leben. B. zieht hier die eindeutige Folgerung: Mit und in Jesus werden wir zugleich Gottes ansichtig. Jesus ist wie B. im nächsten Abschnitt ausführt das „Licht von oben" (64-68). In ihm hat Gott seine reale Gegenwart unter den menschlichen Kreaturen genommen. Die „Verklärung

Jesu – Die geheime Achse des Evangeliums (68-74)" ordnet B. im oben geschilderten Sinn als mystisches Erlebnis ein. Die Bedeutung dieses Ereignisses liege einerseits in dem Ausblick auf das, was alle Christen erwartet (Verwandlung des Leibes). Andererseits werde durch die Parallelität zum Sinaigeschehen die Bundessatzung aufgezeigt. Indem das „Bauen von Hütten" (Lehrhäuser) abgelehnt wurde und die himmlische Stimme Jesus als den geliebten Sohn hervorhebt, sind Moses, Elia und Jesus eben nicht als gleichberechtigte Lehrautoritäten anzuerkennen. Jesus ist der einzige Lehrer, und zwar nicht in bestimmten Satzungen (Tafeln), sondern in persona. Seine Sendung (74-78) ist nicht als „Hilfsassistent" Gottes zu verstehen, sondern als Selbsterniedrigung des dreieinigen Gottes. (Der zweite Teil der Selbsterniedrigung Gottes vollzieht sich dann darin, dass er als Heiliger Geist im Herzen jedes Christen wohnt.) So ist Jesus als Person – nicht irgendein Ding – die Gabe Gottes (78-81).

Im Abschnitt „Auf dem Wasser gehen? Über den geheimnisvollen Leib Jesu" (81-84) unterstreicht B. nochmals die göttliche Natur Jesu. Jesus war nicht nur Mensch, sondern wahrer Gott, der sich als solcher auch durch Jesu Leib offenbart (82). Von diesem mystischen Faktum her will B. auch die Realpräsenz im Abendmahl plausibel machen. (Die Szene des über das Wasser gehenden Petrus verweist für B. darauf, dass durch den Glauben Anteil gewonnen werden kann an der schöpferischen Macht Gottes.) Weil Jesus der absolut Gerechte ist, kann er als Repräsentant Gottes gegenüber allen Völkern Gericht sprechen (Menschensohn). Er tut das in seinem ersten Kommen durch das Wort der Sündenvergebung, durch das er die Sünde, d. h. all das, was der Mensch in seiner Vergangenheit verantwortlich zwischen Gott und sich hat eindringen lassen, aufhebt (85-88).

Gegen ein idealisiertes, oft verweichlichtes Jesusbild stellt B. im Abschnitt „Hard way to heaven: Das Ärgerliche an Jesus" (88-91) den Jesus, der Ärgernis erregte. Als Messias vollbringt Jesus die endzeitlichen Taten Gottes, die darin gipfeln, dass den Armen das Evangelium verkündet wird (Mt 11,5). Besonders Reiche, Machthaber und diejenigen, denen er nicht geholfen hat und die mit dem Kreuztragen nicht einverstanden sind, stehen in der Gefahr Ärgernis an ihm zu nehmen. Dagegen hilft nur sich zu verändern. Eine weitere Provokation liegt in der Auferweckung des Lazarus (92-95), ein weiteres mystisches Ereignis. Jesus erweist sich hier als die Auferstehung in Person und damit als Gott. Ein letzter Abschnitt dieses umfassenden Kapitels behandelt die „Anstößige Vergebung" (95-98). Das Harte am Gleichnis vom unbarmherzigen Schuldner (Schalksknecht, Mt 18,21-35) liege in dem Zorn über die fehlende Weitergabe der erfahrenen Vergebung (vgl. Mt 6,12). Damit werde ein neuzeitlicher Individualismus („Hauptsache, Gott vergibt mir") abgewehrt und als Hauptsache die Herrschaft Gottes fokussiert, die sich realisiere, indem man Vergebung weitergibt.

Die Skizzierung dieses Kapitels vermittelt einen Einblick in den Tenor des Buches. B. verteidigt die Faktizität der berichteten Ereignisse und zeigt Einsichten für die Spiritualität heute auf. Zu dieser exemplarischen Kapiteldarstellung sei mit dem Verhältnis Christentum – Islam ein aktuelles Einzelthema herausgegriffen und B.s Gedanken dazu aufgezeigt. Interreligiöse Toleranz geht von einem undefinierbaren Gott und der Gleichwertigkeit aller Wege zu ihm aus (127-132). Es herrsche ein prinzipienloser Pluralismus. B. beurteilt die Gestaltlosigkeit als tödliche Häresie, die nicht einladend, sondern kurzlebig und kirchenzerstörend wirkt. Nachfolge Jesu kennt Eindeutigkeit. Zum Beispiel wird der interreligiöse Begriff des Lichts bei Jesus und in der christlichen Theologie nicht als irgendeine Erleuchtung verstanden, sondern als die Person Jesu selbst. Christen sind nicht bloß Erleuchtete, sondern Kinder. Spricht sich B. somit (und in Einklang mit seiner Darstellung der Person des Gottessohnes Jesus) für die Einzigartigkeit des christlichen Erlösungsweges aus, differenziert er dann bei der Beurteilung des Verhältnisses der Christen zum Islam (510-517). Er sieht sich zu einer generellen Beurteilung anderer Religionen nicht in der Lage, sondern zur Ehrfurcht verpflichtet. Dies begründet er mit dem Ungenügen einer bekenntnisorientierten Beurteilung des spezifischen Gottesverhältnisses. Positiv geht er bei Begegnung mit dem Islam von einem Gott (Elohim – Allah) aus, den Christen und Moslems anrufen. Die Offenbarung Mohammeds kann er in eine dritte Offenbarungsstufe einordnen, das heißt in die Offenbarungsfülle innerhalb und außerhalb der christlichen Kirche. (Diese Stufe ist weniger verpflichtend als die Offenbarung in Jesus Christus und die kanonische Offenbarung der Propheten und Apostel.) Die mystische Tradition sieht er als Brücke, um Berührungen und neue Formulierungen zu finden. Beim Unterschied in der Heilsfrage (für Moslem vollzieht sich die Erlösung durch Gebet und Almosen) denkt er Brücken an, die über das interzessorische Bitten Jesu gebaut werden könnten. In diesem Dialog sollten Christen mutig ihre Frömmigkeit zeigen und Jesus nicht zum bloßen und mit Mohammed vergleichbaren Menschen degradieren. Unverständlich bleibt dem Rezensenten bei diesen Gedankenführungen, wie Berger seine früheren Aussagen über die von Christus gebrachte Eindeutigkeit und seine Bedeutung als Sohn Gottes unterbringt. Im Abschnitt „Ist der Glaube an Jesus allein selig machend?" (517-521) beantwortet B. diese Anfrage mit Bezug auf die Kriterien des Weltgerichts (Mt 25,31-46). Die Einlassbedingung in den Himmel ist nach biblischem Verständnis die Person Jesu. Ihm begegnet jeder in der Gestalt des Ärmsten (Mt 25,45). Das Kriterium, um in den Himmel zu kommen ist Barmherzigkeit üben. „Wer barmherzig ist wie Gott selbst, kann vor ihm bestehen" (520). Da Jesus der Weltenrichter ist, geschieht dies trotzdem nicht ohne Jesus. Christen haben dabei den Vorteil, dass sie den Maßstab des Gerichts kennen und Vergebung ihrer Sünden erfahren haben, damit auch sie jetzt ihrem Nächsten vergeben können. Der Rezensent begrüßt hier und an vielen Stel-

len des vorliegenden Buches, dass B. Akzente aufspürt, die in der liberalen Bibelauslegung (und teilweise in der evangelikalen) übergangen werden. Wünschenswert wäre allerdings eine Einbettung in die gesamte neutestamentliche Theologie, die als apostolischer Normierungsrahmen nicht übergangen werden darf.

B.s Buch führt den Leser hin zur Geschichtlichkeit und Bedeutung Jesu. Er schreibt flüssig und ohne wissenschaftlichen Ballast. Die Historizität der damaligen Ereignisse wird auch bei Interventionen des Jenseitigen aufrecht erhalten („mystische Erlebnisse"). Als zweiter Skopus zeigt B. die Bedeutung Jesu für den Menschen heute auf. Sein Buch ist somit weniger ein wissenschaftliches Werk, als vielmehr der Versuch einer theologisch fundierten, aber spirituell ausgerichteten „Glaubenshilfe". Dabei verschweigt B. den Wert der zisterziensischen Frömmigkeit für ihn nicht. Der Rezensent anerkennt dankbar das Anliegen B.s als Beitrag zur „Fülle christlicher Formen von Spiritualität" (128). Zur Eindeutigkeit des Glaubens, die es laut B. bei Christus ja gibt, wäre eine stärkere innerbiblische Erhellung der untersuchten Themen wünschenswert. Die Betonung auf die Aussagen der Evangelien können das im Neuen Testament von Jesus Christus gesagte nur partiell aufzeigen. Andererseits wendet B. häufig nicht kanonische Schriften und die mystische Innerlichkeit als Parameter an. Insgesamt ein lohnendes Buch, das die Summe der Lehr- und Glaubenserfahrungen B.s weitergibt. Es bietet vielfältige Anregungen, ohne als neutestamentliche Christologie daherzukommen.

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Der deutsche Pietismus und John Wesley

Sung-Duk Lee

TVG, Kirchengeschichtliche Monographien, vol. 8, Gießen: Brunnen, 2003, 232 pp., Pb., 25,–, ISBN 3-7655-9468-7

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Sung-Duk Lee, methodistischer Pastor aus Korea, untersucht in seiner Dissertation umfassend den Einfluss des deutschen Pietismus auf die Theologie von John Wesley. Lee kommt zu dem Ergebnis, dass die Rolle, die der hallische Pietismus von August Hermann Francke spielt, bisher zu gering eingeschätzt wurde. In der Auseinandersetzung zwischen Wesley und Zinzendorf gibt Lee dem Begründer des Methodismus, der sich auf Luthers Äußerungen zu den Antinomern beruft, recht. Lees Arbeit bringt zahlreiche neue Einsichten zur Wirkung des Pietismus auf Wesleys Entwicklung.

SUMMARY

Sung-Duk Lee, a methodist pastor from Korea has made extensive research in his dissertation into the influence of German piety on John Wesley's theology. Lee arrives at the result that the role which the Halle-based piety of A.H. Francke played has been underestimated up until now. In the debate which went on between Wesley and Zinzendorf Lee gives the positive verdict to the founder of Methodism, who himself appealed to Luther's remarks on the Antinomians. Lee's work brings forth a large number of new insights into the working of pietism on Wesley's development

RÉSUMÉ

Sung-Duk Lee, pasteur méthodiste coréen, a consacré sa thèse de doctorat à la question de l'influence exercée par la piété allemande sur la théologie de John Wesley. Il arrive à la conclusion que le rôle joué par la piété de A.H. Francke, à Halle, a été sous-estimé jusqu'alors. Considérant le débat entre Wesley et Zinzendorf, Lee donne raison au fondateur du Méthodisme, qui en appelait lui-même aux remarques de Luther sur les antinomiens. Ce travail apporte un grand nombre d'informations et de réflexions pénétrantes quant à l'incidence du piétisme sur l'évolution de Wesley.

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Der methodistische Koreaner Sung_Duk Lee hat diese Dissertation 1999 bei Prof. Martin Brecht in Münster eingereicht. Die Arbeit setzt sich zum Ziel, über die Untersuchungen von Martin Schmidt hinaus neue Erkenntnisse über das Verhältnis von kontinentalem Pietismus und angelsächsischem Methodismus in seiner Frühzeit zu gewinnen (14). Deshalb untersucht Lee zum einen die geschichtlichen und theologischen Verbindungen zwischen John Wesley und Zinzendorf bzw. dem Herrnhutertum; zum anderen Wesleys Abhängigkeiten von August Hermann Francke und dem hallischen Pietismus. Im Gegensatz zu Martin Schmidt möchte Lee hervorheben, wie stark Wesley vom hallischen Pietismus und darüber hinaus von Luther geprägt ist. Zinzendorf gerät dagegen unter den Verdacht des Antinomismus, an dem er in bewusstem Gegensatz zur lutherischen Lehre dauernd festgehalten habe (18, 136, 189).

Wesleys Prägung durch den hallischen Pietismus ergibt sich für Lee aus der Lektüre hallischer Schriften, besonders durch August Hermann Franckes Schriften *Nicodemus die Manuductio*, sowie durch die *„Fußstapfen"* bzw. deren englischer Übersetzung in A. W. Böhmes *Pietas Hallensis*. Auch Einflüsse von Bengels *Gnomon* lassen sich nachweisen sowie Wirkungen auf die Frömmigkeit, weil Wesley pietistische Lieder aus den Gesangbüchern von Herrnhut und Freylinghausen übersetzte und in seine Gesangbücher übernahm. Wesleys Besuch bei Zinzendorf in Marienborn läßt diesen eher als distanziert erscheinen (171). Das hallische Glaubenswerk beeindruckt den Reisenden Wesley ebenso wie die Gemeinschaften der Brüder in Marienborn und Herrnhut (172, 175). Schließlich schildert Lee, wie es zum Bruch zwischen Wesley und Zinzendorf sowie den Methodisten und Herrnhutern kommt.

Da Lees Arbeit an anderer Stelle schon ausführlich besprochen und kritisch gewürdigt worden ist (M.

Kotsch in JETh 18, 2004, 341–349), soll hier nur auf das Problem von Wesleys katholisierender Frömmigkeit hingewiesen werden, das Lee nach Ansicht des Rezensenten nicht genug berücksichtigt. Sollte Wesley wirklich von (Ps.)-Makarius beeinflusst sein (Ernst Benz), dann ist das theologische Problem im Streit zwischen Herrnhutern und Methodisten doch weniger in Zinzendorfs Antinomismus als vielmehr in den katholisierenden Zügen von Wesleys Soteriologie zu suchen, in der die psychologisch-empirische Verifizierbarkeit zum Maß imputativ-forensisch gemeinter Schriftaussagen über das erreichte Heil und die Heiligung gemacht wird. – Das gut lesbare Werk ist jedem zu empfehlen, der über den Stand des Gesprächs über die Ursprünge von Wesleys Theologie informiert sein möchte.

Jochen Eber, Schriesheim bei Heidelberg, Deutschland

"Ich bin ein Hebräer": Gedenken an OttoMichel (1903–1993)

Helgo Lindner (Hrsg.)

Gießen: Brunnen, 2003, 472 pp., 24,95, Pb.,
ISBN 3-7655-1318-0

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Eine Gedenkschrift zum 100. Geburtstag des Tübinger Neutestamentlers Otto Michel bekräftigt dessen Bedeutung für die Erforschung des Judentums, für die neutestamentliche Exegese und die evangelikale Theologie nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg. Michel hat zahlreiche Theologinnen und Theologen, besonders in Süddeutschland und in Kreisen des Pfarrerinnen- und pfarrer-Gebetsbundes (PGB) nachhaltig geprägt. In 38 Beiträgen werden vielfältige Aspekte von Otto Michels Leben und seine Wirkung auf Theologie und Pfarrerschaft aufgezeigt.

SUMMARY

This book to honour the 100th birthday of the Tübingen New Testament scholar Otto Michel confirms his significance for research into Judaism, his New Testament exegesis and evangelical theology since the Second World War. Michel has left a lasting impression on numerous theologians, particularly in southern Germany and among the circles of pastors' prayer unions (PGB). The many different aspects of Otto Michel's life and its effect on theology and church ministry are brought to light in 38 contributions.

RÉSUMÉ

Trente-huit contributions viennent honorer Otto Michel, qui fut professeur du Nouveau Testament à Tübingue, à l'occasion de son centième anniversaire. Michel est une figure importante, depuis la seconde guerre mondiale, pour ses travaux de recherche sur le judaïsme, ses travaux d'exégèse du Nouveau Testament et sa théologie évangélique. Il a marqué de nombreux théologiens, en particulier dans le sud de l'Allemagne et dans les cercles des unions de prières des pasteurs. L'ouvrage fait ressortir les nombreux aspects variés de la vie d'Otto Michel et l'influence qu'il a exercée sur la théologie et le ministère de l'Église.

* * * *

Der Tübinger Neutestamentler Otto Michel hat wie kaum ein anderer Theologieprofessor in Deutschland nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg evangelikale Theologinnen und Theologen geprägt. Auf seine Wirkung wurde schon in der Rezension der Festschrift zum neunzigjährigen Jubiläum des PGB hingewiesen (Rainer Braun, Hrsg.: *... da bin ich mitten unter ihnen: Aus 90 Jahren Pfarrerinnen- und Pfarrer-Gebetsbund*, Wuppertal, 2003, 174 pp., vgl. EJT 12:2, 2003, 139–140). Der Aufsatzband "Ich bin ein Hebräer", der zur Erinnerung an Otto Michels 100. Geburtstag und 10. Todestag erschienen ist, vertieft in eindrucksvoller Weise die dankbaren Stimmen aus den Reihen des PGB, der zeitweise sogar als "Michel-Schule" charakterisiert wurde.

Pfarrer Helgo Lindner aus Dautphetal hat in Zusammenarbeit mit der seit 1999 bestehenden Otto-Michel-Arbeitsgemeinschaft den vorliegenden Gedenkband mit 38 Beiträgen herausgegeben. Im ersten Teil des umfangreichen Werkes erschließen acht Autoren verschiedene Aspekte des Lebenswegs von Otto Michel aus der Literatur oder aus eigenem Erleben (R. Braun, H. Frische, J. M. Wischnath, K. Sundermeier, H. Lindner, P. Beyerhaus, O. Betz und C. Völkner). Besonders interessant sind die Ausführungen über Michels "kritischem Wort" zu der Tübinger Fakultätsdenkschrift von 1953 "Für und wider die Theologie Bultmanns". Wichtig war nicht nur Michels Einfluss auf die Ferienseminare des PGB, sondern auch auf die Anfänge der Tübinger Gruppe der "Studentenmission in Deutschland" (SMD). Christina Völkner berichtet am Ende des ersten Teils einfühlsam über Michels letzte Lebensjahre und über sein Sterben (127–135).

Im zweiten Teil des Buches befassen sich sieben Aufsätze mit Otto Michels Theologie (P. Schmidt, A. Fischer, T. Pola, B. Klappert, E. Lubahn und H. Lindner). Der zweite Beitrag von Helgo Lindner in diesem Teil eignet sich besonders gut als Einführung in den Ansatz von Otto Michels Denken: "Zu Otto Michels Theologie – Stichworte zur Erinnerung" (262–272).

Aus Michels Arbeitsgebieten, besonders aus dem Judentum und einer neutestamentlichen Exegese, die das Judentum berücksichtigt, berichten die Verfasser von sechs weiteren Aufsätzen in Teil 3 (E. L. Ehrlich, E. Kamlah, A. Baumann, A. Finkel, R. Jewett, W. Grimm). Anregend und kurzweilig zu lesen sind die folgenden elf Zeugnisse persönlicher Begegnung und Weggemeinschaft im vierten Teil (A. Zeilinger, J. Hamel, K. Brandt, W. u. E. Tlach, B. Müller OSB, G. Gläser, E. Cohen, R. v. Lamezan, R. Scheffbuch, E. Güting und I. Gesk).

In einem abschließenden fünften Teil werden Michels "Kritisches Wort" zum Fakultätsgutachten von 1953 und andere Dokumente, u. a. Peter Beyerhaus' Begräbnisansprache wiedergegeben. Im Anhang des Buches finden sich eine ausführliche Michel-Bibliographie und

Bemerkungen des Leiters des Universitätsarchivs Tübingen zu Michels Nachlaß, insbesondere zum Projekt der Digitalisierung von ungefähr 840 vorhandenen Tonband-Kassettenaufnahmen.

Zahlreiche Bilder, die den Texten im Buch beigegeben sind, machen es zu einer spannenden und abwechslungsreichen Lektüre. Leider kann es eine noch ausstehende umfangreiche Michel-Biographie nicht ersetzen. Die Autobiographie *Anpassung oder Widerstand* (Wuppertal 1989) leidet bekanntlich unter dem Problem, dass sie deutliche Züge eines Alterswerkes trägt. Der Otto-Michel-Arbeitsgemeinschaft ist zu danken, dass der Gedenkband aus verschiedenen Perspektiven Leben und Denken des Tübinger Neutestamentlers in seiner Bedeutung für die Theologie neu erschließt.

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The Theology of Paul's Letter to the Romans

Klaus Haacker

New Testament Theology, Cambridge: CUP, 2003, pb., ix + 183 pp. ISBN 0-521-43535-8, 14,– (hb. 0-521-43480-7, 37.50 GBP)

SUMMARY

Haacker's volume is a superb introduction to the theology of Romans and a suitable companion volume to his *Kommentar*. The discussion is clearly well informed, yet fresh and balanced throughout. Haacker is not trapped in the *impasse* between what has been deemed to be the traditional German Lutheran understanding of Paul, which has become a favourite scapegoat, the "new perspective" and its various recent staunch critics in Germany and elsewhere. While one may obviously disagree with Haacker in some details, the argument and presentation is persuasive. The volume will be useful in courses on the exegesis of Romans, on Pauline theology and on NT theology.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Haackers Band ist eine hervorragende Einleitung in die Theologie des Römerbriefes und ein passender Begleitband zu seinem Kommentar. Die Diskussion ist gut informiert, aber durchgehend frisch und ausgewogen. Haacker ist nicht in der Sackgasse gefangen, die zwischen dem traditionell deutschen lutherischen Verständnis von Paulus, das zum beliebten Sündenbock wurde, der "new perspective" und ihren verschiedenen scharfen Kritikern in Deutschland und anderswo entstanden ist. Obwohl man in manchen Einzelheiten anderer Meinung wie Haacker sein wird, ist die Argumentation und die Präsentation doch überzeugend. Der Band wird für Kurse zur Exegese des Römerbriefes, zur paulinischen Theologie und zur neutestamentlichen Theologie hilfreich sein.

RÉSUMÉ

Voici une superbe introduction à la théologie de l'épître aux Romains et un bon complément au commentaire du même auteur sur celle-ci. L'auteur est bien informé. Il a en même temps un apport bienvenu et équilibré tout du long. Haacker ne se laisse pas enfermer dans l'impasse que constitue le débat sur ce qui a été considéré comme la compréhension luthérienne traditionnelle de la théologie de Paul, qui est devenue un bouc émissaire de choix, la « Nouvelle Perspective » sur la théologie paulinienne et les récentes critiques sévères qui ont été opposées à celle-ci en Allemagne et ailleurs. On peut bien sûr être en désaccord avec l'auteur sur divers détails, mais sa présentation et son argumentation sont convaincantes. Cet ouvrage sera utile à la fois pour l'exégèse de l'épître, l'étude de la théologie paulinienne et l'étude de la théologie du Nouveau Testament.

* * * *

With a volume on the book which is rightly considered to be the most significant of Paul's letters (and for some students perhaps of the whole New Testament!) the *Cambridge New Testament Theology* series comes to completion. And it is a worthy completion of this series directed at students and scholars alike. After his excellent and in many ways original German commentary *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer* (2. Aufl., ThHK 6; Leipzig: EVA, 2002), Prof Klaus Haacker of the Kirchliche Hochschule in Wuppertal, Germany, now provides a fine survey of the major theological issues raised by this letter.

In the first chapter Haacker asks (1-20): "Theology or letter – or both?" and concludes:

> To write a theology of Romans cannot mean to forget about our own place in the history of interpretation. Rather, we should widen our concept of *theology* so that it includes pastoral, social, and emotional dimensions. If a theology centres on God, the creator of all, then it stands to reason that it should be holistic. And, after all, encountering Paul means facing a man of passion both before and after the famous turning point in his life connected with the city of Damascus. The letter to the Romans makes no exception – although it turns out to be the most elaborate, sometimes sophisticated, and in a way most mature of his extant writings (2).

He then raises the questions: "Whose letter?" (2-11, a fine summary of the life of Paul; cf. Haacker's contribution "Paul's life" in J. D. G. Dunn, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to St. Paul*; Cambridge: CUP, 2003, 19-33) and "To Whom" (a good summary of what can be known of the origin and state of the Christian communities in Rome) and the question of "When and Why". Haacker concludes: "To sum it up in one sentence: the character and purpose of this letter result from *who* Paul had become as an individual and *what* he believed was his commission, when in his life he wrote this letter and *where* he intended to go (Jerusalem-Rome-Spain)" (20).

The second chapter, "Theology in a nutshell: The opening of the letter as a foretaste of what follows"

(21-29), is an in-depth study of the letter's programmatic first seven verses. This extensive analysis, recalling Haacker's treatment in his *Kommentar*, is followed by a detailed outline of the argument of the body of the letter, which gives the student a good overview of the contents and flow of the argument of the letter and indicates to the scholar the positions Haacker takes on a number of disputed issues. In my estimate Rom 1.8-15 and 15.14-16.27 are more than the frame to the "letter body" and would have deserved more attention in this context because they form an *inclusio* showing the reader how the argument which is unfolded in-between should be understood (they are treated to some extent in the discussion of the introductory questions).

The longest chapter is an excellent presentation of the major theological concerns of the letter (44-96). The detailed subheadings give the reader sufficient orientation. Haacker pursues these themes through the letter as whole independent of the categories of systematic theology. Under the heading "Romans as a proclamation of peace with God and on earth" (45-53) H. treats peace with God, peace between Jews and Gentiles, peace between Christians and the surrounding world and peace within and between Christian congregations. He concludes: "Thus, the theology of Romans begins with an instruction on the basis of peace *with* God, goes on to develop strategies of peace in human interactions, and ends up with the promise of final peace *from* God in his final victory" (53). "Righteousness redefined: a metamorphosis of ethics" (53-69) deals with ethics, the law and works of the law, grace and faith. "Suffering and hope" (69-77) is devoted to sanctification and Christian existence. Despite the assurance of future glory, "There is no room for an otherworldliness which ignores the ordinary troubles of human existence such as hunger and thirst, clothing and housing, health and emotional needs. By contrast, believers must be ready to face additional hardships when the challenge of Christian existence meets with hostile reactions from a society that is addicted to idols instead of being dedicated to the true and living God" (75).

The often neglected section Rom 9-11 is examined in "The mystery of Israel in the age of the Gospel (77-96; on this subject cf. also Haacker's collection of essays *Versöhnung mit Israel: Exegetische Beiträge*, Veröffentlichungen der Kirchlichen Hochschule Wuppertal 5 (Wuppertal: Foedus; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2002; the outline of these chapters is on p. 39-41). Subsections are entitled: "A personal problem of Paul, the Jew, a theological dilemma of Paul, the apostle, God's freedom affirmed, Israel's failure deplored, God's faithfulness revealed and God's mercy as the mystery of history.

The chapter "Sorting the sources" (97-112) from which Paul draws his theological arguments as displayed in Romans focuses on Paul's appeal to and interpretation of Scripture, on early Jewish traditions employed by him, on basic Christian convictions and echoes from early Christian tradition ("While Paul was proud of pioneering as a missionary in regions untouched by previous evangelism ..., there is no evidence that he had an ambition to push theology towards new horizons – though he did just that according to widespread and well-founded opinion", 108) and on possible borrowing from secular culture ("... there are examples of terms and topics of theological reflection which cannot be traced back to OT and Early Jewish sources but can be explained as echoes of Greek philosophy, however loosely applied", 111). The chapter is also a balanced discussion of the possible sources of Pauline theology in general.

Chapter six introduces a stimulating subject in which Haacker moves beyond the traditional understanding of Romans and brings fresh light and insights to a number of passages. Haacker asks "To the Romans a Roman?" and argues for "The rhetoric of Romans as a model for preaching the Gospel in Rome" (113-34). Haacker wants to take "a closer look at points of contact between Paul's Letter to the Romans and concepts or catchwords that were particularly popular in Roman society at the time of its composition. So far, this horizon of Romans has not yet been sufficiently taken into account" (112). This venue is also pursued in Haacker's commentary and certainly a fresh and original contribution to the understanding of Romans. Haacker moves beyond what is occasionally quoted and noted in order to appreciate the thinking and concepts then current in Rome in order to account for certain peculiar features of Romans. It has implications not only for various issues in homiletics and missiology but also indicates once more that Romans is indeed a real letter to a real church in a very concrete setting, as reflected in the way in which Paul presents his apology for his gospel, rather than a timeless expression of Christian truth, which is how Romans has often been understood in the past. For each of these themes Haacker presents the evidence – showing his familiarity with the sources for first century Rome – in order to indicate the thinking then current.

Haacker sets out with general observations on "Romans as a document of missiology and the idea of contextualisation" and then studies "Peace in Romans and in Roman propaganda and religion" (cf. the interesting observations on *pax Romana* as a likely background to 1Thess 5.3 in C. vom Brocke, *Thessaloniki – Stadt des Kassander und Gemeinde des Paulus: Eine frühe christliche Gemeinde in ihrer heidnischen Umwelt*, WUNT II, 125; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001, 167-85; cf. my review in *Filologia Neotestamentaria* 14, 2001, 157-62) which makes Haacker's observations for Romans all the more likely):

> If Paul shows a predilection for the language of peace (and harmony) in his letter to the Romans (and not in other letters), the most natural explanation is that he was consciously alluding to this ideology [previously described]. That does not mean that he was willing to subscribe to the claim that peace on earth was the gift of rulers of the empire. Far from that, his verdict on them is probably implied in his quota-

tion form Isa 59.8 in Rom 3.17: "They do not know the way of peace". ... What made this phraseology of peace attractive for Paul's interpretation of the Gospel was its obvious appeal to the public, which indicated a deep longing for peace among ordinary people. After all, there had been too much bloodshed in the last decades of the republic and during the rise of Octavian /Augustus to power. On the other hand, to emphasise the peace dimension of the Gospel was in no wise misleading. Paul had the backing of his favourite prophet (Isaiah) for this choice ... (118f).

Haacker then turns to "Righteousness (or, justice) as Roman benefit and as God's activity, gift and calling" and discusses "Limits of the Law as of laws in general", "The power and universality of sin" and finally focuses in the soteriology unfolded in Romans: "A Roman pattern of 'noble death' echoed in Romans"?. On the last subject he concludes: "Paul certainly did not need pagan models on order to develop the idea of sacrificial death. But the Roman tradition starting from the rite of devotio of military leaders was so popular that it could serve as a model for communicating this part of the Gospel of Christ in a Roman environment. ... there is reason to assume that Paul knew this tradition and was willing to exploit it in the course of his intended preaching at Rome" (134). For Haacker these observations show that "Paul kept learning from every milieu in which he lived and proclaimed the Gospel, and that his thinking was increasingly moving towards Rome while he was planning to go there with increasing impatience" (131).

However it remains uncertain just how much of this "upper-class" Roman thinking and concepts can be presupposed for Paul himself and for the readership of Romans. Some of the addressees are of Jewish background, many will be non-citizens, called by Paul to pay tribute as a symbol of submission to the political Roman order (13.6). Haacker's thesis is most convincing for the tenets of Roman propaganda (such as the peace issue) and less persuasive e.g. for the similarities between Seneca's view of humanity and Paul's (128-31). Paul alludes to the OT in Rom 3.10-18, when on other occasions – at least according to Luke – Paul freely quotes "their own poets", *e.g.* Acts 17.28).

This is followed by a consideration of "Romans in its canonical context": Romans among the letters of Paul, Romans and other letters of the NT (1Peter and James, with a discussion of the relation between Romans and Jas 2.14-26), Romans and Acts and Romans and the Gospels, including the relation to the teaching of Jesus, endorsing D. Wenham, "that Paul was not the 'founder of Christianity' but a 'follower of Jesus' – and a very congenial one" (149). The next chapter surveys the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of Romans in the first letter of Clement, in the writings of John Chrysostom and Augustine and the impact the letter had on Martin Luther, John Wesley and Karl Barth (150-61). The current significance of Romans is sketched in the final chapter entitled "The relevance of Romans reconsidered" (162-71). According to Haacker, this relevance lies in three areas: "Romans and the reconciliation between Christians and Jews", "Romans and the Reformation: the limits and legacy of Luther" (it is refreshing to see that Luther on Romans can be a fruitful subject on its own and not only studied in order to provide a dark backdrop to the dawn of the so called "new perspective" on Paul) and "the abiding message of Romans for a disillusioned world". The well produced volume closes with suggestions for further reading and indices of authors, references and subjects.

While it is to be welcomed that the New Testament Theology series is also published as a paperback edition, the prices even for this edition will be beyond many a student. An inexpensive study edition of the whole series, say in three volumes, would be much appreciated.

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Magdala am See Gennesaret: Überlegungen zur sogenannten „mini-sinagoga" und einige andere Beobachtungen zum kulturellen Profil des Ortes in neutestamentlicher Zeit

Jürgen Zangenberg

Kleine Arbeiten zum Alten und Neuen Testament, Bd. 2, Waltrop: Spenner, 2001, Pb., 81 pp., 10,–, ISBN 3-933688-49-3

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In einer neuen Reihe „Kleiner Arbeiten zum Alten und Neuen Testament" erscheint als erster Band eine Untersuchung über Magdala und die an diesem Ort vermutete kleine Synagoge. Der Verfasser geht auf die örtlichen Ausgrabungen ein, beschäftigt sich mit der Fischerei, dem Handel und dem relativen Reichtum der Bewohner des hellenistisch geprägten Ortes, zu denen auch die besonders hervorgehobene Maria aus Magdala zählte.

SUMMARY

First volume in a new series called „Kleiner Arbeiten zum Alten und Neuen Testament" is a study on Magdala and the small synagogue which is believed to have existed in that place. The author details the excavations in the place and concerns himself with the fishing, the business and the relative prosperity of the inhabitants of this culturally hellenistic place, among whom Mary of Magdalen was the best-known.

RÉSUMÉ

C'est là le premier volume d'une série intitulée « Kleiner Arbeiten zum Alten und Neuen Testament ». Il s'agit d'une étude sur la localité de Magdala et sur la petite synagogue dont on suppose l'existence dans cette localité. L'auteur présente en détail les fouilles archéologiques menées en ce lieu et s'intéresse à l'activité de pêche, à l'activité économique et à la relative prospérité des habitants de cette localité de culture hellénistique, parmi lesquels Marie de Magdala est la figure la plus connue.

* * * *

In view of the many reports in the Gospels of Jesus visiting Jewish synagogues and the many references to such buildings (thirty-four occurrences), there has been great interest in the archaeological evidence for pre-70 AD synagogues in Galilee and throughout Palestine (cf. the surveys of B. Chilton, E. Yamauchi, "Synagogues", *Dictionary of New Testament Background*, C. A. Evans, S. E. Porter (eds.); Downers Grove: IVP, 2000, 1145-53 and E. Yamauchi, "Synagogue", *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, J. B. Green, S. McKnight, I. H. Marshall (eds.); Downers Grove, Leicester: IVP, 1992, 781-84). However, contrary to the number of literary occurrences, the archaeological evidence for the *pre*-70 AD era is relatively scarce. Only for Masada, Herodion, Gamla, Kiryat Sefer (possibly also Capernaum, uncertain in Shu'afat and Chorazin) have excavated buildings been identified as synagogues; cf. Zangenberg's survey, 7-11.

In Magdala on the shores of the lake of Gennesaret the Franciscan excavators V. C. Corbo and S. Loffreda unearthed in the seventies a rectangular building with an unusual interior design (three of the four interior sides have a row of columns and water channels), which they identified as a small synagogue, the "mini-sinagoga" of the Italian publications (cf. the good chart and bw. photograph of the building in G. Kroll, *Auf den Spuren Jesu*, 11. ed.; Leipzig: St. Benno, 1990, 209 who follows Corbo; cf. his otherwise helpful description of Magdala, 206-11; for a colour photograph and a succinct summary of Magdala cf. R. Riesner, "Magdala", *GBL II*, 909f). It is their claim and an alternative interpretation of their discovery that Zangenberg interacts with in the first half of this instructive study ("Zwar ‚mini', aber keine ‚sinagoga'. Zur Interpretation von Gebäude d1", 7-43).

Drawing on the published excavation reports, the author surveys the arguments that have been and can be raised for and against this identification. He also interacts with the interpretation of the building as a public fountain-house or *nymphaeum* (thus *e. g.* J. Pahlitzsch, "Magdala", *Neuer Pauly VII*, 656; for a combination of both cf. Riesner, loc. cit., 909 "Kleine Synagoge aus neutestamentlicher Zeit, die vielleicht später in ein heidnisches Quell-Heiligtum umgewandelt wurde"). Following a tentative lead of H. P. Kuhnen, Zangenberg then suggests that the evidence is better or best interpreted in a rather surprising way. The building had public character, thus far agreeing with some divergent proposals, but it actually was a public toilet. He summarizes similar discoveries in other parts of the ancient world, as well as in Palestine, which support this reading of the evidence: "Sollte Gebäude d1 aus Magdala in der Tat als Latrine anzusprechen sein, dann wäre es bei einem vermuteten Entstehungsdatum um die Zeitenwende das älteste bekannte Beispiel für eine öffentliche Bedürfnisanstalt in Palästina. Der Anschluß an das urbane Abwassersystem zeigt einen hohen technischen Standard, während die geringe Größe und einfache dekorative Ausstattung eher den lokalen Gegebenheiten zu entsprechen scheint" (39). However, Zangenberg also notes the preliminary nature of his conclusions. Only the excavation of further parts of Magdala, including its water supply and sewage system, will bring assurance.

On first sight it is disappointing to forego a possible first century synagogue identification (though it certainly is preferable to be careful with the evidence than overly generous!) and to arrive at a conclusion which may at first seem insignificant for New Testament studies, though it may cast some light on passages like *e. g.* Mark 7.19f εἰς τὴν κοιλίαν and Phil 3.8 σκύβαλον (cf. however Lang, *ThWNT VII*, 446-48). Yet Zangenberg's conclusion is further indication of the urban character of ancient Magdala, which is also apparent, for example, from its stadium and hippodrome. Not only places like Bethsaida/Julias, Sepphoris or Tiberias were urban centres in Galilee (cf. M. Chancey, "The Cultural Milieu of Ancient Sepphoris", *NTS* 47, 2001, 127-45 and R. A. Batey, "Sepphoris and the Jesus Movement", *NTS* 47, 2001, 402-10). This observation agrees with a number of recent scholarly (*e. g.* the various contributions of S. Freyne) and popular studies of Galilee and the lake of Gennesaret (*e. g.* M. Nun, *Der See Genezareth und die Evangelien: Archäologische Forschungen eines jüdischen Fischers*, Biblische Archäologie und Zeitgeschichte 10; Giessen: Brunnen, 2001; C. P. Thiede, *Geheimakte Petrus: Auf den Spuren des Apostels*; Stuttgart: Kreuz, 2000).

In the second part, "Reich an Fisch und reich durch Fisch: Beobachtungen zum kulturellen Profil Magdalas" (45-74), Zangenberg conducts a fine survey of further elements of urban architecture in Magdala and relates his findings to the cultural situation of the region around the lake of Gennesaret. The urban character of Magdala is apparent in the rectangular arrangement of its streets and the construction of the buildings in the *insulae* between these streets (photograph and chart in Kroll, 20f). The excavated remains of private houses likewise indicate the significant wealth of the city. One of the mosaics that were discovered shows objects used in Graeco-Roman culture for sport and bathing, a large *kantharos*, a fish and a fishing boat with sails and oars ("Das Schiff gehört vermutlich zu einem Typ von größeren Arbeitsbooten, wie sie während des 1 Jh. n. Chr. auf dem See Gennesaret verbreitet waren und auch verschiedentlich auf Münzen dargestellt wurden" (54; cf. the survey of R. Riesner, "Schiffe auf dem See Genezareth", *GBL III*, 1371f). Zangenberg cites with approval the interpretation of R. Reich: "It seems that the assemblage could have stood for and expressed values which the landlord of the house cherished and wished they would not be wanting, like his livelihood (expressed by the fishing boat by which he probably made his living), food and beverages, the Roman bathhouse and his time of leisure" (54).

Zangenberg goes on to describe the importance of fishery for Magdala and the city's economic dependence on this trade. The Greek name of the city (Taricevai, meaning "factories for salting fish") indicates that Magdala had an importance and function beyond what was common

in the region. He goes on to describe the importance of fish as basic means of subsistence and the various ways it was prepared and consumed. In this context Zangenberg briefly surveys the various occurrences of fish in the Gospels. Starting with the references to fishermen, the author studies the conditions of their trade and raises the question of the socio-historical parameters of fishery around the lake: "Vermutlich war die Fischerei zunächst analog zur Landwirtschaft primär auf die Großfamilie bezogen, und sicherlich war die Arbeit hart und beschwerlich. Dennoch erlauben uns die Texte wie auch eine wachsende Zahl archäologischer Befunde ein differenziertes Bild. Wichtig ist zunächst die Feststellung, daß Fischer üblicherweise keinesfalls zu den ärmsten und geringsten Berufsständen der damaligen Zeit gehörten" (61; cf. the description of the economical and social situation of Galilee in W. Bösen, *Galiläa als Lebensraum und Wirkungsfeld Jesu: Eine zeitgeschichtliche und theologische Untersuchung*, 2. ed.; Freiburg etc.: Herder, 1990, 172-203, who reaches similar conclusions for the situation of fishermen).

This claim is supported by comparison with other trades in Galilee and the economic parameters ("Darüber hinaus garantierte die stetige Nachfrage nach Fisch in der Region um den See einen konstanten Absatz, und das ständig knappe Angebot an Fisch sorgte dafür, daß der Preis nicht zu stark nachgab. ... eine unangefochtene, geradezu monopolartige Stellung zumindest auf dem jüdischen Markt", 61). Some passages in Josephus (*Vita* 163f) suggest a different socio-economical context for Magdala from the family-oriented manner of work of fishermen reflected in some Gospel accounts. The wealthier citiziens of the city would have profited from the regional abundance of fish as owners of vessels and patrons/employers, without ever being physically involved themselves. Zangenberg thus concludes: "Nicht nur bezüglich der Tätigkeit, sondern auch hinsichtlich der allgemeinen Lebensumstände sollte man sich vor einer Romantisierung der Fischerei hüten ... Somit scheinen die Umwälzungen des 1 Jh. n. Chr. auch die Fischerei nicht ausgespart zu haben" (63).

Further sections deal with the general prosperity (indicative of which is e. g. the hippodrome) and the make-up of Magdala's population: "... daß neben der aramäisch bzw. hebräisch sprechenden Bevölkerung ein ausreichend hoher Grad and griechischsprachigen Bewohnern ansässig war. Diese Personen dürften Magdala nicht nur zufällig als Wohnsitz gewählt und den Charakter des Ortes stark mitgeprägt haben. Immerhin läßt bereits die zeitlich früheste Erwähnung von Tarichäa erkennen, daß die Stadt recht wohlhabend gewesen sein muß ..." (64; note the *corrigendum* on this page: three lines below this quotation the year 53 BC should read 43 BC). The facts that the city was well known from the *outside* as well as the presence of Greek-speaking inhabitants on the *inside* supplement each other well and support the picture of Magdala as an urban centre on the Western shores of the *Lake Gennesaret* (66). The last major section studies the stance and fate of Magdala in the Jewish war and the conclusions which Josephus' report allows for the inhabitants. The conclusions of Zangenberg's epilogue are worth quoting at some length:

> Magdala war kein verschlafenes Landstädtchen, sondern verfügte über beträchtlichen Reichtum und zeigte ein beachtlich "urbanes" Gesicht. Insofern könnte sich eine Latrine dl nicht trotz, sondern gerade *wegen* ihres "hellenistischen" Charakters problemlos in den kulturellen Kontext des Ortes einfügen. Doch nicht die Interpretation eines einzelnen Gebäudes ist an sich schon bedeutsam, sondern das differenziertere, auf die Region bezogene Gesamtbild. Der See trennte nicht, er verband Orte, Kulturen und Regionen. Deutlich wurde auch, wie wenig repräsentativ die bisher ergrabenen und publizierten Orte sind, wenn es darum geht, ein umfassendes Bild vom kulturellen Profil der Region um den See Gennesaret zu entwerfen. Offensichtlich existierten unterschiedliche Grade an Urbanität und unterschiedliche Bevölkerungsschichten neben-, bei- und miteinander. Kapernaum ist eben kaum ein "typischer" Musterort am See Gennesaret, von dem man bequem auf andere schließen könnte. Schließlich ist die Frage der kulturellen Einflüsse auf die Bau- und Lebensweise der Menschen endgültig von der Frage nach ihrer religiösen Identität zu unterscheiden. Magdala zeigt, wie wenig die Gleichung "jüdisch = wenig hellenisiert" *versus* "pagan = stark hellenisiert" als tragfähige Grundlage zur Rekonstruktion des kulturellen Lebensraums Galiläa taugt (74).

Seven pages of bibliography round off the well-set and illustrated volume.

Despite its brevity (81 pp), this is a valuable study for all students of NT background, of ancient synagogues, the character of first century Galilee and – last but not least – of Mary of Magdala, who not only plays a role in the Gospels (Mt 27.56,61; 28.1; Mark 15.40,47; 16.1; Luke 8.2; 24.10; John 19.25; 20.1,11,16,18), but also in recent scholarly research and popular attempts of different quality (cf. S. M. Ruf, *Maria aus Magdala: Eine Studie der neutestamentlichen Zeugnisse und archäologischen Befunde*, Biblische Notizen Beih. 9; München, 1995, the excellent recent survey of all aspects regarding Mary in Bibel und Kirche 55, 2000, 170-224).

On Mary, Zangenberg concludes: "Die vergleichsweise häufige Erwähnung und deren thematische Kontexte (Heilung von sieben Dämonen; Mitglied einer Gruppe dankbarer, mit Jesus und den Jüngern umherziehender Frauen; Zeugin der Kreuzigung; Zeugin des offenen Grabes und Gesandte des Auferstandenen) legen nahe, daß es sich um eine für frühchristliche Kreise noch klar identifizierbare und keinesfalls unwichtige Person gehandelt haben muß" (72). However, Zangenberg raises noteworthy *caveats* for the responsible interpretation of her person: "Von der Rekonstruktion des kulturellen Profils einer galiläischen Stadt mithilfe der Archäologie hin zur Profilierung der religiösen Ausrich-

tung und sozialgeschichtlichen Aussagekraft einer (!) ihrer Bewohnerinnen führt in der Tat kein methodisch kontrollierbarer Weg. Niemand kann entscheiden, ob Maria eine ‚typische' Bewohnerin Magdalas war, und nirgends wird erkennbar, daß das NT sie als solche sieht. Im Gegenteil: das NT sperrt sich geradezu gegen seine solche ‚Auswertung', es ist nur an Maria selbst und nicht an ihrem Herkunftsort interessiert" (73).

However, despite these cautions, it can at least be said that the reference in Luke 8.2 to Mary, called Magdalene (ἡ καλουμένη Μαγδαληνη), as one of the healed women in the entourage of Jesus who "provided for them out of their resources" (V 3, NRSV), does fit well with Zangenberg's sketch of the relative wealth of Magdala. In view of his reconstruction Mary form Magdala was not an ignorant "country bumpkin": "... nicht etwa aus einem kleinen Fischerdorf stammte, sondern aus einer florierenden jüdischen Stadt am See Gennesaret, in der teilweise hellenistische Einflüsse im alltäglichen Leben der Bevölkerung eine Rolle spielten" (72). It is not unlikely that Mary Magdalene's contribution to the common fund somehow came from fishery-related income of her family (this assumption is supported by the observation that the female disciple mentioned immediately after Mary was at least through her husband a woman of social standing and presumably wealth. That Mary Magdalene was previously liberated from seven demons, might likewise furnish an interesting perspective on the city (cf. Luke 8.26-30!).

Zangenberg's sketch of the fishery, its significance and social parameters also casts an interesting light on the (probably) seven fishermen disciples of Jesus (cf. the above-mentioned studies of Thiede and Nun and my forthcoming review of the latter in *FilNT*)

J. Zangenberg's careful and helpful discussion in this small volume should reach its purpose of "die Diskussion zu dieser interessanten Fundstelle wieder anregen und darüber hinaus einen kleinen Beitrag zur Erforschung des kulturellen Profils Galiläas in neutestamentlicher Zeit leisten" (p. 7) and raises anticipation for his forthcoming study *Sepphoris in neutestamentlicher Zeit: Überlegungen zum galiläischen Wirkungsfeld Jesu*. Further studies of such interest and quality will turn this nascent series into an interesting venture.

Christoph Stenschke, Bergneustadt, Germany

The God You Have: Politics, Religion, and the First Commandment

Patrick D. Miller

Facets Series, Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004, x + 81 pp., p/b, £3.99, ISBN 0-8006-3662-7

SUMMARY

Patrick Miller's excellent little book discusses the implications of the first commandment for our understanding of the relationship between politics and religion. He examines the axiomatic importance of this call to undivided devotion to the Lord and then goes on to examine two of the main challenges to such commitment—the economic god and the god of political order. Miller then goes on to discuss the positive implications of the first commandment, looking in particular at Deuteronomy's expansion of this law which focuses on love for and fear of the Lord.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Patrick Millers hervorragendes Buch diskutiert die Implikationen des ersten Gebots für unser Verständnis der Beziehung zwischen Politik und Religion. Er untersucht die axiomatische Wichtigkeit dieses Rufs zur ungeteilten Devotion des Herrn und untersucht darauf aufbauend zwei der Hauptherausforderungen solch einer Hingabe – der ökonomische „Gott" und der „Gott" der politischen Ordnung. Danach diskutiert Miller die positiven Implikationen des ersten Gebots, indem er sich besonders die Ausdehnung dieses Gebots in Deuteronomium ansieht, die sich auf die Liebe zu Gott und die Furcht Gottes fokussiert.

RÉSUMÉ

Patrick Miller nous livre un excellent petit ouvrage dans lequel il traite des implications du premier commandement quant au rapport entre la politique et la religion. Il commente cet appel à une dévotion sans partage au Seigneur. Puis il considère deux idoles concurrentes qui réclament l'allégeance humaine : le dieu économie et le dieu ordre politique. Miller aborde ensuite les implications positives du premier commandement, en s'intéressant particulièrement au développement de cette loi dans le Deutéronome, en termes d'amour et de crainte du Seigneur.

* * * *

The size of this book by Patrick Miller (Charles T. Haley Professor of Old Testament Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary, New Jersey) belies its significance. *The God You Have* is only eighty-one pages in length, it is a very quick and accessible read, yet this is a work of almost prophetic significance for today's Church in the Western world. Simply put, this is an excellent book of great contemporary relevance, and one which deserves the widest possible readership.

The God You Have is part of the Facets Series published by Fortress Press. These are books designed to address important theological issues with brevity, clarity and vitality. Some of the works in this series provide helpful summaries of key academic texts—for example, Childs' *Biblical Theology: A Proposal* is a summary of his *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* and Bruggemann's *Spirituality of the Psalms* is an abridged version of his earlier work *The Message of the Psalms*. These I have found to be a helpful means of introducing key texts and concepts to theology students in the early stages of their undergraduate studies. Others, like Miller's offering, are written to address a single issue with a degree of authority and accessibility.

The God You Have, as the subtitle suggests, is a clear,

thorough and cohesive exposition of the implications of the first commandment for the development a proper understanding of political theology (pp. 1–2). Miller argues that this commandment makes such an all-encompassing claim on our devotion, that every other area of life finds its proper meaning only in the light of that primary and exclusive commitment to the Lord our God. He begins by developing the thought that the first commandment ['I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me.' (Ex 20:2–3)] is an axiomatic truth. 'From whatever direction one comes, the First Commandment is axiomatic. It is the basis and starting point for all other inferences in both theology and politics' (p. 3). He develops this basic idea in the second chapter by asking the question 'What do you do with the God you have?' If the prohibition of the first commandment refers to 'having' no other gods before/beside/besides/over against Yhwh, the positive implication is that the believing community 'has' [relationship with] the Creator God. Miller here draws out the significance of the prologue to the Ten Commandments which highlights that relationship with YHWH is grounded in the divine act of release and the call that goes with it. Our response to that call goes beyond the realms of simple 'loyalty'—the first commandment brooks no notion of 'God and …' (pp. 15–16).

Throughout the following chapters Miller develops the idea of the axiomatic claim of the first commandment with regard to 'the economic god' (Chapter 5) and 'the political order as god' (Chapter 6). These themes are not plucked from the air, rather they are developed from a careful study of the way in which the idea of idolatry develops in biblical narrative. Miller draws a parallel between the Baals of the OT and Jesus' use of Mammon in the Gospels and highlights that this was a form of idolatry often connected with the economic sphere, with wealth and consumption (pp. 26–28). Drawing upon the OT account of Amos before King Jeroboam, Miller then focuses on the dangers that occur where the political order becomes coterminous with the church (pp. 35–38). The fifth commandment requires believers to *honour* those in political authority, but the first commandment makes it clear that *obedience* grounded in absolute devotion belongs only the Lord.

In the penultimate chapter of this brief book, Miller examines the positive implications of the first commandment in terms the Shema's (Deut 6:4–5) call to love God with all of 'heart and soul and might'. Such devotion puts all else in proper context—'They *have no place*, according to the prohibition, so you cannot have any other gods; they *lose their place* as you find yourself absorbed in the love of God' (p. 47). He also examines how Deuteronomy further develops the first commandment in the idea of 'fearing God', living life in deep reverence and awe of the Creator God who is the Covenant God. The final chapter, draws further implications from the first commandment based in discussion of its context within the first table of commandments.

Quite simply, this is an excellent little book. It is accessible in terms of its tone and its price and I thoroughly recommend it. Miller grounds his contemplation very strongly in the biblical text and so avoids any excessive cultural application. Although, clearly, Miller is based in an American setting the discussion found in this book applies pointedly to the Church in Europe. The clarion call to focus our life of faith around the absolute, theocentric devotion of first commandment is a challenge that today's Christian community must constantly embrace afresh.

Dominion and Dynasty: A theology of the Hebrew Bible (New Studies in Biblical Theology 15)

Stephen G. Dempster

Leicester: Apollos; Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2003, pp. 267, £12.99, pb, ISBN 0-85111-783-X

SUMMARY

This is a refreshing attempt to read the Hebrew Bible as one unified Text, rather than a 'ragbag' of diverse texts, as is so often the case with Old Testament/Hebrew Bible theologies. Dempster follows the basic storyline of the Hebrew Bible (for which, he states, 'there is strong evidence that this was the Bible of Jesus Christ'), finding there the key themes of 'dominion' and 'dynasty' (or 'geography' and 'genealogy'). The book starts with a strong methodological chapter that lays the foundation upon which the following chapters build as they work through the Hebrew Bible section by section. A concluding chapter looks forward to the New Testament. I laud Dempster's effort to turn the reader's attention to the 'big picture', though I fear that in the process he tends to flatten the diversity and colour of the Hebrew Bible.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dies ist ein erfrischender Versuch, die hebräische Bibel als einheitlichen Text zu lesen, nicht als Sammelsurium verschiedener Texte, wie es bei Theologien des Alten Testaments / der hebräischen Bibel so oft der Fall ist. Dempster folgt der grundlegenden Entfaltung der Geschichte der hebräischen Bibel (die, so sagt er, „gut begründet als Bibel Jesu Christi gelten kann") und findet die Schlüsselthemen „Herrschaft" und „Dynastie" (oder „Geographie" und „Genealogie"). Das Buch beginnt mit einem starken methodologischen Kapitel, das die Grundlage bildet, auf der die folgenden Kapitel, die sich Abschnitt für Abschnitt durch die hebräische Bibel arbeiten, ruhen. Ein abschließendes Kapitel bringt einen Ausblick auf das Neue Testament. Ich lobe Dempsters Bemühen, die Aufmerksamkeit des Lesers auf die großen Zusammenhänge zu lenken, aber ich befürchte, dass er dabei dazu tendiert, die Verschiedenheit

und Farbe der hebräischen Bibel einzuebnen.

RÉSUMÉ

Voici une tentative bienvenue de lire la Bible hébraïque comme un texte unifié, plutôt que comme un « micmac » de textes divers, comme c'est souvent le cas dans les ouvrages de théologie de l'Ancien Testament. Dempster s'attache à suivre la ligne narrative de base de la Bible hébraïque (à propos de laquelle il déclare : « Il y a de solides raisons de considérer que c'était la Bible de Jésus-Christ »). Il y trouve deux thèmes clé : celui du territoire (ou « thème géographique ») et celui de la dynastie (« thème généalogique »). Le livre débute par un chapitre traitant de méthodologie avec compétence, où l'auteur pose les bases sur lesquelles il va ensuite construire au fil de l'étude des différentes sections de l'Ancien Testament. On doit louer l'effort de Dempster pour attirer l'attention du lecteur sur la vue d'ensemble, mais nous craignons que, au cours de cette entreprise, il ait une tendance à aplatir la diversité et à atténuer les différentes couleurs de la Bible hébraïque.

* * * *

In a climate where many scholars question whether writing a theology of the Old Testament, or the Hebrew Bible, is possible (e.g., Gerstenberger's recent *Theologies in the Old Testament*), Dempster's book is a refreshing attempt to read the Hebrew Bible as one unified Text, rather than a 'ragbag' of diverse texts. While he shares Sailhamer's commitment to a canonical approach to Scripture, the subtitle already sets Dempster's book apart from Sailhamer's *Introduction to Old Testament Theology: A Canonical Approach*, because he specifically writes about the Hebrew Bible, for which, he states, 'there is strong evidence that this was the Bible of Jesus Christ.' He follows the text of the Hebrew Bible (or Tanakh, as he usually refers to it), finding there an overall Story (and in this he keeps company with, e.g., John Goldingay in the first volume of his *Old Testament Theology*, subtitled, *Israel's Gospel*) which is split in two by poetic commentary 'that functions to provide a pause in the storyline to reflect on the tragedy of the exile, its causes and significance'. Dempster argues that the story runs from Genesis to 2 Kings (i.e., Torah and Former Prophets); then commentary on this story is offered in the Latter Prophets and Ruth (described as a 'narrative flashback'), the Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs and Lamentations; before the story is resumed in Daniel and continues in Esther, Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles. Most of the book is devoted to what is effectively a retelling of this story and a reiterating of the commentary (that can be a bit tedious if the story is already well-known) which teases out the key theological themes that hold it together. The chief of these are the twin themes of 'dominion' and 'dynasty', which appear most often in the book as 'geography' and 'genealogy'. The importance of 'the land', and especially Jerusalem and the mountain on which it is set, is emphasised along with the great significance of the Davidic monarchy: indeed, *the* key theme could be summarised in the expression, 'the house of David', if it is understood in the dual sense of the physical place where David lived (Jerusalem and all that it stands for) and David's lineage (and all that it stands for). Dempster explains that:

> The engine that drives these themes forward is that of the relationship between the creator and his human creatures on the earth. He creates them like himself for a relationship with them, and their main task is to exercise lordship over the earth; that is, to represent God's rule over the world. The relationship fails at the beginning, and, instead of subduing the world, they are subdued by it. The rest of the story recounts the restoration of the relationship through the twin themes of geography (dominion) and genealogy (dynasty). The ending of the Tanakh, with the focus on David and the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, points to the future restoration of this relationship and thus to a restoration of lost glory.

This illustrates Dempster's focus on 'the narrative "bookends"' of Genesis and Chronicles 'which function to introduce and conclude the canon' and 'keep the main storyline in view'.

The book starts with a methodological chapter which justifies 'A literary approach to Old Testament [though this should be Hebrew Bible] theology'. This chapter provides a solid foundation for the following chapters which work through the Hebrew Bible section by section: Genesis; Exodus to Deuteronomy; Joshua to Kings; Jeremiah to the Twelve; Ruth to Lamentations; and finally Daniel to Chronicles. The book concludes with a short chapter which takes some of Dempster's conclusions into the New Testament. For me the introductory chapter is the most engaging part of the book: Dempster interacts creatively with a wide range of scholarship as he argues his case for a 'wide-angle' view of the Story rather than the 'telescopic' view most usually adopted which focuses in on a narrow part of the Text and never captures the big picture. In this I believe he provides a necessary redress to fragmentary approaches to Old Testament/Hebrew Bible theology. However, I fear that something of the tremendous diversity and colour of the Old Testament, in terms of, for example, its genres, literary styles, perspectives on life, and, yes, theological outlook, is lost in the process. Thus while I laud Dempster's effort to encourage readers to engage with the overall Story that runs through the Hebrew Bible, I would not want this to be the only Old Testament/Hebrew Bible theology someone read. A balance needs to be maintained between detailed study of the theology of any given book, or even of sections within that book and the overall story to which Dempster draws attention. A more nuanced (and undoubtedly much longer!) 'theology' might then arise which took account of unity *and* diversity.

Doug Ingram, Nottingham, England

Thou traveller unknown: the presence and absence of God in the Jacob narrative

K. Walton

Paternoster Biblical and Theological Monographs;
Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003, pbk., xvi + 238pp.,
ISBN 1-84227-059-1, £19.99.

SUMMARY

This is a book about the interpretation of the Jacob narrative, and it is somewhat unusual in combining historical and thematic approaches to this narrative. It focuses on the relationship between the history of the biblical text and the importance of the theme of God's presence and absence in the Jacob story. It concludes that this theme is central to the existing narrative and is present at all levels of the text. This is a stimulating and thoughtful piece of work which is certainly worthy of dissemination among a wider audience.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Es handelt sich um ein Buch zur Interpretation der Jakobsgeschichte. Es ist etwas ungewöhnlich in seiner Kombination von historischen und thematischen Ansätzen zu dieser Geschichte. Der Fokus liegt auf der Beziehung zwischen der Geschichte des biblischen Textes und der Wichtigkeit des Themas der Anwesenheit und Abwesenheit Gottes in der Jakobsgeschichte. Die Schlussfolgerung lautet, dass dieses Thema für die vorliegende Geschichte zentral ist, und dass es auf allen Ebenen des Textes gegenwärtig ist. Es handelt sich um eine stimulierende und bedachtvolle Arbeit, die sicher eine Verbreitung bei einem größeren Publikum verdient.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage traite de l'interprétation du cycle narratif de Jacob. Il présente une certaine originalité en ce qu'il combine une approche historique et une approche thématique du récit. Il s'intéresse à la relation entre l'histoire du texte biblique et l'importance du thème de la présence et de l'absence de Dieu dans l'histoire de Jacob. Il conclut de son étude que ce thème est central dans la narration telle qu'elle se présente aujourd'hui et qu'il y est présent à tous les niveaux du texte. C'est là une étude réfléchie et stimulante qui mérite d'être connue d'un plus large public.

* * * *

Like many volumes in Paternoster's Biblical and Theological Monograph Series, this one had its origins in a Ph.D. thesis, in this case under the supervision of Walter Moberly at Durham. The thesis concerns the interpretation of the Jacob narrative, and adopts a somewhat unusual approach in combining historical and thematic aspects of the narrative. The result is a stimulating and thoughtful piece of work which is certainly worthy of dissemination among a wider audience.

Walton argues that an appreciation of the historical development of the text is important to understanding the story of Jacob. Though he finds no evidence of continuous sources along the lines of the Documentary Hypothesis, he does conclude that the text combines several older traditions, some of which contain signs of additional perspectives, as well as an underlying redactional unity. The Bethel and Peniel episodes are important examples of some of the oldest traditions, while the Jacob-Laban episode is a self-contained story comparable to a German *Novelle*. These different kinds of material have been brought together into a discrete unity which has become the Jacob narrative. However, Walton is doubtful about speculation concerning possible historical contexts for the development of this material, and is critical of recent attempts to place it in settings as varied as a semi-nomadic context, the reign of Jeroboam I, or the exilic or early post-exilic periods.

On the thematic side, Walton argues that the Jacob narrative is constructed around the theme of divine presence and absence. This theme is present at all levels of the material, and it is a mistake to assume that a theological perspective has been superimposed over a purely human story or series of traditions. The idea of divine absence is equally important to the narrative alongside the theme of God's presence and self-revelation in the three key episodes of Jacob's birth, his dream at Bethel and his struggle at Peniel. This is because of the complex and intense nature of Jacob's story, and since this complexity seems to be rooted in the figure of Jacob, his whole relationship with God is bound up with paradox. Particular attention is given to Gen. 35, especially the summarising role of vv. 9-15, where Walton reaffirms von Rad's observation that the *deus absconditus* of earlier parts of the Jacob story has become unambiguously a *deus revelatus*.

Walton also considers the relationship between the patriarch Jacob and the nation of Israel, and considers Jacob as both a figure of promise and a type for Israel. While the focus of the story is the person of Jacob, it has been written in such a way that at many points it is also Israel's story. Again, this is an integral part of the narrative, and is intended to reflect the struggles and questions of later Israelites as well as Jacob's personal experience.

One quibble might be that the book probably underestimates the interaction between God and Jacob, and that the passages where God appears to be unseen reflect the impact of the three key revelations just as much as the accounts of those revelations. It would also have been helpful to have integrated the observations about God with the development of Jacob's character. Part of the problem here is that the book takes almost no account of the conclusion of the Jacob story in Gen. 48-50. Though on one level it can be argued that a definite ending occurs at 35:29, it is particularly unfortunate that Jacob's testimony in 48:15-16 and the account of his death and burial in 49:29-50:14 are left out of consideration. The book also does not really consider how the Jacob story relates to the plot of Genesis, and only briefly discusses its relationship to the themes of promise

and blessing.

On the more technical side, it would have been interesting to consider the impact of at least three levels of redaction, of the Jacob story itself, of the book of Genesis, and of the Pentateuch and beyond. One wonders too how long scholars will continue to use the language of the Documentary Hypothesis when they are really talking about something quite different. The term 'Priestly' for example, is used here only of a redactional function, and without any reference to priestly interests.

Though these are not minor matters, they do perhaps indicate the stimulating nature of this book, and its potential impact on a series of related issues. This volume will certainly have an impact on future interpretation of the Jacob story, and the emphasis on the role of the divine perspective is especially welcome.

Martin Selman, London, UK

Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch
T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker [eds.]

Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2003, xxii + 954 pp., £32.99, hb, ISBN 0-85111-986-7

SUMMARY

This volume is a very worthy addition to the four earlier volumes in IVP's sister NT series. It contains 159 articles from the pens of 86 contributors located mainly in North America and the UK. It includes the anticipated variety of article types, with no article being less than a thousand words long, and some of them being fairly substantial (up to 26 pages in length). Many of the contributors are already well-known in the evangelical constituency (and beyond) for significant works in their allotted subject area. The publishers anticipate three distinct audiences for the work: students, church educators, and scholars, although the first two categories are likely to be the main beneficiaries.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieser Band ist eine sehr wertvolle Ergänzung der vier früheren Bände des IVP-Pendants zum NT. Er enthält 159 Artikel von 86 Autoren, die hauptsächlich aus Nordamerika und aus Großbritannien kommen. Er beinhaltet die erwartete Vielfalt von Artikeltypen. Keiner der Artikel ist weniger als 1000 Wörter lang, und einige sind recht umfangreich (bis zu 26 Seiten). Viele der Autoren sind bereits in der evangelikalen Welt (und darüber hinaus) gut bekannt aufgrund signifikanter Arbeit in den zugeordneten Gebieten. Die Herausgeber gehen von drei verschiedenen Adressatenkreisen aus: Studenten, kirchliche Ausbilder und Gelehrte, obwohl die ersten beiden Kategorien wahrscheinlich am meisten von dem Werk profitieren werden.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce volume vient s'ajouter aux quatre volumes déjà parus dans la série sur le Nouveau Testament publiée par IVP. Il contient 159 articles rédigés par 86 auteurs, principalement d'Amérique du Nord et du Royaume Uni. Les articles sont de types variés. Ils font tous plus d'un millier de mots et certains d'entre eux sont très substantiels (jusqu'à 26 pages). Parmi les auteurs, beaucoup sont déjà bien connus du monde évangélique et au-delà pour des travaux d'envergure dans le domaine relatif au sujet qui leur a été imparti ici. Les éditeurs comptent que cet ouvrage bénéficiera aux étudiants, aux enseignants dans les Églises et aux spécialistes, même si les deux premières catégories seront sans doute celles qui en tireront le plus profit.

* * * *

This volume is a very worthy addition to the four earlier volumes in IVP's sister NT series and fills this reviewer with anticipation for the remaining volumes in the OT series. It contains 159 articles from the pens of 86 contributors, the vast majority of whom are from North America and the UK.

The dictionary includes the anticipated variety of article types. However, no article is less than a thousand words long, with the result that one will not find here the kind of brief article found in other dictionaries on each place or personal name occurring in the text of the Pentateuch (e.g., no articles on 'Amalekites', 'Ararat', or 'Nile'), although some of these may be listed in the 12 page Subject Index towards the end of the volume. Also, other subjects that have dedicated articles in other dictionaries are either not covered here at all (e.g., 'Anger', 'Adoption'), or, are subsumed under related categories (e.g., 'Glory' is mentioned under both 'Holiness' and 'Tabernacle'). On the other hand, one finds articles here on subjects (e.g., 'Alien') that are not always covered in other dictionaries.

Some articles provide fairly substantial treatments of their subjects, e.g., 'Sacrifices and Offerings' (26 pages); 'Tabernacle' (20); 'Law' (18); 'Covenant' (17); and 'Ethics' (15). Many of the contributors have already written significant works on their allotted subject (e.g., McConville on 'Deuteronomy', Walton on 'Creation', Goldingay on 'Hermeneutics', Fretheim on 'Exodus', and Williamson on 'Covenant').

The publishers anticipate three distinct audiences for the work: students, church educators, and scholars. On the basis of the content and depth of many of the articles this is a reasonable assumption, although the first two categories are likely to be the main beneficiaries. Undergraduate students should find many of the articles very helpful in the early stages of their preparation of essays and dissertations, while postgraduate students beginning their research could also derive benefit from the summaries of the present state of scholarship, and also from the (often) significant bibliographies. Scholars may find that some of the articles from outwith their particular research area provide helpful orientations to the subject, particularly if they are required to teach undergraduate classes in these areas. Preachers and other church educators will benefit from the subject overviews

contained in many articles, and will be enabled to keep abreast of more recent trends in pentateuchal scholarship which has seen a revolution in many of its aspects in recent decades.

Reflecting to some extent the diverse intended audience, it was refreshing to find an article on 'Preaching from the Pentateuch' (pp 637-643) in which McMickle offers some statistics that underline the relative rarity of preaching from anywhere in the OT, let alone from the Pentateuch. He then develops his work under three headings: 'The Necessity of Preaching from the OT' in which he reminds us rightly that 'it is impossible to understand the ministry of Jesus and Paul or the theology of the NT without having ... understanding of the ... Pentateuch'; 'Preaching from the Pentateuch'; and 'Principles for Christian Preaching from the OT', under which heading he covers, as well as allegory and typology, issues of continuity and discontinuity, liberation theology, promise and fulfilment, and salvation history. In the section on 'Preaching from the Pentateuch,' McMickle, highlights 'creationism versus evolution' as a significant preaching theme, thus revealing the article's North American provenance. It would have been helpful to see more emphasis placed on the theology of creation in relation to that of temple, an area in which a fair amount of research and writing has been undertaken in recent years. Other issues highlighted as being worthy of the preacher's attention are: the role and status of women in the community of faith, especially with regard to leadership; the institution of marriage; and environmental issues. On the whole I found this section disappointing, but perhaps that betrays my own preference for a more biblical theological approach.

In his article on 'Hermeneutics' Goldingay considers 10 different approaches to the interpretation of the Pentateuch (Christological, Doctrinal, Devotional, Ethical, Feminist, Imperialist, Liberation, Midrashic, Modern, and Postmodern) before finally anticipating 'an increased flowering of newer approaches' in the coming decades. With respect to the 'Doctrinal Interpretation' we may agree with much of what Goldingay writes as well as with his conclusion that 'the framework of Christian doctrine may be allowed to open up questions, but it must not be allowed to determine answers,' even if we are not so ready as he to excoriate 'the rule for the faith' that came to be embodied in the Apostles' Creed for being 'devastatingly effective in silencing the OT and marginalizing the place of Israel in the church's thinking.' One wonders if the silencing of the OT, particularly in Western pulpits, may be blamed more on the influence of some of the elements of 'Modern Interpretation.' In the light of the recent Iraq War, Goldingay's analysis of the 'Imperialist Interpretation' makes sober reading and we all – whether British, American, Israeli or whatever – would do well to heed his warning that 'interpretation of the Pentateuch in the light of the conviction that our particular nation is an embodiment of Israel needs to be accompanied with interpretation in the light of the possibility that our nation is an embodiment of Egypt.' Goldingay is almost as critical of some more recent interpretative approaches (e.g., liberation, and feminist) which illustrate 'the way in which an interpretive stance or commitment both opens interpreters' eyes to aspects of the text that have been ignored and also risks assimilating the text to the commitment that the interpreters have already made.'

Occasionally, contributors 'take critical assumptions to task, seeking at least to identify the albatross if not to remove it'. One such instance is with the article on the 'Religion of the Patriarchs' (671) where the author has chosen 'to offer an alternative' to the standard critical approach 'without proof' with the result that students will have to look elsewhere for help with responding to the critical approach. On the other hand, the sermon preparation of preachers is likely to benefit from the article.

As is usual with works of this genre, the contributions vary in approach and quality and are therefore of variable usefulness to one or other of the anticipated audiences. However, at the price, this is a treasure trove of great value and one that scholars, pastors and (where finances allow) students should have within easy reach.

Hector Morrison, Dingwall, Scotland

Encountering God's Word: Beginning biblical studies

Edited by Philip Duce & Daniel Strange

Leicester: Apollos, 2003, 219 pp.,£9.99, pb,
ISBN 0-85111-792-9

SUMMARY

This valuable book is aimed at students beginning biblical studies at university level and comprises four essays written by different authors delivering courses of university standard. Essays (1) and (2) discuss beginning study in the Old and New Testaments respectively. Number (3) deals with biblical hermeneutics in a post-modern world, and (4) examines the roles of faith and evidence in believing the Bible. The authors take a sympathetic approach to both the methods of modern scholarship and also to the question of evangelical integrity. Hard questions have to be wrestled with but, the contributors maintain, it is possible to do this while being fully committed to the veracity of scripture and also from the perspective of experimental faith. Highly commended.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieses wertvolle Buch richtet sich an Studenten, die das Studium der Bibel auf Universitätsniveau beginnen. Es umfasst vier Essays von verschiedenen Autoren, die universitäre Kurse unterrichten. Essays (1) und (2) diskutieren die Fragen zu Beginn des Studium des Alten und des Neuen Testaments. Nummer (3) behandelt biblische Hermeneutik in der Postmoderne, und Essay (4) untersucht die Rolle

von Glaube und Evidenz in der Akzeptanz der Bibel. Die Autoren vertreten einen sympathetischen Ansatz sowohl im Hinblick auf die Methoden moderner Wissenschaft als auch im Hinblick auf evangelikale Integrität. Schwierige Fragen erfordern Auseinandersetzung, aber, so die Autoren, man kann dies tun und gleichzeitig der Wahrhaftigkeit der Schrift sowie einer Perspektive experimentellem Glaubens verpflichtet bleiben. Sehr zu empfehlen.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage est destiné aux étudiants qui débutent un cursus biblique au niveau universitaire. Il comprend quatre essais écrits par différents auteurs qui enseignent au niveau universitaire. Les deux premiers traitent respectivement de la manière d'aborder l'étude de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Testament. Le troisième traite de l'herméneutique dans un monde post-moderne et le quatrième considère la part de la foi et des preuves objectives dans la croyance en la Bible. Les auteurs adoptent une approche qui prend en compte les méthodes de la science moderne tout en se préoccupant d'intégrité évangélique. Les questions difficiles ne doivent pas être éludées, mais les auteurs maintiennent qu'il est possible d'aborder ces questions tout en adhérant pleinement à la véracité de l'Écriture ainsi qu'en se plaçant du point de vue de l'expérience de la foi. Ce livre est chaudement recommandé.

* * * *

This valuable book is aimed at students beginning, or perhaps in their second year of, biblical studies at university level and comprises four lengthy essays, each by a different author. The first two focus on beginning study in the Old and New Testaments respectively. Essay three deals with the thorny issue of biblical interpretation while the final essay discusses the roles of faith and evidence in believing the bible. The authors are all fairly young graduates/university teachers who bring a fresh, up-to-date feel to the book.

In the first essay, Peter Williams of Aberdeen University, encourages the student to get to grips with two preliminaries in approaching the study of the Old Testament. Firstly, the text itself ought to be read and re-read to gain familiarity with the primary source material. Secondly, learn Hebrew! These are two laudable aims and justifiably emphasised. Williams then raises some of the main issues which an evangelical student holding to a high view of scripture will have to deal with in any Old Testament course. Is all of it true? Did Isaiah write any or all of the book which bears his name? Who is Wellhausen and was he right? What about the book of Joshua—is genocide defensible? Is the Old Testament coherent? Should the New Testament be consulted? His main point is that students should accept that they will be challenged to engage critically with these legitimate questions, some of which do not yield to definite solutions.

The second essay, by Alistair Wilson of Highland Theological College, also places much emphasis on reading the primary text and on the learning of Greek. However, equally as important as these two, says Wilson, is that the student read as widely as possible in background matters. Familiarity with first century Judiasm, intertestamental literature, rabbinic sources, the Dead Sea scrolls and early Christian writings help to create a feel for the life context in which the New Testament was written. Wilson also discusses in some detail the function and role of criticism and provides a useful survey of the main branches of critical study. This is all very helpful and is essential reference material for the beginning student to review from time to time to gain familiarity with the 'buzz' words of New Testament study.

Thirdly, Antony Billington of London Bible College takes the reader into the troubled waters of hermeneutics and does so with a steady hand. Billington engages with the recognised triad of author, text and reader (with special reference to the work of Kevin Vanhoozer.) He is also convinced of the value of Biblical Theology as an interpretative key to scripture and devotes considerable space to a discussion of its significant role. This chapter is thoroughly up to date and provides the reader with a comprehensive overview of much recent discussion. As a summary of the issues involved in fulfils its purpose admirably. My only question is whether or not this is suitable material for those beginning biblical studies. Perhaps this chapter is more suited to later second year or third year study so that the nuances of hermeneutics might be appreciated.

The final essay is by David Gibson, a postgraduate student at King's College, London (now at the University of Aberdeen). Gibson discusses the roles of faith and evidence in believing the Bible and rightly argues for the primacy of the gospel and the work of the Spirit. It is through the preaching of the gospel and the illumination of the Spirit that we come to faith in the first place. And this experience of coming to faith, says Gibson, leads us to accept the truthfulness of the Bible. But Gibson asks; is there something more that can be said to convince a skeptic (i.e. probably one's fellow students) that the Bible is the word of God? Is there something *external* to scripture which is incontrovertibly true and which will command universal assent? Gibson answers in the negative. Rather, the position for the evangelical student is that he operates within a matrix of contributing factors. This matrix comprises the message of the gospel, the Lordship of Jesus Christ, issues of external corroboration such as the use archaeology and historical documents and, finally, appropriate moral responses.

This is a sympathetic and valuable book designed to discuss the wider implications of Biblical studies courses at university level. It is intended to complement the material encountered on such courses, and does so admirably It is also a valuable book for church leaders who have to encourage the leaders of tomorrow. The bibliographical references are superb and give many helpful suggestions as to further reading as well as suitable internet sites.

John Johnston, Inverness, Scotland

De Ignorantia Christi: Zur Parusieverzögerung in den synoptischen Evangelien

T. Laato

Saarijärvi: Evangelisk Litteraturmission (SCRIPTURA), 2002, 114 pp.,

SUMMARY

Finnish scholar Timo Laato addresses three verses (Matt. 10.23; Mk 9.1; 13.30) which are crucial to the study of the eschatology of Jesus and the Gospels. The central argument is that it is not possible to say that Jesus was *mistaken* in his eschatological expectation. Laato argues that Matt. 10.23 is a "mission" saying, rather than being centred on persecution; Mk 9.1 refers primarily to the transfiguration; and the "all things" in Mk 13.30 are the initial signs of the end, including the destruction of Jerusalem.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der finnische Forscher Timo Laato beschäftigt sich mit drei Versen (Matt. 10,23; Mk 9,1; 13,30), die für das Studium der Eschatologie Jesu und der Evangelien entscheidend wichtig sind. Das Hauptargument lautet, dass es nicht möglich ist zu sagen, Jesu eschatologische Erwartung sei falsch gewesen. Laato versteht Matt. 10,23 als „Missionsspruch", nicht als auf Verfolgung zentriert; Mk 9,1 als primär auf die Verklärung bezogen; und das „alle Dinge" von Mk 13,30 als auf die anfänglichen Zeichen des Endes bezogen, inklusive der Zerstörung Jerusalems.

RÉSUMÉ

Le théologien finlandais Timo Laato, se penche sur trois versets qui ont une importance cruciale pour la compréhension de l'eschatologie de Jésus et des Évangiles (Mt 10.23 ; Mc 9.1 ; 13.30). Sa thèse centrale est qu'il est impossible de dire que Jésus s'est trompé quant à son attente eschatologique. Il s'efforce de montrer que le premier texte n'a pas pour thème central la persécution, mais qu'il a trait à la mission. Le deuxième se réfère principalement, selon lui, à la transfiguration. Quant à « toutes ces choses » dont il est question dans le troisième, il s'agit des signes initiaux de la fin, ce qui inclut la destruction de Jérusalem.

* * * *

In his famous *Quest of the Historical Jesus*, Albert Schweitzer based his understanding of Jesus on the assumption that the Gospels (especially Matthew) were broadly historically reliable. The centrepiece of his reconstruction of Jesus' eschatological message (and Schweitzer saw Jesus' preaching as eschatological through and through) was the view that Jesus sent his disciples out into the towns of Israel with the expectation that their suffering on this mission would precipitate the end: 'I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes' (Matt. 10:23). Alongside this passage, there are other references which scholars generally take to refer to Jesus' imminent expectation of the final consummation of the Kingdom, such as the statements that his hearers would not die before witnessing certain events which he foretold (Mark 9:1; Mark 13:30).

It is these three verses (Matt. 10:23; Mark 9:1; 13:30) which the Finnish scholar Timo Laato tackles in this brief study of the eschatology of Jesus and the Gospels. His attempt does not, he writes, have a 'hidden agenda' of attempting to establish the historical truth of the Gospels in every detail (13); nevertheless, the end result, he claims, is that at the very least it is not possible to say that the Jesus of the Gospels was *mistaken* in his eschatological expectation (84).

Taking Matthew 10:23 first, Laato concludes that the verse cannot (as many scholars now agree) bear the weight which Schweitzer laid upon it. Laato takes the saying about the disciples not exhausting the towns of Israel as referring primarily to the disciples' mission, and that it will not be complete before the coming of the Son of Man. Although this might encourage anticipation of an imminent *parousia*, he continues, it certainly does not exclude a more distant expectation of the end (28–29). Thus, the point Jesus makes is that only at the very end will the salvation of Israel be complete (leaving open the question of how it will be accomplished). Although this reviewer prefers the interpretation that Jesus is here reassuring the disciples that they will always have a place of refuge in the towns of Israel, Laato's reading is certainly a plausible one, which would safeguard the infallibility of Jesus' teaching.

Jesus' teaching in Mark 9:1, 'I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power', is the focus of Laato's second exegetical study. In this he argues that the reference is to the transfiguration which immediately follows. The point of the expression that 'some standing here will not taste death' is thus that the inner circle of Peter, James and John (the 'some') will actually witness in their present lives (i.e. before 'tasting death') the glory of Christ which others will only see after their deaths. Laato is right to observe, following Cranfield and others, that this is by far the most convincing exegesis of the saying and the transfiguration pericope which follows.

In terms of Mark 13:30 ('this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened'), Laato ties the 'all these things' most closely to the initial signs (which include the destruction of Jerusalem) of the last days. Thus he answers the question of the reliability of the statement by focusing on the point that Jesus' listeners will witness the birthpangs which precede the end, rather than the end itself.

In all this, however, Laato presents a picture, more complex than this review has so far implied. He anchors a good deal of his discussion in the fact that many of the statements about future expectation in the NT (and, for that matter, in the OT) have a calculated ambiguity. (Laato outlines this in his initial section on 15–22.) So for example, it is too simplistic to say that the transfiguration is an isolated event; rather it inevitably overlaps in some way with the resurrection and the parousia. As

a result, the self-confessed ignorance of Jesus, expressed in Mark 13:32 about the date of the end (hence the Latin title of the book) means that he expresses himself in a way that raises the possibility of an imminent end, while leaving open the eventuality that it might also be more distant. As a result, the warnings to 'stay awake' are equally relevant to Jesus' initial hearers, to the audiences of the gospels, and to us today.

This is a very useful book, although it will be inaccessible to many British and American students because it is in German. Unfortunately, it may prove difficult for continental students to find this as it is published by a small Finnish press. Many English-language readers may find many of the key issues on this vital topic addressed in a similar way in C.E.B. Cranfield's works: see for example his commentary on Mark (Cambridge, 1959), and the essay 'Thoughts on New Testament Eschatology', in his *The Bible and Christian Life* (Edinburgh, 1985).

Simon Gathercole, University of Aberdeen

L'évangile selon saint Luc 15,1-19,27

François Bovon

Genève: Labor et Fides, 2001. P.b., n.p..
ISBN: 2-8309-1008-7.

SUMMARY

The third volume of F. Bovon's major French commentary is characterized by clarity of presentation; literary and theological sensitivity; careful attention to the history of interpretation of the Gospel as well as to contemporary scholarship; and a sense of the importance of the biblical text for the modern Christian community. It is weakened at certain points by Bovon's unwillingness to accept that all the material attributed to Jesus derives from the historical Jesus which necessarily leads him to rather speculative source- and redaction-critical reconstructions. Generally, however, Bovon is willing to wrestle with the text as it stands.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der dritte Band von F. Bovons großem französischen Kommentar zeichnet sich durch folgende Charakteristika aus: Klarheit der Präsentation, literarische und theologische Sensibilität, sorgfältige Aufmerksamkeit gegenüber der Auslegungsgeschichte des Evangelium und der gegenwärtigen Forschung, und einem Sinn für die Wichtigkeit des biblischen Textes für die moderne christliche Gemeinde. Eine Schwäche, die hier und da zutage tritt, besteht in Bovons Unwilligkeit, alles Jesus zugesprochene Material als vom historischen Jesus stammend zu akzeptieren, was ihn notwendigerweise zu recht spekulativen quellen- und redaktionskritischen Rekonstruktionen führt. Im allgemeinen ist Bovon aber willens, mit dem Text in der Form zu arbeiten, in der er gegeben ist.

RÉSUMÉ

Le troisième volume du commentaire majeur de François Bovon sur l'Évangile de Luc se signale par la clarté de sa présentation, sa sensibilité littéraire et théologique, son attention à l'histoire de l'interprétation de l'Évangile, en même temps qu'aux travaux contemporains. Il a aussi le sens de l'importance du texte biblique pour la communauté chrétienne d'aujourd'hui. Son point faible réside dans le refus de Bovon d'accepter la valeur historique de certains des faits et gestes, ou des propos, attribués à Jésus. Cela le conduit à échafauder, à l'aide des méthodes de la critique des sources et de la critique rédactionnelle, des reconstructions au caractère plutôt spéculatif. En général, cependant, Bovon accepte de traiter le texte tel qu'il se présente.

* * * *

François Bovon is Professor of New Testament at Harvard Divinity School, having previously taught at the University of Geneva for many years. Bovon has already published on Luke, including a respected history of interpretation. This is the third volume of Bovon's major four-volume commentary, the first volume of which was published (in German) in 1989. It is being published in both German and French, and the first volume has now been translated into English in the Hermeneia series (2002).

The format of the commentary is very user-friendly. Each major section begins with relevant bibliography, which augments the general bibliography found at the beginning of each volume. Bovon's bibliographies are extensive (for example, more than five pages of specific studies on the parable of the Unjust Steward alone) and generally representative of Lukan scholarship, including a good number of evangelical works.

A French translation of the Greek text is provided. This appears to be a fresh translation by the author although I could find no explicit declaration that this is the case. (No doubt, some of these fundamental matters are dealt with in the first volume of the commentary.) Brief annotations indicate how the translation relates to the underlying Greek text.

Bovon divides his comment into 'analyse' and 'explication'. In the former section he considers issues relating to literary context, parallel passages, etc.. In the latter section Bovon explains the words and phrases of the unit of text and draws out theological significance. The comments are written in clear prose and are arranged in paragraphs which relate to units of thought (whether composed of a single verse or a group of verses). Bovon writes with a light touch which makes the commentary more readable than many.

Scholarly discussion is addressed, but not in an overpowering way. Most of the main body of the commentary deals with features of the biblical text, with only occasional reference to scholarly views. While the footnotes often simply convey bibliographical information, there are also some substantial comments on scholarship.

Bovon indicates in his Preface that he became more

and more interested in the history of reception (German: *Wirkungsgeschichte*) of the biblical text as the writing of his commentary progressed. Certainly, his substantial surveys of the history of reception of appropriate passages gives this third volume a distinctive character. For example, Bovon provides more than eight pages of discussion of the history of the reception of the parable of the two sons (Luke 15; traditionally, the Prodigal Son), including some brief comment on its impact on art. Although his surveys are very interesting and useful, I would have liked to have seen Bovon draw out more explicitly the significance (if any) of the history of interpretation for his own interpretation.

Bovon's comments are generally very helpful. He is sensitive to the literary coherence of the text and to its theological significance. His brief concluding paragraphs are thoughtful and thought-provoking reflections on the on-going message of the text. He normally treats Luke's work with respect, although he does seem to suggest that Luke is sometimes inconsistent in carrying his fundamental principles (for example, on the role of women) through in his narrative (p. 5). At times I also found Bovon too confident in his source- and redaction-critical claims for my comfort (e.g., p. 246 on the 'development' of the Zacchaeus pericope), and too ready to accept the notion that some words attributed to Jesus in the Gospel may in fact have originated from an early Christian prophet after Jesus' earthly ministry (pp. 67-68: 'Celui qui parle ici n'est pas le Jésus historique mais un prophète chrétien.').

Bovon's comments are characterised by close attention to the features of the biblical text and there are frequent references to specific Greek words and phrases. Although Bovon comments on the Greek text of the Gospel, all Greek script is followed by a translation and so readers without Greek should be able to use the commentary. Greek and Hebrew script is used in the footnotes.

The text seems to be happily free of errors, although I noted a few errors in the bibliographies, such as that Bovon attributes the work by David Wenham to his father John (p. 165).

In summary, this volume is both an important addition to Lukan scholarship and a useful tool for those who are entrusted with the task of teaching the Church.

Alistair I. Wilson, Highland Theological College, Dingwall, Scotland

God and History in the Book of Revelation: New Testament Studies in Dialogue with Pannenberg and Moltmann (Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 124)

Michael Gilbertson

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, xiii + 235 pp., £ 47.50, hb, ISBN 0-521-82466-4

SUMMARY

God and History in the Book of Revelation, one of the fruits of the recent surge of interest in the relationship between biblical studies and systematic theology, places Jürgen Moltmann's and Wolfhart Pannenberg's respective views of history into a constructive dialogue with the way in which the Book of Revelation uses spatial and temporal categories to account for God's relationship to the world. The book is highly recommended, especially for its deft analysis of how John the Seer places the ambivalent situation of his audience within God's ultimate purposes for both heaven and earth.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

God and History in the Book of Revelation, eine der Früchte des neuen Anstiegs des Interesses an der Beziehung zwischen biblischer Wissenschaft und systematischer Theologie, bringt die jeweiligen Ansichten über Geschichte von Jürgen Moltmann und Wolfhart Pannenberg in einen konstruktiven Dialog mit dem Weg, auf dem das Buch der Offenbarung räumliche und zeitliche Kategorien benutzt, um Gottes Beziehung zur Welt darzustellen. Das Buch ist sehr zu empfehlen, besonders für seine geschickte Analyse der Art und Weise, auf die Johannes der Seher die ambivalente Situation seiner Adressaten in Gottes ultimative Absichten mit Himmel und Erde einzeichnet.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage est le fruit de l'intérêt renouvelé pour la question du rapport entre les études bibliques et la théologie systématique. L'auteur entame un dialogue avec Moltmann et Pannenberg sur leurs vues respectives quant à l'histoire, en considérant la manière dont le livre de l'Apocalypse utilise les catégories spatiales et temporelles pour rendre compte de la relation de Dieu au monde. Le livre se recommande en particulier pour son analyse approfondie de la manière dont le visionnaire de Patmos situe les situations ambivalentes que connaissent ses lecteurs dans la perspective du projet divin concernant et le ciel et la terre.

* * * *

In *God and History in the Book of Revelation* Michael Gilbertson constructs a dialogue between the Book of Revelation and Wolfhart Pannenberg's and Jürgen Moltmann's respective views of history. In addition to this theological concern, a methodological question runs throughout the book: how can we relate biblical studies and systematic theology, which have usually been held at

arms length in modern academia? The heart of Gilbertson's methodological argument is set out in the second chapter of the book, where he first clearly and concisely analyses a variety of attempts to account for the purpose of and relationship between the two disciplines, and then proposes a dynamic relationship where both the contemporary concerns of modern theology and the historical particularity of the text are given their due weight. Gilbertson justifies his method with an appeal to Alister McGrath's defence of a modified propositional approach to theology in which dogmatics is seen as an elaboration of what is found in Scripture, where "Christian doctrine is...concerned with the unfolding and uncovering of the history of Jesus of Nazareth, in the belief that this gives insight into the nature of reality." (McGrath, as quoted, 44) Apart from a not uncommon but unfortunate neglect of the church's tradition of reading and interpreting Scripture, Gilbertson approach is sensible; he neither diminishes the concerns for the historical contingencies which has been the emphasis of biblical studies nor downplays the role of theological construction within the social, cultural and philosophical circumstances in which we find ourselves. In Christian theology, biblical studies and systematic theology need one another because the former always draws us back to the particularity of the biblical texts that the latter is based upon while the latter seeks to articulate a Scriptural view of reality within which we ought to read the text. One may add, which Gilbertson does not state explicitly, that it is perhaps time for Christian scholars to stop viewing the two as distinct disciplines but see them as the exegetical and conceptual aspect of the one theological task—to speak the truth as informed by Scripture within and for the world in which we find ourselves.

Gilbertson's concern to give biblical studies and systematics their due concern shapes the structure of the book's positive theological argument. In the first chapter Gilbertson sets out the modern philosophical and theological 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 Panneberg 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 shown 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 and Schloss Mittersill, Österreich

After Christianity

Daphne Hampson

Revised Edition (London: SCM, 2002)
ISBN: 0334 02640 7 £16-95

SUMMARY

Daphne Hampson abandoned Christianity for two main reasons. First, because Christianity claims to be an historical religion, based on revelation, which requires affirmation of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ, which she believes is impossible, post-Enlightenment. Second, because Christianity is not moral, as evidenced by its treatment of women. Hampson has not become an atheist, however. Her 'theism' centres on that 'dimension of reality which is God' and is heavily dependent upon the concept that human beings must exist 'centred in relation'. This is a challenging book and provides much material for reflection. Her critique of feminist and Liberal theologians who remain within the church while themselves ceasing to believe in the historicity of Christianity and the uniqueness of Christ is pertinent. However, her judgement that Christianity is not 'moral' must be challenged. She provides no rational basis for a morality which is anything other than a purely personal and individualised human construct.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Daphne Hampson gab das Christentum aus zwei Hauptgründen auf. Erstens, weil das Christentum behauptet, eine auf Offenbarung gegründete historische Religion zu sein, was die Zustimmung zur Einzigartigkeit Jesu Christi verlangt, was sie als unmöglich, nachaufklärerisch ansieht. Zweitens, weil das Christentum nicht moralisch sei, wie sein Umgang mit Frauen belege. Hampson wurde jedoch kein Atheist. Ihr „Theismus" setzt den Schwerpunkt auf „die Dimension der Realität, die Gott ist" und ist stark abhängig von

dem Konzept, dass Menschen „beziehungszentriert" leben müssen. Es handelt sich um ein herausforderndes Buch, das viel Material zum Nachdenken liefert. Ihre Kritik an feministischen und liberalen Theologen, die in der Kirche bleiben, während sie selbst nicht mehr an die Historizität des Christentums und die Einzigartigkeit Christi glauben, ist angemessen. Allerdings muss ihr Urteil, das Christentum sei nicht „moralisch", angegriffen werden. Sie stellt keine rationale Basis für eine Moralität bereit, die nichts anderes als ein rein persönliches und individualisiertes menschliches Konstrukt ist.

RÉSUMÉ

Daphne Hampson s'est détournée du Christianisme principalement pour deux raisons. Tout d'abord parce que le Christianisme se présente comme une religion ayant un fondement historique et basé sur une révélation, ce qui conduit à l'affirmation du rôle unique de Jésus-Christ. Or elle croit qu'il n'est plus possible d'admettre une telle conception depuis le siècle des lumières. La seconde raison est qu'elle juge le Christianisme contraire à la morale, comme le montre à ses yeux la manière dont il traite les femmes. Hampson n'est toutefois pas devenue athée. Elle professe un « théisme » centré sur « cette dimension de la réalité qu'est Dieu ». Au cœur de sa conception est l'idée que les êtres humains doivent exister « centrés sur les relations ». À bien des égards, son livre donne matière à réfléchir. Sa critique des féministes et des théologiens libéraux qui restent dans l'Église alors qu'ils ont cessé de croire à l'historicité du Christianisme et au caractère unique de Christ sonne juste. Cependant, sa pensée selon laquelle le Christianisme n'est pas moral appelle une réponse. Pour sa part, elle ne fournit aucun fondement rationnel à une morale autre qu'une construction purement humaine, personnelle et relative aux individus.

* * * *

This book presents a considerable challenge to orthodox theology, coming as it does from a theologian who has departed from her former affirmation of Christianity. Professor Daphne Hampson, formerly of St Andrews University in Scotland, now teaches in Oxford University. She is a feminist theologian who came to the conclusion that feminism and the 'Christian myth' are incompatible and so she abandoned Christianity.

Professor Hampson rejected Christianity for two main reasons, expressed in the first two chapters of this book. First, because authentic Christianity claims to be an historical religion, based on revelation, which requires us to affirm the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. It is, she says, impossible to affirm these concepts in a post-Enlightenment situation. Her second reason for rejecting Christianity is that it is not moral, particularly as evidenced by its treatment of women. She writes, 'Why anyone who calls herself (or himself) a feminist, who believes in human equality, should wish to hold to a patriarchal myth such as Christianity must remain a matter for battlement' (50). Hampson goes even further and insists that the very concept of worship, whether it be of the Christian God, or of any other god, is quite impossible on her feminist understanding of reality. She says, 'Thus it may be of the essence of feminism that a feminist cannot call anyone else "Lord".' (77)

In chapter three, Hampson spells out her understanding of the nature and scope of feminist thinking, not only in theology but also in other significant areas. She demonstrates a significant familiarity with, and grasp of, this feminist literature. In the course of her argument, she rejects one traditional interpretation of post-Enlightenment thinking, which is that human beings became 'self-centred' (or autonomous) in their thinking, rather than 'God-centred'. Instead, she wants to argue for 'self in relation', arguing that women have understood the concept of relationality much better than men and that feminist theology is more capable of developing this theme. (115)

In chapters four and five, Hampson looks at the 'paradigms of male religion'. She deals first with the way in which Christians have viewed God and is quite scathing in her denunciation of male religion and its symbol systems: 'Man's religion would suggest that he swings between two scenarios, each of which is equally impossible. On the one hand he sees himself as a lone, isolated, independent and self-sufficient monad. He constructs the transcendent knowing that this is untenable and yearning to find another possibility, he projects the ideal of "the feminine" (which may be in the form of God, the church, or woman) in which he seeks to lose himself and so find a completion which he lacks. What is markedly absent in the symbol system of the religion is the understanding of a self as centred in relation: able to stand on its own, yet existing in reciprocity with others (including persons of the neighbouring sex). In other words, what is lacking is exactly what I have characterized as the feminist ideal.' (207)

She is similarly harsh in her judgement of the way in which Christianity has treated women: 'What I believe we need to confront is that the harm which has been done to women within Christian culture is not simply an aberration. It is not as though that symbol system which is Christianity could simply be purified, after which it would serve as well. The shocking treatment of women, throughout Western history, has at least in part flowed from that mythological universe which is Christianity. Nor is it possible through a renewed reading of the scriptures to revert to some pristine faith. For the scriptures themselves exemplify the problem.' (209)

It would be wrong to imagine, however, that Hampson has become an atheist in rejecting Christianity. Thus, in chapter six she spells out what her 'theism' would look like, in contradistinction to Christianity and the other major religious traditions. It centres on that 'dimension of reality which is God' and is heavily dependent upon the concept which has been at the heart of her argument, namely, the need for human beings to exist 'centred in relation'. The question must be asked, however, as to

why Hampson wishes to remain a theist, in spite of her critique of Christianity and, by implication, the other major religious traditions. She expresses it like this, 'I am theistic on account of certain observations as to the presence of power and love in the world. Thus I speak of the existence of "another dimension to reality"; of there being more than meets the eye of there being that on which we can draw. I call this dimension of reality God.' (213) She begins by engaging in dialogue with Schleiermacher but wrestles with any concept of god as a being who acts in this world. As she says, 'The supremely difficult question to answer is whether what we name God has agency, or whether all agency lies with ourselves.' (231) She is open to the idea that the word 'god' may simply refer to a dimension of our own reality rather than a 'being' and that the evidence which draws us to that conclusion includes the existence of love as a reality and the felt need for a reality from which we can draw healing. Finally, in chapter seven, she spells out her understanding of spirituality in this new, experientially-based, theistic worldview.

As an evangelical I was challenged by this book and found much to make me reflect. I was taken, for example, by the unexpected criticism that Hampson makes of Liberal theologians and feminists who have chosen to remain within the church while ceasing themselves to believe in the historicity of key elements in Christian faith and denying the uniqueness of Christ. She criticises them for retaining the 'Christian myth' while no longer believing that it is true, using the words of traditional theology while meaning something quite different. Her comments about Christianity being founded upon an historic revelation and the 'particularity' or uniqueness of Jesus Christ found me standing alongside her in the analysis, while rejecting her conclusions.

If I were to engage in a critique of the book I imagine that I would begin by asking for the basis upon which she judges Christianity. In other words, she rejects it is immoral but that implies a basis from which to judge. If the basis for moral judgements is not an objective given in Scripture (as in orthodox theology) then how do we create this moral construct, which then becomes the basis for the analysis and ultimate rejection of Christianity?

The book is well worth reading, if only to be aware of how someone can create an entire theistic worldview after taking leave of Christianity.

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Islam in Conflict: Past, Present and Future

Peter G. Riddell and Peter Cotterell

Leicester: IVP, 2003, 231pp., £9.99, pb,
ISBN 0-05111-998-0

SUMMARY

This clearly-written work ambitiously aims to discuss the origins and beliefs of Islam, the history of Muslim interaction with non-Muslims, and, its main concern, how to find a way forward from the current rise in violent Islamism. The authors argue that while contemporary political events contribute to Islamic violence, the root causes lie in certain Qur'anic texts and particular episodes in the life of Muhammad. Muslims therefore need to develop hermeneutical solutions enabling them with integrity to lay aside the literal understanding of verses advocating violence. While this emphasis on the importance of foundational texts is helpful, more reflection on why violence flourishes at certain times, and how issues of political context interact with scriptural factors would be beneficial.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieses in großer Klarheit geschriebene Werk hat den Ehrgeiz, die Ursprünge und Glaubenssätze des Islam, die Geschichte der moslemischen Interaktion mit Nicht-Moslems und, als Hauptanliegen, die Möglichkeiten eines Auswegs aus dem gegenwärtigen Anstieg des gewaltbereiten Islamismus zu diskutieren. Die Autoren argumentieren, dass, obwohl gegenwärtige politische Ereignisse zur islamischen Gewalt beitragen, die grundlegenden Ursachen in bestimmten Korantexten und besonderen Episoden im Leben Mohammeds liegen. Moslems sind daher gefordert, hermeneutische Lösungen zu entwickeln, die ihnen erlauben, mit Integrität das wörtliche Verständnis von Versen, die Gewalt verteidigen, beiseite zu legen. Obwohl diese Betonung auf grundlegende Texte hilfreich ist, wäre mehr Reflektion über die Ursachen von sporadisch aufflammender Gewalt und darüber, wie Angelegenheiten des politischen Kontextes mit Faktoren der Schrift interagieren, der Sache föderlich.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage d'une grande lisibilité a pour ambition de présenter les origines et les croyances de l'Islam, l'histoire des relations entre Musulmans et non Musulmans. Son objectif principal est de chercher comment enrayer la montée de l'Islamisme violent. Les auteurs montrent que, si les événements politiques contemporains contribuent à la violence islamiste, la cause fondamentale de cette violence se trouve dans certains textes coraniques et des épisodes particuliers de la vie de Mahomet. Il faut donc que les Musulmans élaborent des solutions herméneutiques qui leur permettent, en toute intégrité, de laisser de côté la lecture littérale de versets appelant à la violence. Cet accent sur le rôle important des textes est éclairant, mais il faudrait aussi s'interroger sur les raisons pour lesquelles la violence éclate à certaines époques, et sur les incidences réciproques du contexte politique et du facteur scripturaire.

* * * *

This work, published in the U.S. under the title *Islam in Context*, is co-written by two authors based at London School of Theology, (formerly London Bible College). The authors (hereafter R&C), who share responsibility for the entire text rather than dividing chapters between them, have three basic aims (p. 7). These are: first, to help the reader to understand Islam; secondly,

to 'present an understanding of the ongoing interaction between the Islamic World and the rest of the world'; and thirdly, 'to attempt to find a viable way forward that might help to resolve present tensions and conflict'. The focus, if not the bulk of the text, is on the third, finding a viable way forward. To provide an overall understanding of the other two topics addressed – Islam in general, and Muslim interaction with the rest of the world in particular- would be a tall order in the space available. Nonetheless, a helpful initial framework for further study can be gained, as long as the reader is alert to the book's recurrent emphasis that it is ultimately scriptural text, not political context, that explains the current situation.

The work is divided into three parts. Part I, 'Looking Back', looks at the earliest stages of the rise of Islam, including its interaction with Christianity. Part II, 'In Between: the Ebb and Flow of Empire' gives a tour through history, including Muslim empires, and missionary engagement with Islam, justly noting that Western powers are not the only ones to have engaged in forceful empire-building. Part III, 'Looking Around' assesses the current situation, devoting chapters to both the radical and moderate Muslim worldview, and a closing chapter on 'Responses to Terrorism'. There is useful background here on Islam for the reader new to the subject, presented in a clear framework. However, there are, perhaps almost inevitably, some limitations, which a summary of the key argument of the book can illustrate.

The controlling metaphor shaping *Islam in Conflict* is of Muslims now finding themselves at a crossroads. One path into the future involves opting for a peaceful interpretation of Islam. However, another possible path is that of radical, violent Islamism. Which path Muslims might take, and how they can be helped to tread the path of peaceful Islam is the central concern of the book. The authors take issue with the many commentators, including some Christian writers, who attribute the current resurgence of violent Islam to the political situation in the Middle East, including the Israel/Palestine question and American foreign policy over Iraq. While accepting that these factors fuel Muslim violence, R&C deny that they provide the cause (see, e.g., p. 163). Instead, they argue that violent aspects of Qur'anic teaching and the life of Muhammad (which they acknowledge are not the only aspects of either) are the root of the problem. Hence the key issues are more scriptural than political.

As for possible solutions, according to R&C Muslims need to develop a new hermeneutic enabling them to take less literally the violent strand of Qur'anic teaching which exists in uneasy relationship with more peaceful and positive elements also found in the Qur'an. This new hermeneutic should be based on distinguishing the meaning of a text from its significance. So (p. 207), instead of cutting off the hand of the thief, as the Qur'an (Sura 5:38-9) commands, imprisonment fulfils the underlying significance of this command, namely discouraging the thief from further stealing, and deterring others from following his example. Since for R&C scriptural issues lie at heart of the problem, hermeneutical solutions, forged and embraced by Muslims themselves, are needed to provide the stimulus to take the path of peace.

While this argument is a useful corrective to the idea that all blame for current violence lies at the door of Western policy makers, there is also a risk of moving too far in the other direction. While the Qur'an does contain within it certain verses advocating the use of force (as Muslim scholars of the classical period recognised without embarrassment), more space could be given to the question of why Islamic violence flourishes at some times more than others. Furthermore, there could be more discussion of why, as the authors note, only a minority of Muslim scholars attempt to re-contextualise elements of Islam to develop a peaceful interpretation of their religion. The question of the integrity of such re-contextualisation also arises. Non-violent readings cannot be advocated simply because they achieve the desired result without regard for whether such readings can be defended as the most plausible, an issue which R&C presumably consider Muslims themselves should address.

As for method and approach, R&C helpfully adopt the strategy of quoting almost entirely Muslim thinkers to illustrate their points. However, the work also gives the impression, not surprisingly given its aims and scope, of straining to cover a huge amount of ground. So judgments are sometimes passed speedily without supporting argument, such as reference to 'the somewhat arid nature of orthodox practice' (p. 43). Occasionally, terms could be more adequately defined, such as the crucial jihad, the meaning of which is wider than 'holy war' (p. 27), though including it.

The sheer range of the book means that there are many specific points that must be passed over here. In sum, while it is true that questions of the role and interpretation of the Qur'an are too easily forgotten by political scientists and others, there remains more to be said concerning the interaction of text and context.

A final word on the cover picture. This, perhaps from publisher rather than authors, shows uniformed Muslims praying on a battlefield with a tank in the background. The implication that Islam is intrinsically military seems to be in tension with the book's central image of different possible paths for Muslims into the future.

Martin Whittingham, Edinburgh, Scotland

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Ruth Gouldbourne is Tutor in Church History and Doctrine at Bristol Baptist College, Bristol.

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James Bruce is on the ministry team at St Mary's Bransgore, UK.

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Shawn D. Wright is Assistant Professor of Church History at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, USA.

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Editorial

Mark Elliott

One of the tasks of public theology (see the previous volume of *EJT*) is to know how to speak of Christian beliefs and values in the setting of the challenge of other religions. It may seem that to have a journal that seems to promote European theology, even while attempting to be evangelical might unconsciously take the Gospel with all the European cultural layers which have built up during the centuries. One way of approaching the matter is say, that of Hans Küng's search for a Weltethos, to affirm a common religious project which might show up just where Western does not mean Christian. Of course there is truth and wisdom in such a method. The different approach of Pope Benedict XVI is to keep a distance of respect for other religions as very much 'other' and to focus on a European Christian inheritance, but to do this self-critically. This Eurocentricity might seem worrying, since as Cardinal he used to insist on the European provenance of ideas which affected the church of the time, notably Marxism on South American Liberation Theology. Everything was European. To counter this, we should perhaps not argue that the Gospel is more middle Eastern than it is European, but we do well to remember that it is neither.

On the day of the terrorist attack on London (7 July, 2005) Bundeskanzler Gerhard Schroeder spoke of how 'our' values were stronger than 'theirs', and that this meant 'we' would overcome. The 'we' was those who affirmed the world system as it stood, the 'they' – those who sought to challenge this by violence. The G8 is an economic forum; the EU is based on economy. A recent work from the Netherlands called *Atlas of European Values* (Leiden: Brill, 2005) has sections on Europe, Family, Work, Religion, Politics, Society and Well-Being with subsections such as 'Unconditional love' 'Work ethos' 'Importance of God' 'Post-materialism' 'Reasons for neediness' (coming after Tolerance and Solidarity) and 'In control of your life'. In a less optimistic tone Joseph Ratzinger (as was) in his *Werte in Zeiten des Umbruchs* (Herder, 2005) has suggested that greed, corruption and the commodification of persons in labour markets or genetic experimentation follow when the 'bottom line' for agreement and common cause in Europe is a mere economic one. Ratzinger proposed a form of a natural theology that could survive the loss of a common belief in Revelation since the Enlightenment. As the greatest good and guarantor of the human rights (which includes the right not to be treated as a means to an end), a belief in the Creator God should be proclaimed in the public sphere. But the author who would become Pope four months after this book was published believes in an old Christian Europe as dreamed of by Adenauer and Schumann, and remembers the Second World War in a way that the German Bundeskanzler for one, would want Europe to forget and move on. There is also some blindness in the Catholic vision (with all its referencing to Maritain and Spaemann) towards Protestantism in its conservative form: American free church religion is viewed as too fragmented to stand up to the capitalist pragmatism of the New World; English-speaking theology since Newman not worth considering.

One should notice the very considered tone of the Italian Alleanza Evangelica's *Comunicato stampa sull'elezione di Benedetto XVI*. There is a request to the new Pope to reconsider Papal authority and bishops as the mark of the church, since the political stature of his predecessor John Paul II caused evangelicals to worry about the 'neutrality' of the Italian state. How the new Pope will engage with Protestants remains to be seen, but some of the first signs are not discouraging. There is an opportunity for evangelicals and catholics to meet on historic 'Nicene-Chalcedonian' orthodoxy, without pretending to agree on other matters.

But in all this the question of 'other religions' and 'the wider world' perhaps has been obscured. Islam is not seen in its most positive light due to Al-Qaeda, and this world-wide horror may only encourage reaction, such as the banning of headscarves from French classrooms. The justice of the war in Iraq seems long forgotten, with the Euro-

peans who opposed it motivated more by concern about American hegemony than about innocent Iraqis. And the Indian and Far Eastern religions are too other-worldly for them to appear as problems. The Pope like most of us is not really all that interested in other religions, but wants to keep them at a distance and will not repeat the 'experiments' of John Paul II at Assisi. The Pope's enemy is secularism and alliances have to be forged in the Christian truth. The issue is intra-European. This means starting with Europe not because it matters more or less than the USA (as seems to come across in President Bush's policy-making) but because it is where the heart of even the world-wide Catholic church is. We too who are European Evangelicals, we have to start 'at home' and move outwards. Can a European understand the Middle East or Africa without first understanding Europe? The urgency seems especially clear in the case of Eastern Europeans moving to find work in Western Europe. What kind of welcome will the Church have for them, not least for those who migrate on a seasonal basis? Will there be outreach, help with language, spiritual comfort of a type that will not look too unfamiliar to them? The Church in mission does not ignore its own problems, but witnesses that however serious these are, the hope in Christ is greater and that the lowliest evangelical theologian can play a part in His kingdom coming. This can only give depth and authority when God's people in Europe speak out about the Middle East and further beyond. A respect for the otherness of say, Islam, must be combined with a love for the people of those lands such as to take a deep interest in them and their fortunes under the merciful Providence of God.

ERRATUM:

Please note that the first article in Volume 14, Number 1 (Church and State: The Contribution of Church History to Evangelical Models for Public Theology, by Professor A.T.B. McGowan, Highland Theological College, Scotland), incorrectly carried the wrong summaries. The correct summaries are given below:

SUMMARY

The argument of this paper is that the Christian church has a right to a place in the public square, on the basis of a proper understanding of the relationship between Church and State, as taught in Scripture. The various historical options for a church/state relationship are considered, concluding in favour of the calvinistic model, as seen particularly in the history and theology of the Church of Scotland. Various problems relating to this view are explored and, finally, some implications are drawn for us as Europeans.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Argumentation dieses Artikels lautet, die christliche Kirche habe aufgrund eines angemessenen Verständnisses der Beziehung zwischen Kirche und Staat, wie sie die Bibel lehrt, ein Recht auf einen Platz in der Öffentlichkeit. Die verschiedenen historischen Optionen zur Beziehung zwischen Kirche und Staat werden betrachtet und ein calvinistisches Modell, wie es in der Geschichte und Theologie der Church of Scotland sichtbar ist, wird schlussendlich bevorzugt. Verschiedene, dieser Ansicht anhaftende Probleme werden untersucht und abschließend werden einige Implikationen für uns als Europäer aufgezeigt.

RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur tente de montrer que l'Église chrétienne a le droit d'avoir sa place dans la sphère publique sur la base d'une compréhension adéquate de la relation entre l'Église et l'État telle que cela est enseigné dans l'Écriture. Il considère les modèles divers de relations entre l'Église et l'État que l'on rencontre au cours de l'histoire et conclut en faveur du modèle calviniste tel qu'il se rencontre, en particulier, dans l'histoire et la théologie de l'Église d'Écosse. Il examine de nombreux problèmes liés à ce point de vue et, finalement, propose des implications pour les chrétiens d'Europe.

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Biblical Patterns For Public Theology

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SUMMARY

These Bible studies were delivered at the Biannual Conference of the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians held at the Neues Leben Zentrum, Wölmersen, Germany, during 13-17 August, 2004. The theme of the conference was 'Evangelical Models for Public Theology', and the Bible readings take up different aspects of Christian responsibility in the life of the community.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Diese Bibelarbeiten wurden auf der zweijährlich stattfindenden Konferenz der FEET (Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians) im Neues Leben Zentrum, Wölmersen, vom 13. bis 17. August 2004 gehalten. Das Konferenzthema lautete "Evangelikale Modelle für öffentliche Theologie", und die Bibelauslegungen greifen verschiedene Aspekte der christlichen Verantwortung für das gemeinsame Leben auf.

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RÉSUMÉ

Les études bibliques qui suivent ont été apportées au colloque bisannuel de l'Association Européenne de Théologiens Évangéliques, au Neues Leben Zentrum, à Wölmersen, en Allemagne, en août 2004. Ce colloque avait pour thème général le sujet des modèles évangéliques pour l'éthique sociale et politique. Ces études bibliques abordent plusieurs aspects de la responsabilité du chrétien dans la vie sociale.

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1. LESSONS FROM SAMUEL

Reading: 1 Samuel 12

Everybody knows two familiar stories about the biblical character Samuel; there is the story of the young boy Samuel hearing the voice of God in the temple by night, and there is the later story of how he was sent with his horn of oil to anoint David as king over Israel. But apart from that he's probably a rather vague figure to many of us. Two books in the Bible, that were originally one, are named after him although he did not write them and in fact he dies well before the end of the first of them. It is clear that he was an extremely important figure in the history of the people, so it may be useful to look briefly at him and see what his significance for us might be in our present context of a conference on public theology.

Some time ago I was listening to a conversation on the radio in which various BBC overseas correspondents looked at the prospects for the new year that was just approaching. It was sadly impressive how they all gave the most pessimistic forecasts of what was likely to happen over the world generally with things getting worse and worse, and in many respects their forecasts have been all too accurate. In such a situation political affairs must inevitably claim our attention. I don't agree with those Christians who say that the business of the church is solely to prepare us for the next life and not to interfere with the history of our present world. If part of being a Christian is precisely to make us better human beings, then what happens in the world and how we behave in it is very much our concern.

Hence back to Samuel. His story is quite a long and complicated one, and I have to say that Old

Testament scholars have some difficulties in working out exactly what happened in detail, indeed whether it all happened just as it is told. But what we do have is a story that was skilfully put together to bring out some important points for the readers, and we have to look at it on that level.

We plunge into the midst of it in 1 Samuel 12 which is in effect a celebration of Samuel's retirement. He had filled the time after the last of the Judges as himself a judge, a prophet, a leader of the people, but he was now old enough to be succeeded by somebody else, and the people had made it clear that they did not want the succession to pass to his sons who were dishonest and untrustworthy. No, the people wanted to choose a king like other nations round about them. Here in this scene we have Samuel giving his farewell speech before he demits office. From it we can catch glimpses of four actors in the situation.

First, there is Samuel himself, *the retiring ruler*. He offers a defence of himself as a leader. He lists the things that he has not done. He has not used his position to take other people's property. He has not cheated anybody. He has not accepted bribes to induce him to give judgment in favour of one person rather than another. Now that is quite a remarkable record when you compare it with the reputations of some of our present or recent rulers, politicians both national and local, civil servants and local government officials, both in this country and elsewhere. It also stood out in Samuel's own world. A recent book by John Goldingay that covers this period in Bible history bears the title *Men behaving badly*, and there is an awful lot of bad behaviour in Samuel and Kings. Even rulers and leaders who had a fairly good reputation afterwards got them only when people conveniently forgot the other side of their characters; David and Solomon were not as saintly as later writers made them out to be. Maybe Samuel didn't always live up to his own ideals. We do get the impression in this chapter and elsewhere that he was more than a trifle peeved at being dropped by the people from office. But two things stand out. First, that he knew how rulers ought to behave, and second, that, unless he had successfully cheated the people, he had lived up to his ideals.

Second, Samuel talks about God himself, *the unseen ruler*. He gives the people a history lesson in which they see that God has been and continues to be active in their history. It was God who rescued them from Egypt in response to their cries for help. But when they forgot about God, they found that God acted to discipline them and bring them back to himself. We cannot ignore the element of judgment in biblical history. Now I know that some people find this to be a difficult concept, but on a human level if you have a world in which there are wicked people who oppress other people, it is impossible to see how there can be any control over them and any establishment of justice without some kind of coercion and pain for the wicked. The biblical writers clearly believed that God acted in a way like human administrators of justice to make wicked people realise the folly of their ways and restrain them from further evil. So a large part of what we call judgment in the Old Testament is meant to be reformatory, to make people realise the error of their ways and encourage them to turn away from it.

That is what is being described here. For we read that when the people came to realise that they were being judged, they cried out to God to deliver them, and once again he heard their cries and relented. He gave them good leaders.

All this is meant to show that God acts through historical events to bring his people back to him when they have sinned and done wrong. We can thus have a positive view of the role of God here. His judgments are meant to be restorative for his people.

This leads us very smoothly to the third actor, or rather set of actors, in the story. These are *the people themselves*, the subjects ruled over by Samuel and then by Saul. They had asked Samuel to appoint a king for them. They were able to exercise some influence over how they were ruled, and their intervention brought the period of the judges to an end, and led to the transition to a monarchy. Later still, in 1 Kings we see how they took part in a rebellion against the monarchy that led to a split in the kingdom. On certain occasions, therefore, they had power and they wielded it.

But right here Samuel reminds them of the danger of wanting a human king. It seems that Samuel was uncertain whether the people's request for a king was an act of rebellion against God or not. God himself was their king, and a human king might be understood as a rival to God. Were the people rejecting God? But God was prepared to let them have their way, provided that their human king was subject to himself and followed his commandments. But nevertheless, it is clear that people, like their rulers, can act sinfully and make political errors. Somewhere in history somebody once said Vox populi vox Dei, meaning that the voice of the

people can be accepted as the voice of God when decisions have to be made. It is clearly false. The people themselves are fallible and sinful. The Men Behaving Badly are not just the rulers and leaders!

Fourthly, and finally, we return to Samuel again, but this time in a different role. At this point he retires from being the judge or leader of the people, but he doesn't retire completely, and it is worth spending a moment on *the retired leader*. In fact there is as much space devoted to him in 1 Samuel after his retirement as there is to the period before it; despite his admission that he was 'old and grey' he seems to have remained remarkably active. What happened? Basically, a person may retire from their particular office or task, but there is no retirement from being God's servant. So here we have a glimpse of what Samuel would continue to do after his retirement.

First, there would be no let up in his *teaching* and warning the people. I will teach you the way that is good and right, he says. There would continue to be advice from him that carried the authority of God. Even here he cannot restrain himself from warning the people against turning aside from God to idols. They are to serve the Lord with their whole hearts. Idols cannot do them any good, because they are powerless. They cannot rescue people from danger. Let them remember what God has done for them, and remain fully loyal to him.

Second, the people had asked Samuel to pray for them because they feared judgment. Maybe they were thinking simply of their present crisis. But Samuel goes beyond that, and declares that he will not fail to pray for them. He will go on doing this and not fall short in his concern for them. The Bible teaches clearly that God does respond to prayer by his people, and that God does things for some people because other people pray for them; a vast amount of prayer is what we call intercession, in which we ask on behalf of somebody else rather than on behalf of ourselves. The two things seem to go together, the obedience of the people to God and the prayers for them made by Samuel work together for their good.

The rest of the story illustrates this ongoing influence of Samuel throughout the difficult years of Saul's erratic rule and the rise to power of David.

What has the story to say to us in the contemporary world?

First, it illustrates *the character of the national leader*. It is interesting that time and again when rulers and leaders are being chosen, the biblical writers ignore the question of their specific qualifications and competences for office and concentrate on their moral character. Not that the former doesn't matter, but it is crucial that they be honourable people who are not there to make what they can for themselves out of their position, to favour their friends and to oppress the poor. That is important for the choice of church leaders, as 1 Tim. 3 rightly notes, but it is also vital in politics. The moral qualities of leaders are a significant factor. I am not persuaded that we can bracket off the private lives of politicians and ignore them. Should we not be choosing our leaders not only in view of the party that they represent, but also and perhaps rather in view of their morality and their religion?

Second, we have seen *how God was active in the history* of his people. He is the unseen but very real actor in the story. But is this how he still works in the world today? This is a big question and study of it would exceed the time available and my capability. In fact, that's what the rest of the Conference is for. Can we see the hand of God in judgment in history today? One thing is clear: we cannot assume either that because a person or a people is doing well and prospering therefore God is pleased with them and is rewarding them, or that because a person or a people is suffering in some kind of way this is a divine judgment upon them for evildoing. There is far too much innocent suffering in the world for us to be able to draw conclusions like that, and equally the biblical writers were very conscious that the wicked could prosper in a way that did not fit in with their wickedness. This makes it very difficult for us to identify specific cases of divine judgment and approval within history.

There is also the complicating factor that the New Testament makes us much more aware of the fact of a final judgment upon evil and its perpetrators. The biblical message is that there are eternal, cosmic standards of right and wrong, and that even if we escape human judgment we are still answerable to God for our lives. Human justice is so fallible and so likely to be swayed by human interest that we cannot rely on it. We need to be reminded of absolute, impartial standards and to be warned that we must all stand before the judgement seat of God to answer for what we have done in this life. How do we proclaim this effectively in today's world?

Third, there is *the responsibility of the people*. And here the important factor is that we are subjects not just of our human rulers but also of God. There-

fore, all of us are called to be obedient to God, and for that we need guidance and a clear understanding of God's purposes for society. We need to analyse the plans of politicians in the light of what we know of God's will. The obvious example of this is the measures taken to deal with terrorism and unjust rulers or with states threatening war on one another. How do we achieve justice and compassion? And this story reminds us that the people do have an influence on government. It is quite remarkable what even a comparatively small group of people can do by lobbying their representatives.

Fourth, there are the tasks from which we are never free, and these can be summed up as teaching other people the ways of the Lord and praying for them. The former is more obviously the task of people with the talent to do so, but it is important that in the New Testament the task of mutual instruction and encouragement is laid upon us all. The task of prayer is vital for all of us, as 1 Tim. 2 makes abundantly plain, and I shall return to it on a later occasion.

It follows from such a story as this that it is normal and natural for God's people to be engaged in government, and that government is a calling from God; we might want to discuss the relationship between the possibility of a pagan king like Cyrus being described as the Lord's anointed, although he was not consciously his servant, and the calling of a Christian to take part in government and being aware of it. What does this say to us about the nature of divine calling?

It is also the case that there is a responsibility for good government that rests upon people even when they are retired from leadership or perhaps have never held it; there is the responsibility to vote and lobby in the interests of truth, justice and compassion.

It is also extremely important to recognise that sin and failure can characterise even the best of leaders. Samuel's sons were not trustworthy, just like Eli's, although they presumably had a godly upbringing. And Saul, despite his initial promise fell far short; David was no saint. Biblical realism compels us to recognise the omnipresence of temptation, sin and failure, in ourselves as well as in others.

Therefore, we can never be free from the responsibility that Samuel continued to feel that he must not cease to teach people the way of the Lord. The principle of godly advisers for rulers runs through the Old Testament right on to the concept of the two anointed leaders at Qumran, one the ruler and the other a priest. It is crucial that our rulers have godly, independent advisers, and that includes our local mayors and provosts and MPs as well as the leaders of central government.

So what we can see from this passage is that there are certain clear principles about the relationship of people to God which are sustained and carried further in the New Testament, and the Old Testament brings out more clearly the political responsibility and communal context in which we live our lives as Christians. In the national and world situation in which we find ourselves I claim that the story of Samuel can start us moving in the right direction.

2. Seek the Welfare of the City

Reading: Jeremiah 29:61-14

The theme of this important passage from the Old Testament is summed up in the command: *Seek the welfare of the city*, a phrase taken up by Bruce Winter as the title of his significant book on Christian duty in the modern world.

The situation requires little explanation. It is the period at the beginning of the exile. The judgment of God upon the people of Judah and their rulers has expressed itself in the capture and devastation of Jerusalem and the surrounding land, and the carrying off of a major proportion of the people to exile in the country of Babylon. The prophet was aware that this period of exile would be extremely long; suppose that at the end of the Second World War the inhabitants of some country defeated in it had been taken away from their land and settled somewhere else; the people of defeated Ruritania were taken into exile for seventy years in Toughistan in 1945. It is now the year 2004, and they are still there and not likely to be released before 2014. It is an appallingly long period of exile, and there were people in the time of Jeremiah who thought that a couple of years would be as long as it would last (Jer 28:1-4).

What do you say in such a situation? In this case, the best that one can say is: Accept the inevitable: settle down where God puts you and live as normal a life as is possible in the circumstances. It would seem that the people in exile were determined to continue to think of themselves as Jews and retain their identity. We may compare the sentiments expressed in Psalm 137 where the people are unable to forget their homeland and long to return. Nevertheless, they are told that they must

seek for the welfare of the place where they are settled. It is the city of their enemies, and all that they might want to see is its destruction and downfall, so that they can escape and be free. In fact that is exactly what they pray for in fearsome terms in Psalm 137 with its intense longing for revenge. But that is not going to happen. What they must do is seek the welfare of their new home, because their own welfare depends upon it.

This is surely a direction to the exiles to play a positive role in the place and society where they are settled. The precise way in which it would be worked out would depend on the specific circumstances.

The vast majority of us here on this occasion are people who live in our own countries, or in countries where we have voluntarily chosen to live and where we are welcome. It may, therefore, seem less applicable to us than to the original audience. But it seems to me that there is more than one application or extension that we should pick up.

1. There are a lot of people in the world today who have been moved from their own country to another, not because of divine judgment upon them personally but because they have been forced out of their previous home through oppressive governments, religious or racial persecution and the like. They are not captives but refugees.

Is it permissible for somebody in a receiving country to say to such people: you have come to our country, and we are glad to welcome you, but may we ask that when you come among us you will seek the welfare of this country which is now, for however long, your home? We ask you to live and work for the good of the society of which you are now a part. Is such a desire something that such people bring with them? Is it something that we should expect of them? If we are members of the government, is this a kind of condition that we should be expecting to be fulfilled or should even be imposing? You are very welcome if you are prepared to be loyal and cooperative members of this people.

2. There is, of course, alongside this another extrapolation: it is obviously that we in the receiving country should be a *welcoming country* and that we should also be seeking the welfare of those who come into our country. For we are hardly in a position to say to the incomers: Seek the welfare of your new country, unless we are prepared first of all to seek their welfare. But can Christian love mean anything less? Clearly, we cannot make demands on the incomers if we are not first prepared to welcome them and seek for their welfare.

I believe that we probably have to take up this inversion of the situation envisaged by Jeremiah and consider what it means for us to live with people who are immigrants into our own country. Our understanding of divine grace as a pattern that we are surely to follow in our lives surely implies nothing less.

3. But, of course, there is manifestly a third extension of the text, which is that we don't need to be exiles in a foreign land to hear these words addressed to us. They apply to us just as strongly if we are living in what we may call *our own land*, and they call us to seek the welfare of our fellow-citizens. Here the principle of any people working for the good of the place where they live and the people who surround them is clearly envisaged.

4. And all this must surely be put in the wider context, that we seek the good of *Europe as a whole* and indeed of *the world as a whole*. The boundaries between countries and groups of countries are arbitrary.

5. Still more widely we may apply the principle to *where-ever* we are. On the one hand, the Jews were being told to act in this way because it was God who had placed them in Babylon; they were under his judgment, and he had sent them into exile (v. 7), and therefore they were to accept their situation as being under his will. The New Testament equivalent of this is doubtless Romans 8:28, which is that God can work in every situation for our ultimate good, and therefore we are to accept what happens to us as a situation with positive potential. On the other hand, there was in this case also a temporal limit set to this situation. There was a divine promise to take the people of Israel back to their own land, and God promised to provide for their welfare. This might seem to suggest that even if a situation is temporary, we should nevertheless make fruitful use of it, and not conclude that it is not worth doing anything because it is short-lived. Sometime Christian believers who know that we are in this world for a short time compared with the everlasting ages of eternity in the world to come somehow assume that this frees us of responsibility to work for the welfare of this world. How far should we see this world as a Vanity Fair through which we must seek to go as quickly as possible to reach the Delectable Country on the other side and to avoid being side-tracked and seduced, and how far are we to recognise that God has some positive purpose in the various stages of pilgrimage through which we have to pass?

There is a further point of a different kind that arises when we consider the audience to whom these words are addressed, and it raises questions that there is simply not time here to discuss fully. Here, as elsewhere in these studies, we are facing the question whether we can take the behavioural teaching of Jesus and of the biblical writers which was so frequently given to individuals and concerned with their personal, private conduct and ask whether we are required to apply it to them in regard to what they do as members of society and further we must ask whether it applies to what societies do to individuals and to one another. What does it mean for Greece in relationship to Turkey? What does it mean for one multi-national company in relation to another and also in relation to the countries in which it works? And what does it mean for the army of one country in relation to the army of another country in the time of war?

I believe that there is sufficient justification in the Bible for making this kind of public application. There is much more in the Old Testament than in the New Testament in this respect. And therefore, unless we are theological Marcionites we shall pay proper attention to it. Paul gives instructions to people in households regarding their relationships. He wrote to people in their roles and functions and gave them exhortation on how they were to behave precisely in these situations. Instructions are given regarding the people's attitudes to rulers and a little, admittedly not very much, is said about the duties of the latter. There is judgment in Revelation on godless societies. Jesus attacked the scribes and Pharisees as a body and their corporate attitudes, and he had words to say to Pilate as governor. John the Baptist told three groups of workers how to behave in their work. Jesus spoke about divorce law, about the tithing laws, about the sabbath law. The more difficult question is whether we can take the teaching that appears to be directed more to individuals as individuals and apply it to societies, governments and organisations. And among such organisations there is also the Christian congregation to which we belong in the town where we live and its relationship to the people who live or work further down the same street. How does it apply to us?

One way ahead is to consider the various alternatives to what we are told here. These include:

1. *Doing nothing*. I assume that I am an island and can live without any attention to the people around. There can be a ghetto mentality in which we put barriers between ourselves and the local people, and we see it happening in the world around us, in places where people are not being integrated into society. Is that how we ourselves behave as a congregation? We may say that our church building is open to all who want to come in, but in practice we do nothing to welcome and encourage people in.

2. *Seeking my own advantage* at the cost of other people. This is pure selfishness. But it might be worth asking what kinds of actions would fall into this category. Somewhat less reprehensible is

3. *Seeking the good of my own group* and not that of the community as a whole. Our concern is for fellow-Ruritanians living in Toughistan and not for the Toughans or anybody else. I suspect that sometimes people are really following line 2 when they profess to be following line 3. The difference between this and the first line is that here we may be actively pursuing our own interests to the disadvantage of other people. One argument against going to war with Iraq was that, however wicked Saddam Hussein might be to many of his own people, such as the Kurds, he was probably more tolerant of Christianity than would be the case if he were expelled and replaced by an Islamic government bent on imposing its own laws on everybody. Was such an argument justifiable?

4. Going further in a negative direction, we might even *seek the evil* of the Toughans because they in this scenario are the conquering nation. But if we think in terms of evangelism, it is surely obvious that we have an obligation to take the gospel to all people and not just to our friends, and it is difficult to take the gospel to people while trying to take advantage of them at the same time.

5. Over against these possibilities is positively *seeking the welfare* of the community to which we belong.

Now this could be done from the selfish desire to promote the prosperity of their new home insofar as this will be a means of increasing their own prosperity? Admittedly Jeremiah spoke to the Jewish captives in this way: your welfare depends on the welfare of Babylon, so seek the welfare of Babylon. So good may be done from mixed or imperfect motives. But in the harsh world of political reality it may be that we cannot avoid this element of self-interest and turn it to the advantage of the society. Clearly it is better if there is a genuine concern for the people around about us for their good as well as our own.

Recently my own congregation did a major refurbishment of its building to make it more

attractive and comfortable and flexible for contemporary needs. It hasn't thought out very clearly just what it is going to do with it, but maybe you can only concentrate on one thing at a time. We never thought of looking for financial help from the National Lottery, but we did discover that you can get some refund of tax from companies engaged in landfill projects, and so we applied and got a useful grant. At this point you discover that there are strings attached, and the question was what contribution will your rebuilding make to community development: devise and show us your community development plan, how the church building and the congregation can contribute to the life of the community round about us. Maybe having to do this is going to make us aware that there is a community round about us, even if virtually nobody who attends the church lives within half a mile or more of it. But my point is that here as a Christian group we are being made to ask what we can contribute to the life of the community; and as a long-time opponent of what we used to call the social gospel – that liberal diversion from the real business of evangelism – I have come to see that we can and must use every channel to demonstrate the love and justice of God and for its own sake, as well as because it establishes a point of contact for evangelism, we must seek the welfare of the community round about us. I realise that we can be so busy with the affairs of the church (and I am guilty as anybody else) that we have no time for communal involvement. And that is a practical problem to which I don't have the answer.

The picture presented here in Jeremiah is one of an integrated society in the sense that its members work together for their mutual welfare. In our pluralistic world, it must be seen as consistent with the desire to retain elements of one's own culture and especially our religion, while recognising the rights of everybody else to the same freedom.

The principle is clear enough. The execution of it is a different matter. What happens when the religions lead to a clash in the way that people live together? What do we do when a religion or way of life for instance upholds the legitimacy and desirability of homosexual and similar relationships and the upbringing of children by partners of the same sex when our belief is that the traditional heterosexual marriage is the appropriate way to bring up children; or when Islamic groups insist that the country as a whole should be governed under Moslem law because in Islam religion and the state are inseparable? What do I want my children to be taught in school, and what rights have I to expect a Christian or a Muslim or a humanist education? What do I do if I am living in Uganda in fear of my family being carried away by the Lord's Resistance Army? These questions arise and cannot be avoided. Yet they cannot be regarded as making Jeremiah's principle false or unacceptable.

Nor can I see that they make us reject the principle that we work together as fellow-Jews or fellow-Christians or fellow-Muslims for the benefit of society as a whole and that we seek to integrate so far as we can and do what is for the good of the people and the land as a whole.

If we want a New Testament passage to link with this one, we may find it in 1 Peter. The great contribution of L. Goppelt to the interpretation of that letter is that he shows how Peter expects his readers to interact positively with the world, even if it is a hostile world. There is no retreat from it. Conduct yourselves honourably among the Gentiles, so that they may see your honourable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge (1 Pet 2:12). Wives are to live in such a way that non-believing husbands may be won over. Keep your conscience clear, so that those who malign you for your good conduct in Christ be put to shame. Do not commit crimes that bring the name of Christ into disrepute. But this attitude is not peculiar to 1 Peter. But alongside this, there is full recognition of the reality of suffering in the world. This side emerges more prominently in Revelation, which has much to say about how one holds on to faith in a situation of intense suffering, and Goppelt rightly recognises that somehow both responses to the sinful world must be held together. Somehow despite every disincentive we must seek the welfare of the city, the village, the country and recognise that this maybe for our own good but must be practised because every city and village and country matters to our God.

3. Prayer for Everybody

Reading: 1 Timothy 2:1-10

The letter that we know as First Timothy was written to a man who was the overseer of a number of churches which were going through a time of trouble and difficulty. The churches had been founded by Paul, but there were at least two things going wrong in them.

One of them was a group of people in them who were putting forward teaching that was different

from Paul's. They liked to burrow in the Old Testament and they discovered many things there about which they could speculate and argue to their heart's content. Some of them came to the conclusion that some foods were unclean for Christians to eat and some of them said that marriage was wrong as well. The church was in danger of being split by these views which aroused a lot of controversy and discussion, and the controversy threatened to become the main activity of the church members. (I suspect that it involved some of the women who were teaching in the church and that this explains why Paul had to instruct them not to teach at all.)

The other thing that was causing trouble was that some of the people were very well-off. You could see this in the way in which the wives dressed to come to church; they had expensive hair-dos and they wore costly jewelry; they flaunted their wealth by the way in which they decked themselves out and tried to make themselves look attractive. So this letter was written to help the church leaders to deal with the situation. Chapter 1 is the preliminaries, putting Timothy wise to the situation and reminding him of the central facts of the Gospel. Chapter 2 gets down to the main agenda of what needs to be done. We are going to look at only one of the elements in Paul's solution to the problem. I find it very significant that the first thing that Timothy is told is to see that the congregation engages in prayer.

There is no doubt that the first and perhaps the major casualty in a church that is divided or engaged in controversy is congregational prayer. Debate and argument are so much more interesting and exciting. And people who are arguing are generally not in the mood for prayer. If a husband and wife are quarrelling with one another, it is unlikely that they will be able to conclude the day by praying together, although to do so would be the practical means of bringing their rift to an end. But the church does not need to be quarrelling for prayer to get quietly put aside. If we are even moderately well-off, so that we don't need to worry too much about where the next meal is coming from, then we can easily feel self-confident and don't need to pray to the Lord; if our daily bread is assured, why bother to pray, Give us today our daily bread? We all of us find other things that drive prayer into a corner of our lives if they don't drive it out altogether. It is very easy to become too busy to pray, and if we try to avoid the challenge by saying that of course we are really praying all the time, then very often this is a way of avoiding prayer.

In a college chapel in Cambridge which I used to attend there was a text carved on the wall which said, 'In the handiwork of their craft is their prayer', meaning that the workman could regard his handiwork as being equivalent to a prayer, an offering to God. The text was not from the Bible as we know it, but from the Apocrypha, and I venture to suggest that it is not true. If we don't have specific times or occasions for proper prayer, then we shall be in grave danger of not really praying.

Some people tell us that they can worship God by walking in the hills and seeing his handiwork in creation rather than by coming to church; I strongly suspect that it is easy to slip into enjoying the hills for their own sake with only a sideglance at the creator and I'm not sure where Jesus or the Holy Spirit fit into that alleged kind of worship. Praise God for the beauty of the world by all means, but you also need to be with the fellowship of his other people in the congregation and offering praise to him through Jesus Christ in the Spirit.

So prayer can be the first casualty of a Christian life or a congregational life that is slipping away from what really matters. But there is another way in which it is at the top of Paul's agenda. When he says 'first of all', he doesn't just mean that this is the first item for discussion; he means that it is first in importance. This is the primary thing that Christians need to be doing. It is not necessarily the first thing in order of action. For example, if you are confronted by a situation of human need in which, say, you have some people starving to death, then your first duty is surely to provide food for them and care for them rather than to pray about them. You should go and help them rather than go to your church service. But Paul is here talking not about emergencies, but about what should be normal in the meeting of the congregation, and he is saying that at the top of our priorities for what we do in church stands prayer. There are other important things to do as well, and in this same letter it is clear that teaching about Christian belief and practice is of fundamental importance. But as regards what we do when we have listened to the teaching, the priority is prayer. You may do all the other right things in church, but if prayer is lacking, then something has gone drastically wrong.

The Importance of Prayer

Why is prayer so important? What is the reason for it? Paul develops two related reasons here in this passage. He starts by saying that we should pray for everybody, and then he particularises and

speaks about kings and those in authority.

The first thing that they are to do is to pray for everybody, that is to say for any and all people, because God wants people to come to know the truth and to be saved.

Paul frequently encourages his readers to pray for the mission on which he is engaged with his colleagues. The prayer is for the missionaries and that the Word of God may run and prosper. In Paul and the New Testament generally there is not a lot of reference to prayer for the people to whom the gospel is directed, but this passage is clearly one such, and it receives powerful backing from Romans 10:1 with Paul's prayer for his fellow-Jews that they may be saved. If the church is supposed to be active in witness and evangelism, as we know that it is, then it must also be active in prayer for the world and for its ultimate welfare both spiritual and material.

Second, there is the prayer for *rulers*. We have seen how the theme is already there in the OT, with the specific example of Samuel who promises to pray for the people when he is retired from his office as their leader (a judge) and Saul takes his place. Likewise the Jews prayed for rulers, although they refused to worship them. There is a very clear distinction between praying to rulers and worshipping them and praying to God for them. The difficulty is when the ruler demands the former and is not content with the latter. But this does not invalidate the basic principle which is that we are called to pray for rulers.

The practical necessity for this is painfully obvious. During the past few years there has been more than one dreadful story about people who have visited other countries where they have been captured by lawless people and held as hostages; in some cases the story has ended happily, but in others there has been grim tragedy as the hostages have been killed and maltreated. These things have happened primarily because the governments of the countries in question have been unable to deal with the activities of these lawless groups for a variety of reasons into which we need not enter, but sometimes including the fact that some of these governments may not have treated their peoples justly and they have rebelled as their only way of getting redress for their wrongs. The result is that ordinary people are unable to live in security and peace.

One particular aspect of this problem may be when Christian people or people of other religions are discriminated against or actively attacked primarily because of their religion, and we know that this happens in many countries. But in the UK we also know that our government has treated some groups in the community, like Irish Roman Catholics, as second-class citizens.

Therefore in this passage Christians are told to pray for rulers and governments so that they may live peaceful and quiet lives in the practice of their religion. They are to pray that governments may rule with justice, so that people are treated fairly and their rights are respected, that they may have authority to ensure that lawlessness is overcome, that they may have wisdom to find workable solutions to their problems, and that they may have compassion for those who are needy. But above all the stress here is on the need to provide freedom and security for people as they live their daily lives.

The prayer for rulers is not specifically for the rulers themselves to be converted, although it is an unavoidable inference from the rest of the passage that they are include in this kind of prayer. Rather the prayer is for a situation in which believers may live a peacable life in which they can practise godliness and dignity, i.e. a Christian life in every aspect as it is understood in this letter. In the context it is reasonable to assume that this means conditions in which the Christian witness may go ahead.

This command to the church is based on the known fact of God's grace and love. He gave his Son Jesus Christ to be a mediator between himself and the sinful world, to bring about a reconciliation between God and human beings, to deliver people from their sins. That is what the gospel is about, and the church has a gospel simply and only because it has a God who is a Saviour and longs to deliver people from the mess into which they have gotten themselves. This, then, is a prayer that people should come to hear the Christian message and be given the opportunity to respond to it.

The specific point made here is that God's desire is for all people to be able to come to know the truth and so to be saved. The particular slant here may be that Gentiles are the object of God's mercy alongside Jews, particularly if there were groups in the Church with restrictive policies regarding the scope of evangelism, but in any case it suggests that the gospel is intended to go to all people in all places. It is based on the fact that God has provided only one Mediator, and therefore the way of salvation must be the same for all people. It is crucially important that Jesus is the only Saviour for Jews as well as for Gentiles.

So there is a twofold basis for the command that

we have here. God wants all people to be saved and he wants them to be able to live godly lives. Therefore it is right and proper to pray both for people to be saved and for them to have the political and social conditions in which they can live the Christian life. Pray for everybody that they may be saved. Pray for rulers and governments and all in authority that they may establish a society in which people can live quiet and peaceful lives. Pray for salvation and peace.

But why is Prayer needed?

We can appreciate the need for these two things to happen, salvation and peace. We can also see that Christians are called to work to bring them about in a whole variety of ways. But then what has prayer got to do with it? Why isn't it enough to get on with the jobs of preaching the gospel and working positively in the community? Why do we need to pray in addition? And why is prayer put at the head of the church's agenda?

First of all, there is the pragmatic answer that *prayer is effective*. When the different ways in which people can pray are listed here in this passage, the list includes requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving. Prayer isn't just asking for things to happen for ourselves and other people; it is also giving thanks for what we receive. It is expressing gratitude for requests that have been answered. There is a danger that we think of the typical 'long prayer' in church as nothing more than a shopping list in which we ask God for this, that and the other. Maybe we should turn it into a thank-you list in which we remember how our prayers have been answered. People who pray find that things happen because of their prayers. So our times of thanksgiving give us the evidence that prayers of petition and intercession are effective.

Second, *prayer releases spiritual powers* in the world. There are things that happen that we do not expect or that we cannot account for, things that take us by surprise even when we have been praying about them. There seems to be no accountable reason for some of the things that happen. That is because we think of things purely in human terms. But does not God have the power to act in the lives of people and to change them and make them behave in ways of his choice? We pray for people to be healed, and people may be healed in ways that include but also that lie beyond the capabilities of medical practice, and the word 'miracle' is not unknown even among people who are not particularly religious. Can we believe that God can do similar things in politics and social concerns?

Third, *prayer is the natural expression of our faith*. Prayer is like most of the words that we use in talking about God. We take ordinary human relationships and qualities and actions and we use them to talk about God, recognising that they are inadequate and that they are at best pictures for what lies beyond words. So we talk about God as a Father, or even sometimes as being like a mother, using the best we know about human parents and children to explain in an intelligible way how we are related to God. Or we take the idea of forgiveness and understand how God acts towards people who have disobeyed his commands and treats them with love and pardon.

Now prayer is like the human activity of asking somebody for something and expressing thanks for it. It's not the sort of relationship you have with the shopkeeper or business executive, but it arises when you are dealing with persons as persons, as in family relationships. The parents ask the child, 'What do you want for Christmas?' and the child responds with a request. The request may be one that can be met without difficulty, or it may be something that cannot be done, or it may be a request that is inappropriate and therefore shouldn't be answered straightforwardly. But the request is made within a context of love, and the asking and the giving and the thanking are all part of that relationship and help to strengthen the bond between the giver and the recipient. Of course, that is the ideal; the reality may be different, and we may have to entreat the garage mechanic to have the car serviced by tomorrow, or the school teacher not to treat us as we deserve for our stupidity, and the person whom we ask may be ruled by conflicting motives. But we can see what the ideal is. And we ask our family and loved ones and friends even though they may already know what we want, and even though we know that they may not be able to supply what we need, and even though they may know better than we do what is good for us.

Can we take that picture and apply it to ourselves and God? It is then telling us that we can go to God with our requests, because he is gracious and loving and responds to prayer. It also suggests that one reason why we don't always get what we need is because we don't ask. Certainly, this is the way in which Jesus understood prayer, as the expression of our relationship to God as his children. And what is happening in this passage is that we are given a tremendous assurance that God wants to save all people everywhere, and therefore we are making a

request that is fully in line with what we know of his love and grace.

Two Unanswerable Questions

There are two questions that I cannot answer. The first is *why God needs us to pray* in order for his wish for the world to be fulfilled. If God wants to save people, why doesn't he get on with it without being dependent on our prayers? The other question is how it is that we can pray to God for governments to behave justly and *yet they* don't, and how it is that we can pray to God for people to be saved, and yet they don't respond to the gospel.

I don't know the answer to these questions, and I think that all I can say in response to them is that here our relationship to God is one of faith and trust where we cannot understand. His ways are beyond our understanding and we are called to trust in him. That after all is part of what faith is. It is the willingness to believe that God is good and kind despite the things that go wrong in the world, because we believe that Jesus, dying on the cross and rising from the dead, is the evidence of the love and the power of God. This is hopeful prayer that is going to be answered positively by God.

If we dare to believe like that, then we can also dare to pray and we must pray. And so this direction to make congregational prayer a priority comes as a powerful challenge to us. Prayer must be central in all our efforts to grow and mature as a Christian congregation. May God enable us to overcome the temptations not to pray and fill us with the desire to be a people who delight to speak to him in prayer.

4. Prophetic Action

Reading: 2 Chronicles 28:1-15

The background to our reading is doubtless familiar to all of us. The land that we tend to call Palestine or Israel was conquered by the Jewish people, all twelve tribes of them after the invasion led by Joshua; the invaders eventually became one nation and were ruled by three kings in succession, first Saul, then David and finally Solomon. after Solomon there was an independence movement directed against his successor who was called Rehoboam, and the larger part of the country in the north seceded and appointed its own king called Jeroboam. The loyal, southern part around Jerusalem, became known as Judah, because it consisted of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; the rebellious northern part, consisting of the remaining tribes, became known as Israel or Samaria, and that is why we have these two alternative names for the country. The people are the Jews, the land is Israel. On the whole, the southern part was more loyal to their ancestral God, and the northern part was more inclined to follow foreign gods and break the commandments of the true God. But neither part of the country could be said to be free from guilt.

They had a tumultuous history, often attacked by their neighbours and other foreign powers,and they also fought one another. The writers of the history in the Bible saw the hand of God in what happened to them. They believed that when the Israelites or the Judaeans suffered at the hands of their enemies this was a judgment upon them by God, a punishment for their sins and a warning to them to turn back to God lest things became even worse.

So the story in this chapter tells how the little southern kingdom under a new king called Ahaz turned away from God and followed idols and even practised human sacrifice. As a result God let them suffer at the hands of their enemies. These included the king of Aram who inflicted a heavy defeat on them, and also the king of the northern kingdom of Israel, Pekah, who also fought against them and overcame them. A huge number of people were killed in battle, and to make matters worse an enormous number of prisoners were taken, mostly it would seem the families of the men who were slain in the army, their wives, sons and daughters. The fate of prisoners of war in the ancient world was typically to be made into slaves of the conqueror, cheap labour. Along with the prisoners the northern army carried off all the valuable things that they could find that had belonged to their enemies. It was a devastating blow against a small kingdom.

So far the story is like many other stories of war in the ancient world, and what happened was typical of many such incidents. But then the story takes a surprising turn. Although the northern kingdom was often idolatrous and rebellious against God, he still spoke to it through his prophets, and now a man called Oded went out to meet the army when it came back with the captives. He had stern words to say to them. He commented on how they had killed the men in the army and taken captives and plunder, and he said to them, In the name of God I command you to send the prisoners back home and set them free. Imagine, if you can, a religious leader in America going to the White House or one in the UK going to Downing Street and saying to the

President or Prime Minister: set Saddam Hussein free, and imagine if you can, the leader of the country agreeing to do so. It doesn't sound very likely, but that is what happened in this story. The leaders in the northern kingdom said to the victorious army coming back from the war: You can't bring those prisoners here; take them back to where they belong. And the army did so. They took the captive men and women and the property and they sent them back to Judah. Well, they actually did more than that. Some of them had lost any decent clothing they had, so they gave them fresh clothing out of the plunder. They were starving, because of the forced march northwards as prisoners, so they gave them some food and drink. There were those who had been injured in the fighting, and there were older people who were utterly exhausted by their experiences. So they provided healing balm and medicine for them, and they put those who were weak on donkeys and brought them safely back to Jericho which was on the border, and then they returned home.

So far the story. It was a grim world in which they lived, but not, I fancy, any grimmer than the world in which we live with its appalling cruelty in warfare and terrorism. Let me draw out the key points that arise in it.

First, we see here the fact that religious people were prepared to stand up in the name of God and *confront* the politicians and the generals. They condemned the wrong things that they were doing and they commanded them to do what was right. i could have chosen any one of a number of Old Testament incidents that would have illustrated the same point. Oded was just one example of a long line of prophets who heard the call of God to stand up for what was right, people like Samuel, Nathan, Elijah and Elisha, Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Amos and Micah, and many others, who spoke out as God's ambassadors.

Sometimes they risked their lives to do so, time and again their words fell on deaf ears, and some of them paid for their courage with their lives. But in this particular story and there are others also, the remarkable thing is that *their words had some effect*. Nothing could undo the death of the men in the Judaean army, but it was possible to stop the action going any further. The very first point in this story is that action by religious people can influence the politicans and even the generals to act differently, and we should not underestimate what can be done.

How did they achieve their effect? Oded used various arguments in his appeal to his audience.

The first was this: when a people go to war, it is very easy for them to be *carried away by it and not know when to stop*. You have slaughtered your enemies in a rage that reaches to heaven, he said. Having inflicted a defeat on the enemy, the victorious side did not know when to stop and proceeded to maltreat the defeated. We have seen this happen in our own day, in the stories that appear to be reliable about serious abuse of Iraqis by some of the alliance soldiers, even if not all the stories are true. It is part of evil human nature. Oded recognised this, and he acted to call a halt to a massacre and cruelty that went far beyond what was reasonable.

Next, Oded told his audience that God had allowed the Judeans to be defeated as a punishment for their sin and evil. But the Israelites themselves were also guilty of sin against God, and indeed they were generally worse than the Judeans. There was the implied threat that bad things could happen to them also if they aroused *the wrath of God* by the way in which they behaved. God would judge them also.

Third, what was their sin? It would seem that there were two related things. On the one hand, even though there had been a split in the kingdom of David and Solomon so that there were now two independent kingdoms, nevertheless the people in the south were fellow-Israelites with the people in the north. So what was happening here was *brother fighting against brother, sisters* suffering at the hands of sisters. In the understanding of the time, it may have been all right to attack foreign peoples, but to do so to your own kith and kin was inexcusable, and so Oded turned on them and castigated them. We would need to ask whether we can draw the lines at this point. The teaching of Jesus extends love to enemies as well as to neighbours. On the other hand, the enslavement of the civilians and the plunder of their property was *inhumanity*, although it was common enough in ancient war. We have here the beginnings of the recognition that there are limits to what is acceptable in war. Clearly this applies particularly if we are forced into war by aggression from outside, and must defend ourselves in ways that are acceptable, at least relatively speaking.

The fourth thing I would have us note from the story is that when the Israelites took this to heart, they proceeded to make up for their inhumanity by showing compassion to the prisoners. They didn't simply set them free and let them find their own way back home; they cared for them in their great

need and provided for their wants. We have here a story of *remarkable compassion*, perhaps beyond what we would expect. It is a story with what we might call a happy ending, although it could never be completely happy after the many deaths that had taken place in the war.

And so now I ask what it has to say to us.

This story is concerned with how people are to behave in their dealings with one another. We sometimes think that the Christian religion is entirely concerned with what we believe, and we devote a lot of our time in church to learning about what we are to believe. But this story is about how we are to live, our relationships with other people, the treatment of our enemies.

A lot of the teaching given by Jesus was about precisely this. He was telling people how they are to live in the family of God or in the kingdom of God. And what he had to tell them was very much the same as what the prophets said in the Old Testament. I omitted to tell you earlier, but maybe you picked up the point for yourself, that the capital city of the northern kingdom was a place called Samaria, and the very last word in the story was about the army going back from Jericho to Samaria. These were the people who were the ancestors of the Samaritans in the time of Jesus. When Jesus was asked by a Jewish teacher how people were to live, Jesus told a story about a man who was attacked by terrorists on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, and was helped, not by fellow-Jews, but by a man from Samaria who healed his wounds, put him on his donkey, and took him to the comparative comfort of an inn in Jericho. The echoes in Jesus' parable of this story are just too strong to be accidental. Jesus knew this story and told his own story that makes much the same point.

The story told by Jesus was one about personal conduct, how the lawyer who spoke with Jesus was to treat other people. Much of the teaching of Jesus is given in this kind of way. And we might be tempted to draw two conclusions. First, that the teaching of Jesus and his followers was given to individuals and is concerned with their own personal lives. In this particular case, it is the question of how you treat the people we call neighbours. And, second, that the audiences addressed by Jesus and his followers were people in their personal lives.

But behind the story told by Jesus we have this action by Oded in which he takes on the leaders of the army in the matter of how they are behaving as leaders of the army. He is concerned with public morality, not just with how we related to society as private individuals, but how we behave as members of society in the different roles and occupations and positions that we have. The special circumstances of the mission of Jesus are not an excuse for us to think that the gospel has nothing to do with public life or that as Christians we are not called to address people in their official positions in government and business.

So what are the practical things that Christian followers of Jesus must do? Starting from there it is very clear that they are justice and compassion.

First, *justice*. It is unfortunate that wars have to be fought, often by people who are forced to do so because of enemy invaders and terrorists. Such wars must be fought in as just a manner as possible. War is an evil, but there can be rules that make it less so. There are principles like not attacking non-combatants, not destroying things for the sake of destruction, not inflicting wounds that go beyond what is just, respecting the limits of an eye for an eye and not seeking monstrous revenge. There is a long Christian tradition of what is called just war theory, that lays down guidelines for whether one should go to war, and if one does, how that war should be conducted. I am aware that the concept has been criticised, and not only by pacifists, but I would still claim that some vital points remain valid.

The second element is *compassion*; this is the added factor that we bring into our dealings even with enemies. The teaching of Jesus has taken us beyond thinking of some people as our brothers and sisters and others as our enemies, for Jesus and his followers have shown us that all of humanity are people for whom Christ died and potentially brothers and sisters. We are to think of Moslems and Hindus as our brothers and sisters, even if they fail to reciprocate. And we are to love our neighbours and our enemies, and show compassion. And I believe that must be true not just of our individual attitudes but also of our corporate and national attitudes as well. Christianity is about going the extra mile, a phrase that we owe to Jesus, and that was said in the context of being commanded to do something by an enemy soldier.

A further point that must be considered is *judgment*. I keep coming back to this very difficult point. Oded warned the Israelites that if they persisted in their action against Judah they too would find themselves under the judgement of God. Such judgement typically took the form of natural disasters like famine and plague but also of defeat and

disaster at the hands of other warring nations. The Old Testament testifies frequently to this understanding of history in which national sin leads to national disaster, so that prophets can prophesy what will happen to a people who sin and do not repent and can also identify specific disasters as judgments for specific sinful acts. These judgments may be of two kinds. On the one hand, there is the kind of judgment which can be seen to arise directly out of a sinful action, as when, for example, the person who takes drugs becomes an addict, suffers from consequent bad health and may be reduced to poverty through spending all their resources on the craving. On the other hand, if that same person should be severely injured by a reckless car driver, some people might want to argue that this was another form of judgment on the addict, even though there was no causal relationship between the addiction and being the victim of an accident. So too in the Old Testament many disasters of the second sort are seen as God's working in history to judge and warn his people. And conversely, when people prosper, this may be interpreted as a sign of divine favour and reward.

Now I have a problem here, in that it seems to me that generally speaking Christians today no longer share this way of understanding history; it is not part of our public theology in the way that it was part of Oded's. What are we to make of it? I have no theoretical difficulties with the appropriation of the rest of the story, but what do we do with this aspect of it? Do we threaten governments and armies with divine judgments in history and/or future judgments (which incidentally were hardly part of the prophetic message)? By what right could we identify a particular disaster as a divine judgment on a specific sinful action? And how do we relate judgment on individuals and judgment on communities to one another?

To show justice and compassion in our own personal lives is a big enough challenge. But let us not forget that this story is about a man called Oded who knew that God was calling him to *tell the government* and the army and the people generally what God commanded them to do. As Christians we have a duty to speak about in the name of God and justice and compassion in the sick society and world in which we live. We have a social and political duty as a church, as well as an individual one. God needs people in his church to act as prophets and speak his words to kings and rulers. Think of what has been achieved by a man like Desmond Tutu in South Africa, and by other African Christians, some of whom have been murdered for their forthrightness. It is never going to be easy, but there is no other way.

The Middle East and Africa may seem very remote from us here, and we are a small group of people, but we can still be effective in our witness for God's principles in national and international life. My tendency as a Christian and as a preacher is to concentrate on our personal spiritual lives and our outreach in evangelism as a congregation, but this is another vital dimension of our Christian living that we are dare not ignore. And we go out from this conference in due course to be different people for having been here, not just knowing new things, but living differently.

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The Old Testament Contribution to Evangelical Models for Public Theology

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SUMMARY

This article argues that the Old Testament has much to contribute to the current discussion about public theology, not least because in ancient Israel there was no segregation of public and private life. Rather than attempting to give specific answers, the article highlights the importance and meaning of core OT topics such as creation and its ethical consequences, God's lordship over history, idolatry, God's universal kingship, and the role of Israel's prophets vis-à-vis kings, the people and other nations. The reach of these topics is not limited to God's particular covenant with Israel so that they are universally applicable. They set Christians in a direction of critical engagement with society.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Argumentation dieses Artikels lautet, das Alte Testament habe viel zur gegenwärtigen Diskussion über öffentliche Theologie beizutragen, nicht zuletzt deshalb, weil es im alten Israel keine Trennung zwischen öffentlichem und privatem Leben gab. Der Artikel versucht nicht, spezifische Antworten zu geben, sondern er betont die Wichtigkeit und Bedeutung von wesentlichen alttestamentlichen Themen wie Schöpfung und ihre ethischen Konsequenzen, Gottes Herrschaft über die Geschichte, Götzendienst, Gottes universelle Herrschaft und die Rolle der israelischen Propheten im Gegenüber zu Königen, dem Volk und anderen Nationen. Die Reichweite dieser Themen ist nicht auf Gottes besonderen Bund mit Israel beschränkt, so dass sie universal anwendbar sind. Sie weisen Christen in Richtung kritischer Auseinandersetzung mit der Gesellschaft.

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RÉSUMÉ

L'Ancien Testament apporte une contribution importante à l'éthique socio-politique, notamment parce qu'en Israël, il n'y avait pas de dichotomie entre la vie publique et la vie privée. L'auteur n'aborde pas des sujets spécifiques, mais s'attache à souligner l'importance et la signification de thèmes centraux de l'Ancien Testament comme la doctrine de la création et ses conséquences éthiques, la seigneurie de Dieu sur l' histoire, le rôle des prophètes israélites auprès des rois, du peuple de Dieu et des autres peuples. La portée de ces thèmes ne se limite pas au champ de l'alliance particulière de Dieu avec Israël mais elle est universelle. Ils invitent les chrétiens à un engagement critique dans la vie de la société.

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Introduction

It is not easy to define what 'public theology' is, but I take the definition from Robert Benne's study *The Paradoxical Vision: A Public Theology for the Twenty-first Century* (Fortress, 1995):

> 'Public theology ... refers to the engagement of a living religious tradition with its public environment – the economic, political, and cultural spheres of our common life.'[1]

Several questions and thoughts immediately spring to mind on hearing this definition:

- The 'living religious tradition' in our case is

Christianity, more specifically Evangelicalism, and even more specifically European Evangelicalism. The fact that we live and work in Europe is essential here.

• The definition just mentioned implies that it is possible for a religious tradition, in this case Christianity, *not* to be engaged with its public environment. And indeed, here we trace one of the first problems.

• The fact that the Executive Committee of the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians has chosen this topic indicates that we sense there are problems here. These problems have to do with secularization. As we will see, in the days of ancient Israel there was no such thing as *public* theology as opposed to *private* religious life, since all theology was public theology. But the mere fact that FEET is discussing what role evangelicals should play in issues of public life suggests that it's not a natural or totally normal thing which is taken for granted by the average European person.

• I say 'European' because in other cultures the issue would be dealt with very differently. To many non-Western societies life is 'religious' anyway and there's no such thing as a 'private' life which would be totally disconnected from culture or politics and so forth.

• Now of course, some might say there's no need at all for reflecting on our engagement in society. After all, we are separate from the world, as Christians we don't belong to it, and we should not be engaged with public life, politics, economics, and military issues at all. I assume we will sooner or later deal with some of the models from church history which advocated this view. Some Christians say: don't speak about public theology at all, speak about people's individual response to the gospel of Jesus Christ – and build the church.

• Returning to the definition of public theology just given, we can say, however, that not being engaged in public life as Christians is influencing society as well. To keep silent is just as much a choice as to speak out. Living in this world always includes choices, one way or the other.

• As Evangelicals, we confess that the foundation of our thinking should be in Scripture. So whatever we choose, we want to look seriously at what the Bible says. Now all of us know this is not an easy task. Christians have defended war quoting Bible verses and they have opposed it with the same Bible. They have defended and opposed slavery, they have defended and opposed capitalism. The Bible is not an easy book as we all know. Yet there is also a very positive side to this: the Bible is a dynamic book, not just dropped down from heaven, but a book to engage in, to study, to receive corrections from, to be challenged by.

• So in studying the Old Testament on the issue of public theology, we need to take into account the dynamic character of the Bible. We search for answers, we discuss them together, we try to listen to God's voice as careful as possible and we try to bring into practice what we learn from all this.

What can the Old Testament contribute to our discussion about public theology?

I will focus on a few important issues in the Old Testament which may help us in discovering some guidelines for public theology. By reflecting on them, I try to give some basic biblical-theological principles which may guide us in making actual decisions. So this paper is not about those actual decisions, say about Old Testament and war, or Old Testament and the economy (etc.), it is meant to provide a sort of framework from which we may discuss our involvement in public life in more detail.

The basic principles I want to discuss are: Creation and the earliest history, kingship, prophets, the nations, and participation and intercession.

1. Creation and the earliest history

In the first place it is important to say that the Old Testament does not know the term 'public theology'. The definition above speaks about public theology as 'the engagement of a living religious tradition with its public environment – the economic, political, and cultural spheres of our common life'. Now the Old Testament as a whole is a religious book about a living religious tradition constantly involved with the economic, political and cultural spheres of common life. The Old Testament is not a private prayer book for a Sunday afternoon. It gives a thoroughly religious view of the world, the nations, society, nature and individuals. In the Old Testament there's no such thing as a 'non-engaged living religious tradition'. There's no history in the Old Testament apart from the religious history, the history of God and his people/his world.

It is true that historical-critical research has tried to find the 'facts of history' behind the 'biblical history', but in the first place no historical-critical research itself is objective, and in the second place because of the nature of the Old Testament mere history and God's history cannot be separated.

This is an important theological issue. The fact that Israel does not have a history book apart from the Old Testament is not due to the fact that all nations were religious in those days, so that it would be self-evident that the history of a nation was coloured spiritually, but it certainly has to do with the statements in the Old Testament about God being the Creator of the whole world and the Lord of all history. According to the Old Testament there is no history outside the sphere of God's influence and there is no world out of God's control. These are far reaching claims and they are made throughout the Old Testament, beginning in Genesis 1.

In the way of thinking of ancient Israel, no Israelite can so to speak step 'outside' God's world and say: Let's think about God. Or: Let's think if and how God plays a role in history or in politics or in public life. The overall assumption is that he does – the questions posed in the Old Testament relate to how he does. And related to this assumption is the question how *God's people* plays a role in this world – in God's name.

The confession that the God of Israel is the Creator of heaven and earth has many implications. Yet too often the issue of creation has been neglected in Old Testament theology because the story of the Exodus was considered to be of primary relevance, whereas Genesis 1 and 2 were 'only' thought to be the result of reflection in the days of the Babylonian exile and thereafter. Yet in the context of the Bible as a whole the fact that God created the earth, the animals and humankind is essential for understanding the rest of God's history with that same world. It is essential that biblical theology starts with God's creative work and reflects on the consequences of this confession. Too often Evangelical Christians have lost themselves in debates about 'whether it really happened in six days' or whatever else really happened – and that was the only way they looked at the story of creation – without realising the enormous theological claims that are made in Genesis 1 and 2: claims regarding God's creative power through his word, his majesty, his supremacy over the moon and the stars, etc.

When we consider the whole of the Bible we may say it to have a 'sandwich structure': it begins with the creation of heavens and earth in the Book of Genesis and it ends with the re-creation of heavens and earth in the Book of Revelation. This is the space and time in which salvation history takes place, in which everything which happens today takes place. This is the area in which 'public theology' takes place and where it should be searching for its foundation and its principles.

All this means that from the point of view of the Old Testament (and in fact, also from the New) the whole world is God's. All people are his creation, all nations are included from the beginning as they will be in the end (Rev. 21-22). God is above history and he was there before history began, before the days and the months and the years were created. So history is his. This is a basic confession throughout the Old Testament. The belief in God as Creator and in the world as being his creation is utilised in many different contexts in the Bible, not only in Genesis 1-2:

A. It is used in the context of ethics: my fellow men and women have been created in God's image and therefore should be treated with respect (Gen. 9:6; Prov. 14:31). This is the foundation of the universal rights of humankind. Care for the created world, for animals and the environment, is part of living before God. As Psalm 8:6-8 tells us, human beings were made co-regents of the Creator, whose name is majestic over all the earth! The language is 'royal language', referring to human beings who are 'crowned ... with glory and honour' (verse 5). We will come back to the issue of kingship below.

God's creative work is also mentioned as a motive for keeping the sabbath: 'For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy' (Ex. 20:11). So there are various implications for human behaviour which follow from the fact that God created the world.

B. The confession of creation is used in the context of the big questions in history: Is God still in control when his people are in exile in Babylon? What about the power of the gods of other nations? Have they conquered the God of Israel by taking his people into exile? What about God's promises to his own people? What about God's power? In this context the prophecies from the Book of Isaiah are very powerful:

> 'This is what the LORD says – your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:
> "For your sake I will send to Babylon and bring down as fugitives all the Babylonians,
> in the ships in which they took pride.
> I am the LORD, your Holy One, Israel's Creator, your King."' (Is. 43:14-15)
>
> 'Why do you say, O Jacob, and complain, O Israel,
> "My way is hidden from the LORD; my cause

is disregarded by my God"?
Do you not know? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.
He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.
Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall;
but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.' (Is. 40:27-31)

The fact that God is the Creator implies that he has the power to rescue his people from their enemies and to do a wonderful work – to bring them back from exile and to make (create) a new beginning.

C. The idea of creation is used in the context of idolatry. The passages from Isaiah not only speak about God as Creator, but also emphasize that God is the One and Only God. This is a conviction which is deeply rooted in the Old Testament faith. As we read in Deuteronomy 6:4, the shema which is repeated by Jews each day, 'Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.'

God is the Creator and the only One. Sun, moon and stars were created by him and are therefore not divine. There are no other gods in the whole universe. Yet, idolatry was a constant threat to Israel. The world was full of belief in other gods and full of rituals resulting from that belief. And since the rituals in Canaan had to do with fertility, Baal worship turned out to be very attractive.

By way of summary we can say that the Old Testament makes very clear statements about God as the Creator of everything, as the LORD of everything (including history and other nations), and as the One and Only God. There is no 'theology', so to speak, or 'faith', separated from the sphere of life or history, including politics and the other nations.

We move on and come to the issue of the nations in Genesis 4-11. In these chapters it is made very clear that God is not only the God of Israel, but that all the nations are his and that they are therefore, so to speak, one big family. The table of nations in Genesis 10 makes this clear. It gives structure to the world of nations and clarifies the relationships between them. It is not about different nations, who live in the realms of different gods (as was believed in the Ancient Near East), it all happens under the control of God the Creator of heaven and earth. Neither is there anything 'mythical' about the origins of these peoples. This chapter is anything but 'boring' literature, it is far more than just an administrative document. It is highly important in the context of the Bible.

Genesis 11 follows this summary of nations. The essence of the story of the tower of Babel is verse 4:

> 'Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth."'

So the essence of the human plan is gaining power, a power which will touch on the divine. And at the centre of power are human beings themselves, who want to make a name for themselves. In this way a centre of power could originate without any God-based reality underlying it.[2] It is the same type of sin Adam and Eve were tempted to: the search for power and becoming 'as God'.

God's answer to the tower of Babel is that people were spread around the world and that the groups could not understand each other anymore. The other, positive, answer to the story is what follows in the next chapter with the calling of Abraham. There God says:

'I will make you into a great nation (...)
I will make your name great...' (Gen. 12:2)

That nation will be God-centred and therefore will be great in another sense than 'powerful in the eyes of the world'. God will make Abraham's name great.

It is important to realise that the essence of the call of Abraham is not that only one nation will benefit from God's blessings. It is through Abraham and his descendants that 'all peoples on earth will be blessed' (verse 3). As Dumbrell remarks[3], 'The Kingdom of God established in global terms is the goal of the Abrahamic covenant.'

2. Kingship

We've already touched on the concept of God as King in our discussion of Creation. As we read in Isaiah 43:15: 'I am the LORD, your Holy One, Israel's Creator, your King.' In this prophecy God's power to redeem his people is highlighted as the prophet reminds them of God's power as the Creator of Israel, as the Holy One, and as their King. Looking at the historical context, the last title is

a remarkable one, since at that time the people no longer had their own Davidic king ruling over them. It was the king of Babylon who seemed to be in control of the whole world.

Yet the statement that God is King, not just of his own people Israel, but of the whole universe, is very deeply rooted in the Old Testament. It is frequently combined with the theme of creation, for instance in Psalm 96: 4-6, 10, 13:

> 'For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.
>
> Splendour and majesty are before him; strength and glory are in his sanctuary.'
>
> 'Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns.
>
> The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved;
>
> he will judge the peoples with equity."'
>
> '...for he comes, he comes to judge the earth.
>
> He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his truth.'

In these verses several highly important theological statements are made:

a. Contrary to the gods of other nations, called 'idols', God is the Creator.

b. He is the King of the whole world – 'The LORD reigns'.

c. As such he is the Judge of all nations. He will judge in righteousness and truth.

Another statement is made in Jeremiah 10, a chapter which deals with idols:

> But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. (...)
>
> But God made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding. ...
>
> for he is the Maker of all things (verses 10, 12, 16).

The kingship of God is thus an all-embracing conviction which spans the universe, the history and all nations and so does the fact that he is the Creator. We will come back to the position of the nations below.

How did Israel live out these convictions?

In the first place, Israel was called to show in its whole life what it meant that God was their King, that they were his special people. As we saw in Genesis 12, in the calling of Abraham God did not exclude other nations but wanted to bless them through Abraham and his offspring. In the rest of the Torah, particularly in the Book of Deuteronomy, we can observe how this works out or is supposed to work in everyday life.

We can regard Israel as a paradigm, a 'model' of how God relates to people and how they should relate to each other. I take Chris Wright's definition of paradigm as given in *Living as the People of God*:

> 'A paradigm is something used as a model or example for other cases where a basic principle remains unchanged, though details differ.' 'A paradigm is not so much imitated as applied. It is assumed that cases will differ but, when necessary adjustments have been made, they will conform to the observable pattern of the paradigm.'[4]

In this context we can try to give an interpretation of many of the laws given to Israel. This is attempted in the work of Chris Wright and in my latest book *Celebrating the Law?*[5] from which I quote:

> 'In the commandments and laws of the Torah we discover what sort of life God wants people to live. Both in its stories and in its laws the Torah shows how God wants to relate to people as well as how God wants people to relate to him and to each other. The laws and commands show us what a life with God as King looks like. In such a life and in a land where people live according to God's will, there will be justice and mercy; God's presence will permeate everything. The other nations should see this difference and be attracted to the one God and Creator. Israel's example should draw others to follow God and his rules as well. Moses expresses the uniqueness of Israel and its commandments and the effect they may have on other nations:
>
> > Observe them [the decrees and laws taught by Moses] carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." ... And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today? (Deut. 4:6, 8)
>
> Israel is a *pars pro toto*, a part which represents the whole: in this land and among this people God's Kingship, which is a Kingship over all the earth, must become visible and effective.'[6]

In this paper I will not go into detail about particular ethical situations, some of which I covered in my book and many of which are also dealt with

by Chris Wright in his books on Old Testament Ethics. Instead I would like to look at one particular issue in Israel's 'public'/'political' life – the issue of human kingship.

I concentrate on it for two reasons: In the first place the Kingship of God has turned out to be very important in the Old Testament, as we saw, and we can ask how this relates to human kingship; in the second place in this area it will become clear how Israel is meant to be a paradigm in the world.

In the first place we notice that kingship in Israel is an arbitrary matter. It is not a natural thing, as it seems to be with other nations, who 'naturally' have a king to lead them in war and to establish order in society. Israel's history has known several periods without an earthly king. There was no king in the beginning, when God called Abraham. During their journey in the desert it was not a king, but a prophet who led them. Within the history of the Ancient Near East it is surprising how short the period was during which Israel had a real monarchy in the midst of all the surrounding kingdoms and powers: less than 500 years!

When Israel asks for a king, this is received by God and his prophet Samuel with considerable criticism. The idea of the people is: '...now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have' (1 Sam. 8:5). However, this was exactly what they should not be: like the other nations. The first answer they receive is therefore that they are different, because God is their King and they have rejected him by their request for an earthly king. The rest of the passage concentrates on the inequality which kingship will bring. One of the basic concepts in the laws of Moses was the idea of brotherhood and equality in the presence of God. The covenant was the leading principle which united all Israelites as equal people with equal responsibilities. No one was to rule over another – no king, no rich people.

At the end of 1 Samuel 8, God 'gives in', so to speak. And in the history of Israel he uses kingship to fulfil his plans anyway. But the Old Testament has critical reservations about kingship all the way through. And history itself proved the criticism of 1 Samuel 8 to be right: Kings were rulers who did exploit the people from time to time.

During the whole period of the monarchy, there has been this critical distance to the king. It was in particular embodied by the prophets. Next to king Saul there was the prophet Samuel, next to king David the prophet Nathan, next to Ahab Elijah, next to many later kings were the so called writing prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah and Amos. They were the 'opposition', so to speak, in the name of the Lord. We will come back to their role in Israel.

Before we do that, let us take a look at an important chapter about kingship which is Deuteronomy 17:14-20. This passage is usually read as retrospection from the time of Josiah, but I think it is from much earlier times, one of the reasons being that the view presented here is too critical of kingship to be from those days. And if Deuteronomy was written to legitimate Josiah's reform, as is often stated, it is surprising that the passage on the king is such a small part of the Book. In his Commentary on Deuteronomy, J.G. McConville states: 'Deuteronomy, or at least a form of it, is the document of a real political and religious constitution of Israel from the pre-monarchical period.'[7] Deuteronomy 16:18-18:22 gives laws governing administration, but the king does not have an essential place in it, argues McConville.[8] Others are responsible for legal and administrative duties.

Deuteronomy 17:14 begins with the statement that God has given the land to his people – it is not by the power of a human being (a king or a great army) that Israel was able to live in the promised land. If they ever want to have a king over them, the text says – so it is not an essential element of nationhood – he should be one 'from among your own brothers'. The king is my brother, and this fact alludes to the idea of equality as the covenant people of God.

The following verses tell us how different an Israelite king should be from the kings of other nations: No riches, no strong army, no worldly power, not many wives. That is what should not happen. What *should* happen, however, is that he writes 'for himself on a scroll a copy of this law... It is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that

– he may learn to revere the LORD his God

– and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees

– and not consider himself better than his brothers

– and turn from the law to the right or to the left.' (verses 18-20)

In Mesopotamia kings were the law-givers themselves. A new king would introduce his own laws. The Babylonian king Hammurabi is a good example of this. In Israel it is the prophet Moses who is the ultimate lawgiver, and, as we believe, in the

name of God. The laws of Hammurabi are not religiously motivated, the laws of Moses are throughout. As McConville states: 'The programme of Deut. 16:18 – 18:22 is ... in direct opposition to the prevalent ANE royal-cultic ideology, in which the king is chief executive in cult and political administration...' 'If the rule of gods in Assyria was expressed by means of a king who dominated every sphere of the nation's life, Yahweh in contrast was the one who gave land, upheld justice and conducted wars.[9]

Visitors to the British Museum can be struck by the fact that there are few objects from Israel compared to Assyria and Egypt. This fact fits in with Deuteronomy 17, however. The artefacts of other nations are in most cases glorifications of kings and their victories, such as over other nations and over lions. The huge statues, the inscriptions, the records all try to convey the message that the king was an excellent king who was under the protection of the gods. Compared to that, the Old Testament is very sober. Of course, the making of images was forbidden. But also in its literature the Old Testament does not glorify the kings. It speaks of defeats, of disobedience to God, of sins and failures, even when it comes to the 'ideal' king David. The Old Testament dares to criticize its own kings because it is mainly a prophetic book – history, nations, kings are viewed from a prophetic perspective. We will come back to this.

Another aspect of human kingship is the fact that in a certain way *each human being* exercises 'royal duties'. Human beings receive great responsibilities:

> '...fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground' (Gen. 1:28).

Man and woman are created 'in his own image, in the image of God'. There has been much discussion about the significance of this verse[10], but one of the possibilities, which to me seems a plausible one, is that men and women represent God on earth. In other nations it is the king who is regarded as God's representative.

The role of humans in Psalm 8 is very different from the role the Babylonians ascribed to them. In the Babylonian creation myth *Enuma Elish*, human beings and the earth were created out of chaos. The need for protection against chaos is an ongoing issue. Protection is guaranteed by means of a good structure in society, in particular through the building and fortification of the city of Babylon. The king was the 'god-king', the vice-regent of the god. In Psalm 8, however, every human being is seen as a 'vice-regent of God' and can rule over God's creation on his decree.[11]

G. J. Wenham remarks with regard to the *function* of creation in the image of God:

> ... it enables mankind to rule over the earth and the other creatures. In ancient oriental myth kings were made in the gods' image, but Genesis democratises the idea; every human being is a king and responsible for managing the world on God's behalf.[12]

So the Bible values human beings very highly. This is an essential element in our view of humankind.

We can say that, compared to other nations, the Old Testament has a profoundly different view of the political world. Basically, we can say it is a *prophetic* view, not based on human insights, not based on the principle of human power, but based on the confession of God's reign and his rule. Human kings play a limited role amongst the covenant people of Israel. They are always evaluated from a prophetic point of view, from the perspective of what they do with God's Torah.

3. Prophets and politics

Life in Israel was religious in all its aspects, as we can see in the laws of the Torah. Political life was not a separate area. This was illustrated by the law on kingship in Deuteronomy 17. The king's law book and daily literature was the Torah and not a secularized political manifesto.

That the public life was not separated from faith is also clear in the life and work of the prophets of Israel. Other nations also had prophets. However, the prophetic texts from other nations often, though not always, show that prophets and other religious leaders such as priests, were supposed to confirm what the king did and said. In other Ancient Near Eastern texts, like some of the treaties, we also find a great fear of criticism of the king, which might lead to rebellion or revolt.[13]

Kings in Israel, however, are constantly evaluated from the point of view of what they did with the Torah of God. And if they trespassed it, they were told so by prophets. Of course, there were court prophets as well, supportive of the king and his officials. The prophet Jeremiah was involved in a constant battle with them. But prophets like Elijah and Nathan, and the major writing proph-

ets like Isaiah, Jeremiah and Amos were not the mouthpiece of the king or of the officials. These prophets were, so to speak, the 'conscience' of the king and the nation, the 'flee which was constantly buzzing around their head'. When Ahab has a walk in 'his' (actually, Nabot's garden), something he had desperately longed for, it is this annoying prophet Elijah who comes and disturbs his peace. In another story, in 1 Kings 22 Ahab gets irritated about another true prophet of God, Micaiah, and says: 'Didn't I tell you that he never prophesies anything good about me, but only bad?' In this chapter Ahab is not mentioned by name but constantly called 'the king of Israel'. Even 'the king of Israel' could not just do what he wished!

In the so called Writing Prophets, there is a clear connection between the Torah and the message of the prophets. It is to the two sides of the Great Commandment that they constantly refer: loving and obeying God and loving your neighbours. It is about social issues that they raise their voices but they also warn against idolatry and false forms of worshipping God. We cannot say that their message concerns the social *and* the religious, since religion was meant to be social and ethical rules were given by God. There simply was no contrast between religion and politics, or between private and public theology. All of life was meant to be God-centred. The prophets emphasize this again and again. It belongs to the heart of the covenant made at Sinai. A 'social' prophet like Amos, who says strong things about the rich, includes worship in his message of doom:

> 'You trample on the poor...
> You oppress the righteous and take bribes
> and you deprive the poor of justice in the courts.' (Amos 5:11-12)
> 'I hate, I despise your religious feasts;
> I cannot stand your assemblies...
> Away with the noise of your songs!
> I will not listen to the music of your harps.
> But let justice roll on like a river,
> righteousness like a never-failing stream!'
> (Amos 5:21, 23-24)

This is a strong message. Imagine that God does not want us to sing any hymns anymore until we are doing justice to the poor...

If necessary the prophets would criticise individuals, the people as a whole, religious leaders like (false) prophets and priests, and political leaders. This could lead to much opposition from those addressed. When Amos proclaims doom on king Jeroboam, he is accused of a conspiracy against the king (Amos 7:10).

Probably the strongest example of opposition is found in the life of the prophet Jeremiah. He is persecuted by friends and family, and by kings. In particular king Jehoiakim reacts very strongly to Jeremiah's message: He burns the scroll with prophetic warnings (Jer. 36) and in this way he does exactly the opposite of what king Josiah does in 2 Kings 22. Jehoiakim is the opposite of the ideal Israelite king as described in Deuteronomy 17, for he neglects God's law and exploits his brothers to magnify his own glory (Jer. 22:13-17).

The prophetic books make it obvious that the prophets were not only sent to their own people, be it Israel or Judah. Many prophetic books also contain messages to other nations. At his call Jeremiah was commissioned as 'a prophet to the nations'. His mission was international. In the book of Jeremiah there are indeed many 'international' messages, so to say. Jeremiah was constantly involved in international politics. The world in which he lived was about to change after the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal had died in 630 BC. The Babylonians became ever stronger. Jeremiah's message involved strong political advice: the best thing to do was to surrender to the king of Babylon. That was his message to the last king, Zedekiah (Jer. 21, 27). The prophet even illustrated and enacted his message by sending yokes to the delegates of several nations who planned a revolt against Babylon (Jer. 27). Jeremiah gave political advice and this could be highly controversial and brought him in danger (Jer. 37-38).

4. The nations

Another feature of the book of Jeremiah is that beside the biographical passages about his interference with politics, it contains a large number of *oracles against the nations*. First, in Jeremiah 25 God is pictured as the One who makes all the nations drink the cup of the wine of his wrath. This chapter gives us, as it were, a look behind the scenes of God's intervention and his rule in the history of the world. The oracles against the nations in Jeremiah 46-51[14] cover many of the nations mentioned in chapter 25, the last one being Babylon, the strongest enemy in those days.

In the oracles against the nations it is not always made clear why a nation is judged and punished by God. Often pride is mentioned, nations are condemned because of challenging God.[15] In the case of Babylon there are several reasons: their pride,

their arrogance towards God, their humiliation of God's people, their idolatry, the profanation of God's holy temple.[16] Jeremiah 50:29 says: Babylon 'defied the LORD, the Holy One of Israel'. Pride is a recurring theme in the prophecies against the nations. We hear echoes here of the story of the tower of Babel.

The oracles against the nations may teach us several things:

- God is in control of history (the oracle against Babylon in Jer. 51 ends with: 'declares the King, whose name is the LORD Almighty'). God is King over the entire world. He rules, despite what nations and kings may be up to.
- God judges nations: 'For the LORD is a God of retribution...' (Jer. 51:56). This is also part of the message of Amos who proclaims God's judgement on the sins of other nations (Amos 1-2).
- God defends the powerless and will restore justice (Jer. 51:36: 'See, I will defend your cause...').
- When we look at other passages, foreign rulers are sometimes even called 'God's servant'[17] or his 'shepherd' and 'anointed' (Is. 44:28; 45:1). Though they are not worshippers of God and are, like Nebuchadnezzar, punished for what they did to Israel, the expression 'servant' makes clear that God uses them as his instruments to fulfil his plans. They may think they are independent kings who have authority over the whole world, in the end they are 'just' used by God. What they do is not beyond God's control.

The fact that prophets spoke to the nations is not a strange element in the Old Testament. As we saw above, from the beginning of Genesis it has been clear that God's concern is for the whole world. Genesis 10 summarizes the nations' origins under God's control. In the call of Abraham in Genesis 12 the nations are not excluded but included. In Deuteronomy 32, a covenant book which seems to concentrate largely on Israel, Moses says:

> 'When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided all mankind, he set boundaries for the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel' (Deut. 21:8).

The oracles against the nations are an essential element of the conviction that God is the only Creator and that he is the only God and King over all.

It is good to remark that not all prophecies against the nations are as negative as those against Babylon. There are messages of hope[18] and of course, there are visions of a future in which all the nations will go up to Jerusalem to worship the LORD.[19]

The oracles against the nations show that God is in control of history and that he fulfils his plans in his own way. This theme returns in the last book of the Bible. God's reign will be established forever and all anti-powers, like Babylon, will be destroyed. The Book of Revelation contains a large number of allusions to the Old Testament prophetic oracles against the nations.[20]

To sum up: the prophets of Israel clearly spoke out against kings, political and religious leaders, and other nations. The fact that they did was part of their commission. It was also based on the conviction that God is the LORD of history, the Creator and the One and Only God.

5. Examples of involvement in 'public life'

It is clear that the prophets were heavily involved in politics, either national or international. Their message varies from situation to situation and is therefore always relevant and up to date.

Isaiah warns king Ahaz not to give in to the threat of the enemy and not to surrender to Assyria (Is. 6), Jeremiah on the contrary urges king Zedekiah to surrender to Babylon. The same Jeremiah, in his letter to the exiles in chapter 29, gives advice to the exiles in Babylon to settle there, to live in the foreign land as if it were their home, even to pray for the enemy and to 'seek the peace and prosperity of the city' to which they have been exiled. Is this an acceptance of the status quo, an acceptance of the enemy's rule? Yes and no. In the following verses the promise of a return to the promised land is given. The perspective is one of hope of restoration under God's guidance. In the interim-period the people are required to live their normal life, to start families, to build and to plant – and to show a positive attitude towards the Babylonians who exiled them.

Elsewhere we see how believers seemingly adapt themselves to foreign rulers, in some cases enemies of Israel, by living in peace at their courts. I think of Joseph, Nehemiah, Esther and Daniel and his three friends. Yet, there is an independence in their behaviour which is clearly based on their belonging to the covenant people of God. They live their lives 'in exile', yet hold on to their own, God given principles.[21] And Daniel clearly sets limits to what kings may require of him, yet he is respected and attains a high position.

So when it comes to examples of participation in public life there is some variation in the Old Testa-

ment. Yet in every situation, whether that is in the promised land during the time of the monarchy, or whether it is in a foreign country in exile, there is a sort of critical distance, an evaluation of political affairs which is based on the faith that God is the ultimate Ruler and Creator of the world.

One more form of participation should be mentioned, last but definitely not least. That is *intercession*, of which the story of Abraham who pleads with God is one of the best examples (Gen. 18). Jeremiah urged the exiles to pray for Babylon. The people of God are called to pray for the welfare of those outside the covenant. That is part of their mission.

6. Some implications for Christians

This paper has concentrated on the Old Testament. Of course, as Christians we cannot read the Old Testament as if there was no New Testament. Yet the next paper will deal with that more extensively. I therefore confine myself to some concluding remarks which may be helpful for our discussion.

• The Old Testament provides us with a far reaching view of the world and the world's history. The conviction that God is the Creator and King of the whole world implies that as Christians we do not need to behave ourselves as if we are somewhere hidden in the corner with a faith which is just a personal, individual matter irrelevant to the rest of the world. Old Testament faith (and I believe New Testament faith as well) by its very nature focuses on the whole world. We have a world view which is all-embracing. It is not one that invites us to dominate the world as if it is our own 'name which we want to make great', as the people in the story of the tower of Babel, but it is God's salvation-history for the whole world. Christian involvement in public life has a strong foundation in God's position as Creator and in his Kingship. Admittedly, the church is not a theocracy like Israel and the Christian church is not defined by one people and one land either. Nonetheless, her message is worldwide. This is not only so because in the New Testament she was given a mission in Christ's name, but also because of the Old Testament view of the world and of history as God's world and God's history.

For this reason in this paper I have concentrated on universal themes like creation and kingship and hardly paid attention to God's particular covenant with Israel. I believe that the Old Testament world view, based on the conviction that God is the Creator and King of the whole world, gives us a firm foundation to speak out even in a non-Christian world.

• All too often attention is limited to the monarchy when the Old Testament is invited to speak about politics and public theology. But the Old Testament is not just about the period of the Israelite monarchy, it has a much wider vision in which the monarchy plays only one part.

• God is the One and Only God. Consequently Christians should be on the forefront to speak out against idolatry in whatever form, for example in the form of political ideologies or spiritual movements like New Age.

• Christians can have influence in this world because they were called to be a paradigm, in the same way as Israel was meant to be. This may be in deeds or in words. The laws of the Old Testament can provide a framework for knowing what is essential when it comes to justice, righteousness and holiness. I cannot deal with this topic extensively just now, but I refer to Chris Wright's *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* and to my own book *Celebrating the Law?*

• The concept of creation has many implications for ethics, such as the rights of human beings, the value of life, the care for the environment. We should not hesitate to bring these values into the public arena.

• The level and form of actual political involvement may vary from time to time and from place to place. Intercession for the world and the nations, however, should always be part of the ministry of the Church. Yet sometimes Christians may be able to speak out more clearly than at other times or in other places; remember the examples of Elijah, Amos and Daniel. The overall leading principle is that we continue to study the Scriptures and ask for God's guidance in order to have a prophetically critical view of the societies we live in. Too often studying the Bible has resulted in the affirmation of views which supported the status quo. In the way in which Deuteronomy 17 deals with kingship in contrast with other nations, Christians may find a guideline for a view of power which differs from that of the world around them, a view which is in line with Jesus' prayer: '*Thy* Kingdom come…'

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Notes

1 Paper presented at the 2004 FEET conference on 'public theology'.
2 W.J. Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation. A Theology of the Old Testament Covenants* (Grand Rapids & Carlisle 1993) , p. 61.
3 Ibidem, p. 78.
4 C. J. H. Wright, *Living as the People of God: The Relevance of Old Testament Ethics* (Leicester 1983), p. 43; published in the United States as *An Eye for an Eye: The Place of Old Testament Ethics Today* (Downers Grove 1983). A fully revised, updated and integrated edition of this book and *Walking in the Ways of the LORD* was published as *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* (IVP 2004).
5 H. Lalleman-de Winkel, *Celebrating the Law? Rethinking Old Testament Ethics* (Paternoster, 2004).
6 *Celebrating*, pp. 24-25.
7 J.G. McConville, *Deuteronomy* (Apollos OT Commentary 5; IVP, 2002), p. 34.
8 Ibidem.
9 Ibidem, pp. 34-35.
10 See G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (Word; Waco 1987), pp. 29-32.
11 Lalleman, *Celebrating the Law?*, pp.17-18; E. Otto, *Theologische Ethik des Alten Testaments* (Stuttgart etc. 1994), pp. 92-94.
12 G.J. Wenham, *Story as Torah. Reading the Old Testament ethically* (Edinburgh 2000), p. 25.
13 'Within the empire's provincial system, pacts of loyalty with the upper class and the Assyrian rank and file served as a means of protecting the king and his heir-designate against potential conspiracies and uprisings.' (S. Parpola, 'Neo-Assyrian Treaties from the Royal Archives of Nineveh', *JCS* 39 (1987), p. 161). One of the treaties Parpola deals with is Esarhaddon's Accession Treaty (7th Century) which reads: 'I swear that should I he[ar an ug]ly word about him ... I will go and tell it to Esarhaddon, my lord, [I swear] that I [will] be [his servant] and (only) speak good of him...'(p. 170f.).
14 The Septuagint put the oracles against the nations after 25:13a.
15 Moab (48:7, 15, 29), Ammon (49:4), Edom (49:7, 16).
16 Babylon's pride (50:31-32, 36; 51:25-26), their injustice and violence to others (end of 50:15, 29; 51:6), sins against God, his people and his temple (50:14, 24, 28, 29; 51:10-11, 24, 35-36, 49), their idolatry (50:2, 38; 51:17-18, 47, 52).
17 Even Nebukadnessar (Jer. 25:9; 27:6)!
18 Jeremiah 48:47; 49:6; 49:39; see also Isaiah 19:19-25.
19 Jeremiah 3:17; 12:15-16; 16:19; Isaiah 2:1-5; 11:10; 60:3; Micah 4:1f.
20 Revelation 14:8; 16:19; 17-19.
21 In the Book of Esther God is not mentioned, but I believe he is present on every page.

Atonement for a 'Sinless' Society
Engaging with an Emerging Culture

Alan Mann

'Sin doesn't really exist as a serious idea in modern life', wrote the journalist Bryan Appleyard. He is not alone in his views. 'Sin' has become just as tainted, polluted and defiled in the postmodern mind as the word itself indicates.

Atonement for a Sinless Society is about an encounter between two stories: the story of the postmodern, post-industrialized, post-Christian 'sinless' self and the story of Atonement played out in the Passion Narrative. Drawing on cultural commentators, narrative therapists and contemporary theologians, Alan Mann shows that the biblical narrative needs to be re-read in the light of this emerging story so that it can speak meaningfully and sufficiently to an increasingly 'sinless' society.

Alan Mann is a writer, educator and theological consultant. An author and contributor to numerous publications, he has worked with several leading Christian organizations, most notably Oasis Trust UK. He is co-author with Steve Chalke of *The Lost Message of Jesus*.

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Peter R. Holmes combines a career in management training and consultancy, with his work in Christ Church Deal and Rapha workshops. He holds a Dip.Th. and MA in pastoral theology, and a PhD in therapeutic change, and social and group processes in a faith setting. He is also a member of the Association of Therapeutic Communities (ATC) and a Lead Reviewer on the Royal College of Psychiatrists Community of Communities Research Project.

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The Covenant and the Social Message of Amos[1]

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SUMMARY

In order to understand the social message of the prophet Amos, it is crucial to consider it within the framework of the covenant both of creation and of redemption. The former is presented in the first chapters of Genesis, the latter finds its first expressions in the promises God made to Abraham and in the treaty he concluded with Moses. This means that all nations are accountable to the Creator, but especially Judah and Israel who have been given God's special revelation and specific requirements. As a consequence many forms of social ills, whether they be injustice in the courts, political oppression or economic exploitation, have religious roots; They are not only an offense to the dignity of man, but are the expression of a deep disdain towards the Lord and a disregard for His honor and holiness.

* * * *

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Um die soziale Botschaft des Amos zu verstehen, ist es entscheidend, sie innerhalb des Rahmens des Bundes der Schöpfung und der Erlösung zu betrachten. Der erstere wird in den ersten Kapiteln der Genesis präsentiert, der letztere findet seinen ersten Ausdruck in den Verheißungen Gottes an Abraham und in dem Vertrag mit Moses. Dies bedeutet, dass alle Nationen dem Schöpfer verantwortlich sind, besonders aber Juda und Israel, denen Gottes spezielle Offenbarung und spezifische Anforderungen gegeben wurden. Als Konsequenz haben viele Formen sozialer Missstände wie Ungerechtigkeit vor Gericht, politische Unterdrückung oder ökonomische Ausbeutung religiöse Wurzeln. Sie sind nicht nur ein Verstoß gegen die Würde des Menschen, sondern Ausdruck einer tiefen Verachtung Gottes und einer Geringschätzung seiner Ehre und Heiligkeit.

* * * *

RÉSUMÉ

Il faut tenir compte de la notion de l'alliance pour avoir une juste compréhension du message social du prophète Amos : – l'alliance que Dieu a conclue lors de la création est évoquée dans les premiers chapitres de la Genèse ; – l'alliance de rédemption dont les premières étapes sont formulées dans les promesses que Dieu a faites à Abraham et dans le traité qu'il a conclu avec Moïse. Cela signifie que toutes les nations sont responsables devant Dieu et plus particulièrement Juda et Israël car ils ont reçu Sa révélation spéciale et connaissent les exigences qu'elle contient. Il en résulte que bien des maux sociaux ont des racines religieuses, qu'ils relèvent de l'injustice des tribunaux, de l'oppression politique ou de l'exploitation économique. Ils foulent au pied la dignité de l'homme et sont l'expression d'un profond mépris envers Dieu. Ils portent ainsi atteinte à l'honneur et à la sainteté du Seigneur.

* * * *

One of the most quoted books of the Bible in regard to social issues is the book of Amos. Amos vigorously pleads for the poor and criticizes those who "lie on beds inlaid with ivory" and "dine on choice lambs" (Amos 6:4). But we have to be careful to read these comments not through twenty-first century eyes heavily influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by contemporary materialist perspectives.

In order to apply properly the prophetic insights of Amos, it is essential to understand his message in light of the historical situation of Amos, and of the central theological theme of the Old Testament – namely, God's eternal covenant with man. With this understanding clearly in mind, we can then apply the insights of Amos to the situation of the poor and the oppressed.

Biblically, the covenant is a treaty that God,

the ruler, has concluded with man, the subject. It establishes that man is not autonomous and implies that the creature is responsible before the Creator who has given "all men life and breath and everything else" (Acts 17:25). Although Amos does not use the word "covenant," the concept nevertheless underlies and permeates his message and his vision of reality. In the oracles of the shepherd of Tekoa, the covenant has a double dimension: It is both creational and redemptional. This essay shows how an understanding of both aspects is essential to developing a Biblical view of social justice.

The Covenant of Creation

First, we should discuss Amos' praise of the Creator God, "He who forms the mountains, creates the wind, and reveals his thoughts to man, he who turns dawn to darkness, and treads the high places of the earth" (4:13).[2] The covenant of creation (also known as the covenant of works or of life), one of the pillars of the Biblical perspective, is presented in the first three chapters of Genesis[3] and renewed within a fallen world in the treaty that God established with Noah and his sons (Gen. 9:8-17). Here are some of the characteristics of the covenant, as set forth early in Genesis:

– The Lord Himself is the initiator of His covenant of life. He is the God of heaven and earth, the ultimate reality. Though infinite, God is also a personal being: He thinks and communicates, shows love and compassion, decides and acts.

– All things are dependent upon God. By establishing the fundamental Creator-creature motif, God specifies the nature of the relation man is to have with God and with the universe.

– Precise stipulations are given, the respect or rejection of which are sanctioned by God's blessing or curse. Man has God-given liberty to eat of the fruit of the earth (Gen. 2:8, 15, 16) and to exercise dominion over the creatures (Gen. 1:28). God ordains marriage, with the promise of families (Gen. 2:18).

– Most importantly, God offers man communion with Himself (Gen. 1:26-29; 3:8) and thus introduces the Sabbath which recalls God's lordship over mankind and creation (Gen. 2:3).

– God, in summary, enters into a covenant of life with man, upon condition of personal and perpetual obedience (Gal. 3:12; Rom. 10:5). The tree of life was token of the covenant (Gen. 2:9); eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, however, would lead to the pain of death (Gen.2:17).[4]

It is vital to remember that the Lord, not man, initiates this covenant; its scope is universal. The covenant requires obedience of not just some men but all men, because Adam, the head of the human race, is representative of mankind as a whole (Rom. 5:12-21).

When the Bible tells us that man is created[5] in the "image of God" (Gen. 1:26, 27), we are given two pieces of information vital to understanding how we are to act in the midst of the world. We are told about the nature of man – all men and women – and about the position or function of man in creation.

We are told about the nature of man in that the word "*image* of God" means effigy or representation (1 Sam. 6:5; 2 Kings 11:18; Ezek. 23:14). For the ancients, an image had worth in relation to the object or person that it resembles. This means that man is to define himself with reference to God, and that his primary calling is to be in fellowship with God. This expression also conveys the idea of sonship, an idea found in Luke's genealogy of Jesus when Adam is declared "son of God" (Luke 3:38). The Apostle Paul conveys the same thought when he says: "We are his offspring" (Acts 7:28).[6]

Emphasizing the vertical dimension does not mean embracing a soul/body dualism.[7] The Bible emphasizes the unity of man: Man does not have a body, he is a body. Supposedly feeding the soul while starving the body leaves us with a corpse. But it is important to avoid the common tendency today to reduce man to a purely horizontal dimension. The expression "image of God" underscores the uniqueness of man. Yes, he is "of the earth," and is one among many creatures, yet he is a being who like God thinks, loves and acts; man is qualitatively different from the rest of creation.[8] He is a spiritual being called to live a conscious relationship with his ultimate partner, a relationship which transcends his body without reducing its value. As H. Blocher says it concisely, "the spirit of man is of the earth" and "the body of man is the expression of his spirit".[9]

The expression "image of God" also suggests man's calling: God created the world, and man can exercise dominion over it. Psalm 8, while using the vocabulary of enthronement to stress the greatness and dignity of man, reiterates the cultural mandate found in Genesis: "Subdue [the earth]. Rule over

the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground" (Gen. 1:28). The same idea is emphasized in a different way in the narrative dealing with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden: "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it" (Gen 2:15).

The first chapter of Genesis emphasizes the *subjection*[10] of creation (Gen. 1:26-28). Man, the unique creature, the climax of God's creative activity, is given authority, under God. But the second chapter adds a nuance as if to anticipate the possible misuse of power. Rather than tyrannizing creation, man is "to serve it"[11] (Gen. 2:16). When man exploits the earth, he must look after that with which God has entrusted him. When man works "for the king" (Ps. 45:1), work can become a "form of worship." Though man is unique in dignity, he is not autonomous. He is responsible for his stewardship before the Creator. He is to "take care of[12] the creation with the same solicitude the Father shows toward His handiwork (Prov. 8:30, 31; Rom. 8:18-22).

That position of authority under a God who sets specific limits contrasts with the pattern of ancient oriental despotism; where in practice the tyrant's power was unlimited. The Biblical view contrasts with ancient pagan mentalities in another way also: The Babylonians saw work as negative, something thrust upon men by lazy gods, but the early chapters of Genesis portray work and labor in a positive light. The statement, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28) implies both numeric and economic growth. Though all things belong to God, ownership and the right to property are clearly implied.[13]

Man's Cultural Mandate within a Broken World

Chapters 4 through 6 of Genesis deal specifically with the development of the human race rather than with the history of redemption, and thus show us how man began to fill the earth and subdue it. Abel and Cain were involved in agriculture, and Cain later built a permanent settlement (4:1, 17).[14] Jabal was the father of the semi nomadic herders of livestock (4:20); Jubal was the father of musicians and therefore of culture as a whole (4:21); Tubal Cain, half-brother of Jabal and Jubal, was the father of technology and industry (4:22). These names and chronologies, so often skipped over in Bible reading, show a crucial distinctive of the Biblical worldview: Israel neighbors ascribed the organization of civilization to the gods,[15] but Genesis shows that civilization and culture were constructed by mortal men created after the image of God. Genesis continually stresses the dignity and worth of man who is capable of creative imagination.

Again, just as the earlier chapters of Genesis anticipate the misuse of power, so we should remember here that it is the line of Cain that is doing all these things. That lineage is not an outright condemnation of man's civilizing action, but post Fall activities always have a note of ambiguity. What is the meaning of civilization and culture for the creature who has become his own finality? Will not stewardship be transformed into a drive for autonomy? The heart of the dilemma is not the creative ingenuity of man nor his labor and industry, but the folly of his arrogance. The rebellion of the first couple[16] led to an alienation that spread to every area of life both on a vertical and horizontal level: alienation from God, self, fellowman, all the other creatures. The murders committed by Cain and Lamech, along with the advent of tyranny and polygamy (Gen. 4:19), illustrate in a striking fashion the dynamic and the expansion of sin.

And yet, after all of this abuse of power, and after God's judgment of that abuse by means of the great flood, He graciously renews His covenant. The treaty He concludes with Noah introduces a time of patience, with a view to the realization of God's plan of redemption (Rom. 3:25; 8:18-25). The covenant, given despite the wickedness of man's heart – thoughts, emotions and actions – is established by God alone. It is universal, including in its scope not only Noah, but also his descendants, all other creatures, and even the whole earth (Gen 9:9-13). It is not conditioned by obedience to specific stipulations, and it is for "as long as the earth endures" (Gen 8:22). The rainbow, as the sign of the covenant, guarantees cosmic stability (Gen. 9:12-17) and testifies to the faithfulness and patience of God.[17] It is within this framework that man's cultural mandate is renewed (Gen. 9:1-8). In the midst of a reality that suffers the consequences of evil, things are not quite the same. Dominion over the other creatures arouses "fear and dread" (Gen. 9:2). In addition to "green plants," men may now eat "everything that lives and moves" as long as the blood has been removed (Gen. 9:3, 4).[18] God Himself introduces capital punishment: "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man" (Gen. 9:6). Indeed, the very nature of the Lord

is the ultimate foundation of right. To recognize that nature and abide by it is a safeguard against all forms of arbitrary action. God gives man liberty under Himself, and establishes justice for all.

The Covenant of Redemption

That is what God does for everyone. But he also does particular things for a particular people. As M. H. Segal notes, "The real theme of the Pentateuch is the selection of Israel from the nations and its consecration to the service of God and his laws in a divinely appointed land."[19] God promises to make the descendants of Abraham into the people of God and to give them Canaan as an everlasting inheritance (Gen. 15; 17:7, 8). God also makes a third promise, stated explicitly in His call to Abram: "All peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Gen. 12:3). That promise clearly emphasizes both the redemptional and universal scope of God's purpose: God's original blessing on all mankind (Gen. 1:28) would be restored through Abraham and his descendants, reaching fulfillment in the person and work of the Messiah.

Israel's task is to glorify God by demonstrating His holiness in the midst of a lost world. By the means of a particular people, divine beauty, truth, and redemption will shine forth among men as they lie in the shadow of death. As the Lord, who has delivered His people out of Egyptian bondage, declares to Moses just before the revelation on Sinai, "Out of all nations ... you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exod. 19:4-6). Israel, "the kingdom of priests," is to be to the nations of the world what the priests are to a nation: leaders of worship, teachers of truth.

God makes known to His "treasured possession" (v. 5) the law by which they must live. Rather than exalting man's discretion, that law carefully limits arrogant power. It proclaims, among other things, that human life is sacred, that all men are equal before God, and that the weaker members of the community must be protected and defended.

Those distinctives need emphasis, because the Biblical view of law is very different from that found in other ancient codes. In Mesopotamia the law was above the gods; they functioned as its witnesses, defenders and guardians. In Israel, with the law incorporated into the covenant, God is the author, source and fountain of law. The Psalmist expressed this understanding well by writing, "He has revealed his word to Jacob, his laws and decrees to Israel. He has done this for no other nation; they do not know his laws" (Ps. 147:19, 20). The law, far from impersonal, was a statement of God's will, and was to govern the whole of life.[20]

Furthermore, in Mesopotamia the king alone was chosen by the gods to receive the perception of truth. In Israel, however, the law was given and proclaimed to the community as a whole (Exod. 21:1). It was not the prerogative of a class of professionals (jurist, lawyer, judge); the law was read publicly to the people every seven years. Both individual and social responsibility were emphasized. Everyone could know the rule that he who destroys human life is accountable for the crime committed (Exod. 21:12). A murderer was not supposed to be able to buy his way out or use his power to escape justice, for religious values precede economic or political considerations. The corollary also was true: the death penalty was suppressed in the case of crimes committed against property, regardless of whose property was taken (Exod. 22:1ff.).

Similarly, the principle that all men are equal before God was of fundamental importance. In principle, there was no class justice in Israel as there is in the Code of Hammurabi.[21] Those in power were not to suspend the rules for their own benefit. The famous "eye for eye, tooth for tooth" verse, so often misunderstood, limited the punishment to the person committing the offense, and specified that the penalty must correspond to the crime perpetrated.[22] Significantly, the Bible provided not for survival of the fittest, but for protection of the weaker members of the community: the blind and the deaf (Deut. 27:18), widows and orphans (Deut. 27:17-22), the foreigner (Deut. 27:17; Exod. 23:6), the poor (Deut. 15:7-11; Exod. 23:6), the debtor who sells himself into slavery (Deut. 15:12-18), and those born slaves (Exod. 23:12). The law requires that they be protected from oppression and exploitation. Even their specific prerogatives are indicated (Deut. 14:29).

In summary, the five books of Moses show concern for justice for all mankind, with the idea of justice always couched within the covenant and resting upon theocentric thought.[23] Israel has the task of being a light unto the Gentiles, showing God's way of ministering to both body and soul. Now, with these aspects of the covenant established, we may approach within Biblical thought-patterns the message that Amos delivered to Judah and Israel.

Amos in Context

To begin with, we will touch on the historical background. Living during the eighth century B.C., Amos prophesied during the reigns of Jeroboam II (786-746), king of Israel, and Azariah (also named Uzziah, 783-742), king of Judah. He probably began his public ministry towards the middle of the century. For both kingdoms, it was a time of security, peace and political growth. Previously, Aram (Syria) had continually made inroads upon Israel and had even invaded its territory on a number of occasions. But with the rise of Assyria, the Syrian power had been broken; Adadnirari III's conquest of Damascus precipitated Aram into a period of weakness which was to benefit both the Northern and the Southern kingdoms.

Assyria would eventually conquer Israel, but during this period the Assyrian armies were occupied with various internal and external dangers. It is therefore not surprising that Israel and Judah, though divided, gained back the territory lost after the death of Solomon. Jeroboam II included in his sphere of influence Aram and Hamath to the north and Ammon and Moab to the east. Uzziah extended the boundaries of Judah to include Edom, the tribes of Arabia, the Negev and the Philistine cities (Gath, Jabnet and Ashdod). Key trade routes – one following the coastline, another going through Transjordania – once again passed through both kingdoms. The Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon offered an opening onto the Mediterranean, while the port of Elath, on the Red Sea, became an important channel for trade with partners in the south.[24] As Neher wrote, "Palestine, crossroads of the sea and the land routes, becomes the center of international economic exchanges."[25]

In addition to the renewal of trade, industrial activities flourished,[26] herds grew, and agriculture was encouraged.[27] The era of peace and prosperity was not limited to the royal house, but extended to a wealthy class of society mainly made up of the nobility, officers and merchants. Those individuals built magnificent houses and invested in costly furniture (probably made in Damascus[28]) and ivory ornaments (often inlaid with precious stones such as lapis lazuli). The well being of this upper class, described by Amos, has been confirmed by archaeological finds made in Samaria.[29]

Amos does not condemn prosperity that results from honest, hard work, or from wise investment of wealth. He attacks shameless business practices such as "skimping the measure, boosting the price and cheating with dishonest scales" (Amos 8:5). He attacks those who ignore the misery around them and instead practice a superficial optimism, particularly in international relations (Amos 6:1-7). Freed from the immediate threat of powerful Aram, Israel and Judah did not see, or pretended not to see, the danger that was rising in the north. Having made new gods for themselves alongside the God of the covenant, enjoying the comfort that wealth and well being bring, they did not recognize the fatal consequences of sin.

Israel and Judah also did not understand the cause of their prosperity. Instead of ascribing economic success to the mercy of God and their forefathers' development of a biblical worldview concerning economics, they often gave thanks to Baal, god of storms and controller of fertility within the Canaanite and Phoenician cults.[30] Such idol worship obviously was a direct affront to God. In Baal worship, as in other pagan myths, evil is part of the ultimate make-up of reality – that is, God – and absolute right and wrong do not exist. In paganism, with its naturalistic emphasis, history is replaced by an endless repetition of the cycles of cosmic life, and man is only a part of them; therefore, the significance and meaning of history and of man is greatly reduced. If there is ultimately no personal absolute in the universe, what is evil and why fight it? In the light of these considerations, one can understand why the prophets denounced with such vigor all forms of idolatry. Baalism presented powerless gods (with the limitations and sins common to man) and demanded that they be adored. Baalism thus explained the world in a way totally contradicting the biblical perspective (I Kings 18:16-45).

Despite the syncretism, God did not turn his back on His people. He did not even ignore those who were not His people, because other nations were also accountable before God. As Paul would later write, "the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness" (Rom. 1:18ff).

The General Requirements

On the basis of the covenant of creation established with Adam and renewed with Noah and his descendants, Amos criticizes Syria, Philistia, Phoenicia, Edom, Ammon and Moab. For example, Amos speaks out against the *brutal inhumanity* that Syria shows in warfare: "Damascus has threshed Gilead

with sledges having iron teeth" (Amos 1:3). He attacks the Philistine *deportation of civilians*, innocent refugees destined to become merchandise in the international marketplace (Amos 1:6; see also Joel 3:8; Obad. 20). He protests the self-interested Phoenician betrayal of the *"treaty of brotherhood"* with Israel (Amos 1:9; 1 Kings 5:26; 9:14). He denounces the savage *acts of cruelty* perpetuated in order to expand territory. Thus, "Ammon... ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead in order to extend his borders" (Amos 1:13).

Amos, in short, attacks those who do not respect a key fact of Genesis 1: Man is made "in the image of God." To hate the image bearer is to hate the image, so Amos attacks the *"stifling of all compassion"* (Amos 1:11) and the violent anger that seeks to obliterate the very last trace of one's enemies. For example, God sends fire on Moab "because he burned, as if to lime, the bones of Edom's king" (Amos 2:1).[31] Neher's translation of that verse – "because Moab has burned the bones left by the king of Edom in order to extract lime" – brings up another point: Was Edom using corpses abandoned on the battlefield for industrial purposes, thus placing economic considerations above the honor due to a man's memory?[32] It is difficult to decide which is the better interpretation, but both are an expression of an utter contempt for man. God condemns that contempt for those made after His image, whether they are from Israel or from other nations.

In his commentary on Amos, A. Motyer draws, from the passage we have been dealing with, principles of conduct which are valid for both individuals and communities: Man is not an object that can be manipulated as one sees fit; truth and loyalty in human relationships and affairs are crucial; seeking for power and money must be checked by ethical standards; all humans deserve respect.[33] It is important to note that these principles are couched in a worldview that corresponds basically to the Noahic covenant: Man is unique; he lives in a moral universe; he is accountable to God, the ultimate absolute. That is why Amos argues with such vigor against arbitrary power of all kinds: he sees man's dictatorship and violence as the very negation of the meaningfulness of God's universe, and an attack on God Himself

It is not difficult to see the relevance of such a message to questions of social justice. First, man is a responsible creature. According to a rabbinic exegesis of the famous recurring verse in Amos, God is saying, "Because of the three sins of Damascus, of Gaza..., because of four, I will not bring back Damascus, Gaza . . . from the destiny it has brought upon itself by its sins and which I had forgiven on many occasions" (1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1).[34] Though it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a holy God, choice is a decisive factor in the disaster and ruin that came upon these nations. Man can operate within the covenant given to Noah and take dominion, or man can arrogantly bring about tyranny, social unrest, poverty and destruction. There is no place here for a deterministic view of history and culture.

Secondly, Amos also reminds us that God's judgment is both a call to repentance and a vindication and protection of the humble. The justice and the solicitude of the Father are for those who have been "threshed" (Amos 1:3), led into captivity (1:6), or betrayed (1:9); it is for those who are the object of sinful anger (1:11), sickening violence (1:13), and unjust commercial transactions (1:6, 9; 2:1). God is the uncompromising advocate of those who are victims of the violations of the law He has given for the well being of His creatures. Nevertheless, within the Biblical perspective, poverty, misery and suffering have no value in themselves. They are also related to man's decision making significance, and can be the consequence of irresponsible and often unwise choices.

A third aspect relates to the role of God's chosen people – chosen for special grace but also special work, to be a nation of priests in service to the world. Amos' first six oracles deal with nations under the Noahic Covenant but not the Mosaic; the final two deal specifically with Judah and Israel, and we should now examine them.

The Particular Requirements

The prophet begins by placing the spotlight upon Judah. It is found guilty, even more so than the surrounding nations, for it has been the object of God's solicitude and special revelation. Indeed, the kingdom has rejected the teaching of God in nature and history; it has broken away from the religious and moral precepts of the covenant. Judah has abandoned the wisdom of God in order to follow the deviations of the false and deceitful gods (Amos 2:4). In practice, to turn to the idols and to seek their help is the equivalent of pushing God out of one's mental horizon. Exaltation of self is at the heart of rebellion against God and inevitably leads to despising His will.[35]

The northern kingdom is in even worse shape.

At the time of the schism, Jeroboam I established two new sanctuaries, Dan in the north and Bethel in the south, so that the people would not have to go to Jerusalem and thus fall under the influence of the kingdom of Judah. Jereboam I introduced into his new state church the calf symbol of power and fertility; he said it was to represent the Lord, but he was introducing a pagan symbol into the worship of God.[36] In addition, the king assumed the function of high priest and appointed non-levitical priests to preside over the new religion and worship (1 Kings 12:28-33). Apparently he forgot history and the dramatic consequences of wanting to identify the Lord with the golden calf (Exod. 32).

Amos couches his attack upon both Judah and Israel in a framework of covenant. In his oracle against the inhabitants of Judah, Amos recalled that they had been given the law (Amos 2:4); in his statement against Israel he evoked God's past blessings. The two oracles taken together refer to elements that constitute a covenant: the deliverance from Egypt (Amos 2:10), the bestowing of a constitution (2:4), and the giving of a land (2:9). Though divided, the two nations belong to the same body: They have both benefited from God's solicitude, and they are both responsible before Him for deliberately disregarding His will and following vain idols created out of their supposedly autonomous imagination.

Both Judah and Israel, in short, were playing down the requirements of God and pretending that moral life and economic success could be gained by reliance on gods embodied in the fluctuating forces of nature and in the capricious will of man. This meant, whatever the quality of the religious makeup, that man became the measure of all things on both the individual and institutional level. Proclaiming freedom from all checks and balances, autonomy led the people of the covenant to discover the reverse side of significance. Their selfish desires, interests, and utopias became the norms of their judicial, economic, political, diplomatic and military activities. They sought new security in the self-sufficient virtues of royal authority, diplomacy, and military power.

Such a perversion yielded only bitterness, violence, and death. Egoism, arbitrary force and ruthless exploitation blunted moral judgment and undermined social justice and peace. It is precisely at this moment in history that one finds a deep fissure in the social tissue of Judah/Israel. As guardian of the covenant, Amos identified specific evils, including the corruption of the law courts so that they did not defend the cause of the innocent and of the defenseless (Amos 2:6; 8:6), but merely responded to personal power.[37] Not only were the innocent and the defenseless despised, but in the case of a misdeed, the penalty did not correspond to the crime committed. Two of the specific tenets of Biblical law – equal justice for all, and consideration for the weak – were set aside.

Those who had power forced ruthless economic practices that respected neither the person made in the image of God nor the property of the powerless (Amos 2:7; 8:4). The "poor" are considered righteous not because of their economic position as such, but because they are both innocent and defenseless.[38] Peasants were compelled to surrender their crops at their own expense (Amos 5:lla). Prosperity based on wrongful gain flourished, with those newly-rich through use of power eager to invest in land and real estate (Amos 3:15; 5:llb). Amos does not champion poverty against prosperity – such an opposition is foreign to the Biblical mentality – but he questions the acquisition of wealth at the expense of the respect for God's law and therefore of justice. He attacks the way that Judah and Israel threw off the just requirements of the covenant and based their conduct on the desires and inclinations of their fickle hearts (Amos 3:9b; 8:5, 6).

The oppression is such that weaker members of the community are disregarded or simply brushed aside (Amos 2:7a; 8:4a), while the Nazarite and the prophets, guardians of the covenant, are encouraged to betray their calling and deny their ministry (Amos 2:12). The words of Paul describing the godless generation in the last days are quite fitting for the contemporaries of Amos: they are "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" (2 Tim. 3:4). This is true both of the inhabitants of Samaria – including some of the wealthy women (Amos 4:1) – and of Judah who seem to be totally unaware that calamity is at hand (Amos 6:1-6; 5:18). They have opted for a shortsighted philosophy of life. Since life and death have no ultimate meaning, "let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die" (1 Cor. 15:32).[39] Man has no ultimate purpose; he is alone in a universe which is amoral and arbitrary!

It is therefore not surprising that the Israelites showed disdain for God, for His will, for His servants, and for true worship. God's special people were as insensitive as all the other nations – even more so, because they were insensitive to God's working among them. They considered the day of the coming of the Lord as a day of light and not of darkness (Amos 5:18). They did not

grieve over the imminent ruin of their country (Amos 6:6). They refused to hear the oracles of the prophet (7:16). They would not reflect on the disastrous consequences of their acts as God sought to bring them back from their evil ways (4:6-11). They acted so horribly because they had become ungodly, profaning God Himself by despising His covenant. Amos eloquently linked religious infidelity and social injustice by noting that "Father and son use the same girl and so profane my holy name. They lie down beside every altar on garments taken in pledge. In the house of their gods they drink wine taken as fines" (Amos 2:7b, 8).

In this passage, the shepherd of Tekoa exposed immorality, probably the sacred prostitution that was at the heart of the fertility cult (v. 7b) and the ill-gotten gains used to promote religious idolatry (v. 8).[40] It is clear here, as elsewhere in the prophecy, that government backed creeds had become a means to an end, that of justifying the wickedness of man's heart. Amos attacks religious formalism and hypocrisy that deny justice and righteousness (Amos 5:21-24; 8:4), Canaanite idolatry (Amos 2:7b, 8; 5:26), and also the propensity to adapt the ritual and its meaning to the circumstances at hand.[41] That is why Amos mentions a number of religious centers that were the shrines of pilgrimages as they had been associated with important moments of Israel's past history:

– Bethel (3:14; 4:5; 5:5; 7:13) was the place where Jacob experienced the presence of the Lord in a dream that gave to give a new direction to his life (Gen. 28:10-22). It was also there that God gave him the new name of Israel as he returned from Paddam Aram (Gen. 35:1-15). At the time of Amos, Bethel was probably the most important shrine of the Northern Kingdom. In fact, it is called "the king's sanctuary and the temple of the kingdom." Jeroboam had combined political and religious leadership. So, when the prophet denounced the rebellion and sin of the high place, it was considered an act of treason and conspiracy (7:7-13).

– Gilgal (4:4; 5:5)[42] l was to take on historical importance at the time of Joshua. It was there that Joshua set up the twelve stones that commemorated the crossing of the Jordan (4:20) and it was there that the people of the covenant were, once again, consecrated by the act of circumcision and the celebrating of the Passover (5:2-12).

– Beersheba (5:5; 8:14) is associated with all three patriarchs. It was there that they received the assurance of the presence of the Lord (Gen. 21:22-33; Gen. 26.23-33; Gen. 46:1-4).

Apparently, these three centers, in addition to Dan and Samaria (8:14) were important shrines of pilgrimage. To consider the past is of crucial importance as long as it does not become an end in itself, but a means to face up to the present and to look upon the future with God given serenity. Such was not the perspective of Israel. Not only Israel was quick to disregard the law of Moses (Am. 4:5, 6), but also introduced foreign gods (5:25; 8:14).

Israel, in short, thought it could worship the gods as well as the Lord. Such confusion could lead only to the denial of the one true God and the advent of a man-made religion (Amos 4:5; 6:8; 7:9). This arrogant pride blinded Israelites and led to a change in their whole outlook and system of values. It made them despise truth and run after lies, hate good and love evil (Amos 5:15). And yet, what weight could the creature god carry in comparison with the Creator-Judge, the moral absolute and fountain of life, the God who holds the universe in His power?

Conclusion

Amos announced imminent disaster, the result of responsible choice, but through words of judgment he sought to awaken the consciences of his listeners and thus open the way of redemption. Clouds were thick on the horizon, but there was still time to repent. That is why the prophet appealed untiringly to the responsibility of the covenant people (Amos 4:4; 5:5, 6, 14, 15), confronting them with a choice between God and idols, between God and man, between God and nothingness, between truth and falsehood, between good and evil, between life and death. Sadly, Israel did not heed the warnings of Amos. It brought upon itself invasion and exile, the consequences of its decisions. Judah, after a reprieve, suffered the same calamities. In the midst of turmoil, however, God was watching over his wide and gracious design. His promise of salvation is couched in Amos' last oracle (Amos 9:8-15), which begins by identifying the imminent judgment with an act of purification (vv. 9,10). Although destruction was to overcome the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, God would establish His kingdom of peace and prosperity by means of a remnant. The Lord would undertake the restoration of the house of David, the messianic kingdom

(2 Sam. 7) that would extend to all the nations, to all those who would be the objects of divine grace. This promise began to be fulfilled with the return from exile, but more significantly with the coming of Jesus of Nazareth (Acts 15:17).[43]

That is the grand message of Amos, a book that should not be turned into a narrow tract. To read Amos as an attack on the wealthy or a call for class warfare is not only superficial, but wrong and perverse: It is turning God's message of justice and compassion into a sermon of hatred The emphasis in Amos is on a refusal to abide by God's covenant, and a consequent tendency of the powerful to lord it over the weak. The covenant of creation and the cultural mandate gives man the opportunity to take dominion over the earth – but sinful man abuses freedom whether he be religious or not. Thus all men are accountable before the Creator, the God of Jesus-Christ.

The lesson of Amos for Christians today is sobering: God's covenant gives us the opportunity to become His people – in reality His "priests" bearing witness to His eternal covenant of truth, justice and righteousness. But too often we simply think and act according to the spirit of the age. If we follow our own inclinations we are likely to create oppression, sometimes in the name of fighting oppression. Only by understanding God's requirements and covenantal mercy as fully revealed in Jesus-Christ, can we look at evil squarely and thus see the need for a change of mind and direction. As justice and peace come about, they will stand as a token of the coming kingdom.[44]

Notes

1 This article is a slightly modified version of an essay entitled "Prophet and Covenant," published in M. Olasky ed., *Freedom, Justice and Hope* (Westchester: Crossway Books, 1988) 19-39.

2 Along with such doxologies (5:8 and 9:5, 6) Amos repeatedly sets his oracles within the wider covenant of creation, and does not restrict his prophecy to Israel and Judah (1; 2:3). It should be noted that the Lord, in bringing action against Israel, summons the fortresses of Philistia and Egypt as witnesses to the evil in Samaria (3:9). Amos also announces the universal dimension of the restoration to be introduced by the Messiah (9:11, 12).

3 If one considers the overall Old Testament picture, a number of passages correctly translated seem to refer to the covenant concluded with Adam:
- speaking of unrepentant Israel, Hosea says: "Like Adam, they have broken the covenant" (6:7). This allusion to Adam corresponds to the prophet's numerous references to the past (2:8; 9:10; 11:8; 12:4).
- As he recalls his past integrity, Job seems to refer to the Fall when he declares: "If I have concealed my sin as Adam did, by hiding my guilt in my heart..." (Job 31:33).
- Another possible reference can be found in the Psalms. Speaking of the unfaithful rulers and judges, Asaph says: "surely you will die like Adam, you will fall like the 'first' of rulers" (Ps. 82:7). Cf. also Jb 15:7; Ps. 73:3.

4 The Westminster Catechism goes into this very well; many editions are available, including one published by W. Blackwood, Edinburgh and London, 1963, p. 55.

5 The verb "bara," to create, is used only with God as subject. It is used forty-nine times in the Old Testament (mainly in Genesis, Isaiah and the Psalms). In Genesis 1, it occurs at three crucial points of God's creative activity: the creation of all things (1:1), of the animal world (l: 20ff.), and of man (l:26ff.). This concept reminds us that God is the ultimate being. He has made all things out of nothing by the power of His word.

6 Paul is quoting from the Sicilian poet Aratus (Phoenomena) and from Cleanthes ("Hymn to Zeus").

7 Looking at Biblical use of some key words is important here. "Body" stresses the historical and external associations that influence the life of man; "flesh" calls to mind man's relationship to nature and mankind as a whole – it is never used of God; "spirit denotes man endowed with power who has a relationship with the Spirit of God; "soul" stresses the individuality and the vitality of man, and draws attention to the inner life and feelings as well as to personal consciousness; "heart" is associated with the intellectual, volitional and emotional activities of man. This term is only used of God and man.

8 To stress the unique identity of man as he stands before the Creator, the Bible uses the following terms: soul (nefesh, neshma); spirit (ruah); heart (leb). This, of course, does not deny the great variety of usages these words can have in other contexts. For further discussion and bibliography, see my article "L'homme, la mort et la vie: perspectives bibliques," in La Revue Reformée, No. 149, 1987, pp. 12-23.

9 H. Blocher. *Révélation des Origines* (Lausanne: P.B.U., 1998), 82. English title : *In the Beginning: the Opening chapters of Genesis.* Tr. of the first edition by D. G. Preston, Leicester, England, 1984.

10 Two Hebrew words are used: radah means to tread (in the wine press, Joel 4:13) and by extension, to rule, govern (Ps. 72:8). *Kabash* means to subject someone, to make subservient (Jer. 34:16; Num. 32:22) and to violate or rape (Esth. 7:8). Because

of the reality of evil in the midst of our world one can notice an ambivalence in the way these terms may be used, both for good or evil.

11 *'Abad* means to work, to cultivate, to serve, but also to serve in the Temple and thus to adore.

12 Shamar means to guard, to watch over, to protect, to save (Gen. 41:35; Ps. 121:7).

13 Atrahasis, Tablet I, has man created in order to relieve the gods from the heavy and arduous work that was their lot. See W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard, eds., *The Babylonian Story of the Flood* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 42ff. The Fall, of course, had drastic affects on work, procreation, and other aspects of the creation. Alienation resulting from the Fall will continue to have an effect until the return of Christ, but until that time we have God's mandate to glorify Him in our work.

14 The NIV translates "city." In Josh. 13:23, this word is used in conjunction with another word meaning a "permanent settlement without wall; farm; village." It is therefore preferable to speak of a "permanent settlement."

15 For example, at Ugarit, the skill and art of the blacksmith were attributed to the divinity Ktrwhss.

16 In Genesis 2 and 3, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents man's autonomous knowledge that rejects the sovereignty of God. By choosing autonomy, man seeks to become his own end. He seeks to establish knowledge, values and happiness on a purely horizontal level. It is the beginning of idolatry: the creature becoming the reference point. In fact, man is placed before two different attitudes towards life, two different world and life views. The contrast, it should be noted, is not between faith and knowledge, but between two different forms of knowledge, one whose foundation is God and the other man. The former brings wisdom, integrity and life; the latter brings folly, ruin and death. Which one will man choose?

17 Consider within such a perspective Isa. 54:10 and Matt. 5:45.

18 The reason for this restriction lies in the fact that the blood is associated with the life of the animal and that it has an important place in the ritual of atonement (Gen. 3:21; 4:4), as the book of Leviticus reveals (Lev. 1:5; 3:17; 7:26; 17:12; 19:26).

19 M. H. Segal: *The Pentateuch* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1976), p. 23.

20 The Biblical legislation is often given within an historical setting (Lev. 10; 24:10-16; Num. 15:32-36) and can have a prophetic dimension (Deut. 17:14-20). The historical as well as the ethical and religious justifications appeal to conscience and have an educational character to motivate obedience (Exod. 6:7-9, 20-25).

21 The one exception to the principle of equal justice for all was the case of the slave. But it must be noted that the relevant legislation seeks to protect and to preserve the dignity of the slave: his condition is temporary; he must not become the object of abusive physical violence; he must be treated as a human being (Deut. 23:15).

22 With one notable exception: Deuteronomy 25:11, 12.

23 For further discussion, see Sh. M. Paul, *Studies in the Book of the Covenant in the Light of Cuneiform and Biblical Law* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970), pp. 27-42, and A. van Selms, "Law" in *New Bible Dictionary* (London: Intervarsity Press, 1962), p. 720.

24 Orphir especially, which roughly corresponds with present-day Somalia (2 Kings 14:22; 2 Chron. 26:2; 1 Kings 9:26).

25 A. Neher, *Amos* (Paris: Vrin, 1981), p. 207.

26 Including copper-mining in the Arabah. J. Bright mentions weaving and dyeing at Debir; see his *History of Israel* (London: S.C.M. Press, 1974), p. 256.

27 2 Chronicles 26:10.

28 Amos 3:12. The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain.

29 N. Avigad, "Samaria," in *Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, Vol. 4 (London: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 1046.

30 The difference between the two cults was that the former was agrarian and the latter Dionysiac.

31 The burning deprived Edom's king of the proper burial due even to one's enemies (1 Kings 2:31; 2 Kings 9:34). In the Old Testament, the burning of a corpse is extremely rare (1 Sam. 31:12) and is probably a sign of God's judgment. In the case of Saul and his sons (1 Sam. 31:12), it has been suggested that cremation was performed to prevent any further abuse of the bodies. In Leviticus 21:9, burning is the legal penalty for prostitution (cf. also Gen. 38:24).

32 A. Neher, op. cit., pp. 52, 53.

33 A. Motyer, *The Day of the Lion: The Message of Amos* (Leicester: Intervarsity Press, 1974).

34 A. Neher, op. cit., p. 50.

35 This inclination to turn away from the law is well illustrated by the king himself. Uzziah sought to claim for himself a privilege that was reserved for the high priest. We are told in the book of Chronicles that "after Uzziah became powerful, his pride led to his downfall. He was unfaithful to the Lord his God, and entered the temple of the Lord to burn incense" (2 Chron. 26:16). Those words "his pride" mean literally, "his heart was exalted"; he had high aims. "He was unfaithful to God" means "he acted counter to his duty towards God." This incident kindled the conflict which seemed to exist in Jerusalem between the king and the clergy (the priest-Levites had saved the Davidic dynasty from the hands of Athaliah – 2 Chron. 22:10-12, and the influence they exercised probably weighed on the king.)

36 There was a difference: Pagan gods stood on the calves or bulls, while in Jeroboam's religion there

was no representation of God standing on the statues. The syncretism and confusion were all the more subtle!

37 Mosaic law allowed servitude; it was a means of paying one's debt by labor. However, the term of bondage was limited and the slaves were to be treated as hired workers (Exod. 21:1, 2; Lev. 25:39-43; Deut. 15:1-11). Amos and others testified that the practice was abused (2 Kings 4:1; Neh. 5:5).

38 In Amos 2:6, the "righteous" are the innocent party in a trial, while the "needy" are the weak, the defenseless. In Amos 8:6, a parallel passage, the word "poor" is used in the place of "righteous." A possible translation of Amos 2:7 (a difficult passage) is: "The Israelite trample on the heads of the poor as upon the dust of the ground and redirect the way of the humble."

39 Paul is quoting from Isaiah 22:13. As the people of Jerusalem faced the coming judgment announced by Isaiah, rather than recognizing their unfaithfulness, repenting of their sins, and returning to the Lord, they preferred to make the best of the present joys of life, thinking that is all it has to offer!

40 These gains were obtained by the breaking of the laws protecting the powerless (Exod. 22:26, 27; Deut. 24:12, 13, 17) or by exorbitant claims or false charges of damage.

41 It should be noted that Baal itself is not mentioned once in Amos. The cult that Jeroboam introduced in Israel after Solomon's reign, and that Jehu restored, was not overtly idolatrous. Rather, it was an appeal to tradition, a breaking away from the law, and an integration of idolatry.

42 Gilgal is also mentioned by Hosea as an important religious shrine (Hos. 4:15; 9:15; 12:11).

43 The Greek translation of the Old Testament, and the New Testament, offer a different reading of verse 12, one that gives it a messianic dimension: "So that the remnant of men and all the nations that bear my name may seek the Lord" (Amos 9:12). James considers this passage as a proof that Jesus is the Messiah!

44 For further reading: H. W. Wolff, *Joel and Amos* (Philadephia; Fortress Press, 1977), German edition 1969. L. Epsztein, *La justice sociale dans le Proche-Orient ancien et le peuple de la Bible* (Paris: Le Cerf, 1983) ; R. Martin-Achard, *Amos, l'homme, le message, l'influence* (Genève : Labor et Fidès, 1984) ; Sh. M. Paul, *A Commentary of the book of Amos* (Minneapolis : Fortress and Augsburg Press, 1991) ; J. N. Niehaus, *Amos* in T. E. McComiskey ed. *The Minor Prophets*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992); P. Bovati, R. Meynet, *Le Livre du Prophète Amos* (Paris: Le Cerf, 1994); P. Bovati, R. Meynet, *La fin d'Israël, paroles d'Amos* (Paris : Le Cerf, 1994). Shorter version of the rhetorical approach exemplified in the Commentary ; J. Jeremias, *The Book of Amos: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), German Edition 1995; I. Jaruzelska, *Amos and the Officialdom in the Kingdom of Israel: The sociological evidence*. Socjologia 25 (Posnan: Adan Mickiewicz University Press, 1998), C. Hahling, Pauvreté, injustice et éloignement de Dieu: importance et pertinence du message social d'Amos. Mémoire de Maîtrise, Faculté Libre de Théologie Réformée, Aix-en-Provence, 2005.

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Economy and Immanence: Karl Rahner's Doctrine of the Trinity[1]

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SUMMARY

In the recent resurgence of Trinitarian theology, many theologians have employed Rahner's famous dictum in varying ways. This paper seeks to place his axiom in the context of his doctrine of the Trinity as a whole. It is concluded that, while Rahner has made a genuine contribution to Trinitarian discussion, his formulation (especially in its reciprocal clause) jeopardizes the freedom of God in loving creation, and should only be accepted with modification.

* * * *

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Im seit kurzem wieder auflebenden Interesse an trinitarischer Theologie haben viele Theologen Rahners berühmtes Diktum auf verschiedene Weise verwendet. Dieser Artikel versucht, sein Axiom in den Zusammenhang seiner gesamten Trinitätslehre zu stellen. Der Artikel kommt zu dem Schluss, dass trotz der Tatsache, dass Rahner einen originären Beitrag zur Diskussion der Trinitätslehre geleistet hat, seine Formulierung (besonders in ihrer wechselseitigen Klausel) die Freiheit Gottes, die Schöpfung zu lieben, aufs Spiel setzt und nur mit Modifikationen akzeptiert werden sollte.

* * * *

RÉSUMÉ

Dans le cadre de l'intérêt récent pour la théologie de la Trinité, de nombreux théologiens ont repris la fameuse formule de Rahner de manières diverses. Cet essai tente de replacer son axiome dans le contexte de sa théologie de la Trinité dans son ensemble. L'auteur parvient à la conclusion que, bien que Rahner ait apporté une contribution valable au sujet de la Trinité, sa formulation (surtout dans la clause réciproque) porte atteinte à la liberté divine dans l'amour pour la création. On ne peut donc l'accepter que moyennant modification.

* * * *

Introduction

In the recent "renewal of Trinitarian theology," scholars have given broad assent to Catholic theologian Karl Rahner's famous dictum, "The 'economic' Trinity is the 'immanent' Trinity and the 'immanent' Trinity is the 'economic' Trinity."[2] One theologian characterizes the differences among the major Trinitarian thinkers today by the various ways they interpret and implement Rahner's thesis into their theology.[3] In view of such prominence, this brief essay shall attempt to understand the axiom in the light of Rahner's broader Trinitarian theology. After considering Rahner's aim, method, and starting point, we shall then examine the particular emphasis he places on the Trinity as an act of God's self-communication before turning to his immanent and economic identification and his discussion of proper roles within the Trinity. In the end, while Rahner has made a real contribution to the current discussion, we shall argue that his thesis needs to be qualified if it is to receive acceptance in an orthodox theological understanding.

Rahner's Aim, Method, and Starting Point

For Rahner, the doctrine of the Trinity is an abso-

lutely essential key to Christian life. He laments the eclipse of the doctrine in the church: "despite their orthodox confession of the Trinity, Christians are, in their practical life, almost mere 'monotheists.'...should the doctrine of the Trinity have to be dropped as false, the major part of religious literature could well remain virtually unchanged."[4] He traces the roots of this, in part, to the distinction that has been made between the two treatises "On the One God" (*De Deo Uno*) and "On the Triune God" (*De Deo Trino*). While he recognizes the need to treat both topics, their separation, which he attributes to Thomas Aquinas, has led to the neglect of the latter and an undue emphasis on the unity of God.[5] In the end, by the time one gets to the treatise *On the Triune God*, "It looks as if everything which matters for us in God has already been said in the treatise *On the One God*."[6] Thus, Rahner wants to restore to prominence a stress on the Trinity in both doctrinal and practical life.

In order to achieve such a recovery, Rahner focuses on salvation history. To derive our doctrine, we should "confidently look for an access into the doctrine of the Trinity in Jesus and in his Spirit, as we experience them through faith in salvation history."[7] While not neglecting the Magisterium's traditional teaching on the Trinity,[8] the doctrine should follow the order of salvation history. Thus, while there is "an authentic secret prehistory of the revelation of the Trinity in the Old Testament,"[9] the real revelation of the Trinity does not come until Christ and the Spirit are explicitly on the scene. This focus on history means that the "missions" of the members of the Trinity are brought to the foreground:

> But if it is true that we can really grasp the content of the doctrine of the Trinity only by going back to the history of salvation and of grace, to our experience of Jesus and of the Spirit of God, who operates in us, because in them we really already possess the Trinity itself as such, then there never should be a treatise on the Trinity in which the doctrine of the "missions" is at best only appended as a relatively unimportant and additional scholion.[10]

And, as we shall see below, this is one of the fundamental drives behind his identification of the economic and the immanent Trinities.

This methodological stress on salvation history has two important correlates. First, Rahner rejects the propriety of the psychological analogy. While it is traditional and its "basic justification" cannot be doubted,[11] it uses a circular reasoning: "it postulates from the doctrine of the Trinity a model of human knowledge and love, which either remains questionable, or about which it is not clear that it can be more than a *model* of human knowledge precisely as *finite*."[12] Further, the "psychological theory of the Trinity neglects the experience of the Trinity in the economy of salvation in favor of a seemingly almost Gnostic speculation about what goes on in the inner life of God."[13] Thus, Rahner distances himself from some of the classical Augustinian approach to understanding the Trinity.

Second, this highlights Rahner's starting point as one "from below." While this would not necessarily flow from a focus on salvation history, for Rahner the emphasis on human experience is programmatic. As Gary Badcock has written, "Rahner's entire theological enterprise, and his trinitarian position within it, must be conceived as an instance of ...a theological approach 'from below'....theological anthropology lies at the heart of Rahner's theology."[14] To give a full explication of Rahner's neo-Kantian transcendentalism that lies at the heart of his anthropology is beyond the scope of this paper,[15] but his persistent anthropological considerations influence his conception of the Trinity, especially with regard to his Christology.[16] In this light, Rahner's treatise can be seen as an effort to connect the doctrine of the Trinity to humanity: "There *must* be a connection between Trinity and man. The Trinity is a mystery of *salvation*, otherwise it would never have been revealed."[17] [18]

Trinity as Self-Communication

With this rudimentary understanding of Rahner's aim, method, and starting point, we can turn to his doctrine proper. The Trinity is the "mystery of salvation." Rahner means to place emphasis on each of these terms. The Trinity is the mystery of *salvation*: "If there are any absolute mysteries in the Christian faith, that of the Trinity is undoubtedly the most fundamental."[19] And it is the mystery of salvation, which consists fundamentally in God's self-communication. Thus, in the doctrine of the Trinity we come to see that "God himself as the abiding and holy mystery, as the incomprehensible ground of man's transcendent existence is not only the God of infinite distance, but also wants to be the God of absolute closeness in a true self-communication."[20]

Rahner follows the Greek Fathers in affirming the Father as the unoriginated God who is the

source of the Trinity.[21] The Father "self-communicates" himself through the Son and the Spirit. Indeed, the communication of the Spirit is not possible without the incarnation of the Son.[22] He is emphatic that this work of self-communication is not merely information about the Father, but rather that which is communicated is the "essence" or "divinity" of God himself.[23] As he says, "Here is the absolute mystery revealed to us only by Christ: God's *self*-communication is truly a self-communication."[24]

In the divine self-communication, there is a single act of communication with "two basic modalities."[25] Rahner develops this concept by means of four pairs of "aspects": (a) Origin-Future; (b) History-Transcendence; (c) Invitation-Acceptance; and (d) Knowledge-Love.[26] The Son is associated with the first term of each pair (and thus over all with "history" and "truth"), while the Spirit is associated with the latter term (and so with "Spirit" and "love"). Thus, the one self-communication takes place fundamentally "as truth and as love."[27]

This is not simply a public show, however, with no roots in God's being itself. Rather, Rahner insists, "the differentiation of the self-communication of God in history (of truth) and spirit (of love) must belong to God 'in himself,' or otherwise this difference, which undoubtedly exists, would do away with God's *self*-communication."[28] Therefore, there is a necessary connection between God's being in and for himself, and the way he appears in salvation history: "when God freely steps outside of himself in *self*-communication...it is and must be the Son who appears historically in the flesh as man. And it is and must be the Spirit who brings about the acceptance by the world...of this self-communication."[29] Here we can see the beginnings of his identification of the economic with the immanent Trinity.

Furthermore, Rahner's understanding of the Trinity as self-communication leads him to assert the insufficiency of the traditional language of "persons" within the Trinity. While such terminology is ancient and established,[30] modern usage of "person" leads one to think of solitary individuals with their own centers of consciousness.[31] Thus, "if we wish to understand the use of 'three persons' correctly (this supposes that we forget the usual meaning of the words), we must always return to the original experience of salvation history."[32] Instead of thinking of "several spiritual centers of activity, of several subjectivities and liberties,"[33] Rahner suggests the term "distinct manner of subsisting" instead of "person."[34] He distinguishes this from Barth's "manner of being," insisting also that it should not be supposed that this " 'manner' were something subsequent, a 'modality' without which the substantially real might also exist."[35] In the end, then, the traditional "person" language should be understood as expressing, economically, "three concrete ways of being given, of givenness," and immanently "three relative concrete ways of existing" of one God.[36] Thus, once Rahner has reconciled his stress on self-communication with the notion of persons, he can write that "each one of the three divine persons communicates himself to man in gratuitous grace in his own personal particularity and diversity...these three self-communications are the self-communication of the one God in the three relative ways in which God subsists."[37]

The Economic Trinity is the Immanent Trinity

This now leads us to consider Rahner's fundamental axiom: the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and vice versa. This statement may be taken in varying ways, and Rahner himself is not entirely clear in his writing.[38] The fundamental thrust of it, however, is clear. Rahner vehemently protests against any sort of "God behind the God-who-is-revealed." That is, he wants to assert that salvation history reveals God as he is in himself, as opposed to tendencies that posit some sort of gap between the economic and the immanent (e.g., Sabellianism or Arianism).[39] Rahner does not want to deny that the immanent Trinity actually exists or to say that the Trinity is constituted by salvation history. Rather, "the revelation of the immanent Trinity can only be thought of as coming in the action of divine grace qua action, that is, by the immanent Trinity becoming the economic Trinity."[40]

The question, then, may be posed: what is the "meaning of the copula" in Rahner's dictum?[41] If it is to be understood as expressing a literal identification between the two (an ontological construal), "then it clearly requires qualification, since, as it stands, it fails to shed light on an adequate way to maintain both the ontological difference between God and creation, *and* the ontological relatedness of God to creation."[42] If, however, it is being used somewhat metaphorically to posit an identity of relation, then the statement may be paraphrased something like this: "The relationality of God to us in salvation history is God as internally and antecedently related in God's self, and *vice versa*."[43] In

this sense, then, the axiom may be seen as a "methodological rather than ontological insight."[44]

Rahner himself is not entirely clear which of these two options should be preferred. At times his language supports the "methodological" understanding of the copula by stressing the freedom inherent in God's decision to communicate himself:

> The identity does not of course mean that one denies that the 'economic' Trinity, one with the immanent Trinity, only exists by virtue of the free decree of God to communicate himself (supernaturally). But by virtue of this free decree, the gift in which God imparts himself to the world is precisely God as the triune God, and not something produced by him through efficient causality, something that represents him.[45]

In these sentences one may see an entirely orthodox concern to stress a coincidence of God's revelation of himself with God's being in himself. At other times, however, Rahner appears to blur the lines more than this:

> It is not a question here of setting the immanent and economic Trinity in a narrower and clearer relationship, which nevertheless always assumes the prior existence of two separate realities. The goal of our efforts is rather to bring out a prior and original identity and unity of the two realities, in relation to which the immanent and economic Trinity offer developments, clarifications and aspects of this underlying unity.[46]

Rahner's stress on the "prior and original identity and unity" of the immanent and the economic seem rather to point to an ontological understanding of the copula.

I want to suggest that Rahner's lack of clarity is due to his conception of the Trinity as divine self-communication. Because God himself is really communicated, there can be, *a priori*, no distinction between the two conceptions of the Trinity. This is most clearly seen in Rahner's identification of the processions with the missions. The missions are not enacted in salvation history so much as they are rather extensions of the processions: "the two immanent processions in God correspond (in identity) with the two missions."[47] We will have more to say on this in our next section.

LaCugna points out that the classic distinction between the immanent and the economic Trinity is made in order "(a) to uphold divine freedom, (b) to avoid equating God with the world, and (c) to avoid the agnostic or nominalist perspectives which despair of any real knowledge of God on our part."[48] This is why she is zealous to defend Rahner against any ontological construal of the copula in his axiom. There is in Rahner's axiom, however, an element that suggests that it is to be intended to be more than methodological – that is, its "*vice versa*" clause. Colin Gunton contrasts Barth and Rahner on this point in a way that sheds light on Rahner's axiom:

> Barth's view is that in the order of knowing we may move from what God (economically) shows himself to be to a corresponding conception of what God is in himself. If God is what we are given in the economy, then we may conclude that the economy is a reliable guide to what God is, eternally and in himself. There is, however, an asymmetrical relationship between knowing and being, and we are not obliged to accept the apparent view of Rahner that the thesis 'the Economic Trinity is the Immanent Trinity' is also true 'reciprocally' (*umgekehrt*).[49]

In other words, Rahner is not simply saying that the economic Trinity gives us an accurate picture of who God is in himself, but also that the immanent Trinity is somehow fully disclosed in the economic Trinity. This lends support to a more ontological construal of the copula, as does Rahner's discussion of "proper missions" within the Trinity, to which we now turn.

Proper Missions in the Trinity

In attempting to provide support for his axiom, Rahner has to face a possible objection raised by the tradition. Since the time of Augustine, it has been supposed that any one of the divine persons could have become man in the incarnation.[50] If this were the case, the economic Trinity would not reveal the true structure of the immanent, but would be more of an *ad hoc* encounter of the immanent Trinity with history. Rahner, however, counters this with the idea that "there is at least *one* 'mission,' *one* presence in the world, *one* reality of salvation history which is not merely appropriated to some divine person, but which is proper to him…There has occurred in salvation history something which can be predicated only of one divine person."[51] He is speaking, of course, of the incarnation of the Logos.

Here Rahner has also introduced the idea of "proper" attributes that go beyond "mere appropriation." In doing so, he wants to say that each member of the Trinity has its proper relationship to the creation, and the incarnation is only the most obvi-

ous example. While the Father's essence is communicated through the Son, it is the Spirit, as we have seen above, that effects the reception of this (recall the second set of terms: future, transcendence, acceptance, love). Thus, the Spirit, as "Uncreated Grace," has proper relations just like the Logos. In this sense, Rahner can write, "Christology and the doctrine of grace are, strictly speaking, doctrine of the Trinity."[52] Here we see the strict correspondence between God's self-communication in himself and that toward the world: "the real distinction between the two processions is constituted by a twofold immanent self-communication, inasmuch as the unoriginated God (the Father) is he who is expressed in the truth for himself (the Son) and he who is received and accepted in love for himself (the Spirit), and hence is he who can freely communicate himself *ad extra* in this twofold way."[53]

There is therefore an identity between the processions and the missions: "the two immanent processions in God correspond (in identity) with the two missions."[54] This leads Rahner to make an interesting connection between the persons of the Son and Spirit and the created reality they each assume in the economy: "the relationships to created realities constituted in formal (not efficient) causality by the missions as processions are not appropriations…The relationships are proper to the person in each case."[55] This move has important consequences for both his Christology and his pneumatology. To begin with the latter, Rahner employs the notion of "quasi-formal causality" to speak of the Spirit's role as Uncreated Grace. As LaCugna writes, this notion "means something more than efficient, less than formal causality. The indwelling of the divine persons in grace makes the graced person as close to God as possible without erasing the ontological difference between God and creature."[56] In other words, the Spirit does not merely work through created reality (efficient cause), but somehow inheres within the person to effect the reception of Christ. In Badcock's words, "Rahner consistently defines grace, which *is* the self-communication of God to you and me, in pneumatological rather than in Christological terms."[57] It might be too strong to speak of repeated "hypostatic unions" with the Spirit and individuals, but the parallel is apt.[58]

The consequences of this move for Christology are more pronounced in Rahner's work. It must be emphasized that the incarnation is far more important for Rahner's Christology (and hence, for his doctrine of the Trinity) than is a doctrine of the atonement. The point that Rahner labors to establish is that the incarnation must be proper to the Logos or else there is no true revelation of the Logos.[59] This means that Christology and anthropology are closely linked in his thought: "Christology is the end and beginning of anthropology. And this anthropology, when most thoroughly realized in Christology, is eternally theology."[60] Indeed, this link is not merely through historical accident, but is due to a proper correspondence between Logos and humanity. Rahner writes, "If God wills to become non-God, man comes to be, that and nothing else, we might say…And if God himself is man and remains so for ever, if all theology is therefore eternally an anthropology….man is for ever the articulate mystery of God."[61]

This identity is bound up for Rahner in the theology of the symbol. As Hill describes Rahner's symbolic theology, he writes, "Everything, to the extent that it is, seeks to come to full realization of itself by bringing its own being to expression in 'another' that it posits over and against itself…It is not a mere sign or cognitive pointer, but an ontological reality."[62] This logic is clearly seen in Rahner's description of how the utterance of the Logos in some sense entails human existence:

> Human nature in general is a possible object of the creative knowledge and power of God, because and insofar as the Logos is by nature the one who is 'utterable' (even into that which is not God)…[human nature] is the constitutive, real symbol of the Logos himself…man is possible because the exteriorization of the Logos is possible.[63]

For Rahner, then, such created reality is seen as "a consequence of the self-communication" of God.[64] It is clear that Rahner extends the concept of self-communication not simply to Jesus' divine nature, but to his human nature as well: "This man [i.e., Jesus] is, as such, the self-utterance of God in its self-emptying, because God expresses *himself* when he empties himself."[65]

We may question, however, for two reasons whether Rahner's strict identification of the exteriorization of the Logos with humanity has come at too great a price. First, the language he uses is so emanationist that it seems to compromise the freedom of God in creation. Hill perceptively states that

> the way in which emphasis falls upon the Son as the auto-expression of God the Father, coupled with the insistence that only the Son could

be God's self-expression (real symbol) into the Void, does strongly suggest that, prior to the Incarnation, the eternal Word is not so much the nonincarnate Word as the Word that is to become incarnate…Rahner's thinking appears to compromise a view of that utterly free act as *logically* subsequent to the unoriginate 'structure' of God's very being as triune, that is, to God's very being as deity apart from all relation to the nondivine.[66]

In other words, Rahner seems to make the very identity of the second person of the Trinity dependent in some way upon created human beings. Second, such a close identification of humanity as the symbol of the Logos leads Rahner to universalism. Self-acceptance, then, becomes the same as acceptance of Christ, and love of neighbor is the same as love of God: "Anyone who accepts his own humanity in full – and how immeasurably hard that is, how doubtful whether we really do it! – has accepted the Son of Man, because God has accepted man in him."[67]

Concluding Evaluations

In conclusion, we may sum up our discussion of Rahner's understanding of the Trinity, and especially of his "axiom," by way of critique and appreciation. First, the largest single critique we must offer is that Rahner's axiom eclipses the immanent Trinity, especially in light of the "reciprocal" move to affirm that the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity. As Paul Molnar argues, the purpose of any doctrine of the immanent trinity, broadly speaking, is "to recognize, uphold and respect God's freedom."[68] In other words, to affirm that God was complete in himself before creation is to affirm that he created out of freedom, and hence that his being is not somehow constituted by his act of creation nor that creation is an extension of himself.

It is clear that Rahner himself did not want to draw these conclusions explicitly. In Ted Peters' words, "Rahner persists in the classical insistence that God's eternity is independent of historical self-constitution."[69] However, by virtue of the reciprocal identification of the economic and the immanent Trinity, Rahner paves the way to "consider how the history of the incarnation as history becomes internal to the divine perichoresis itself. And along with the incarnate Son comes the world that he was destined to save, so that the whole of temporal creation enters into the eternity of God's self-relatedness."[70] Indeed, LaCugna has developed Rahner's insight by claiming that the immanent Trinity should be left behind as a theological fiction: "to postulate God's nonrelationship with the world as the primordial truth about God's nature, is a fantasy about a God who does not exist."[71]

But by so closely identifying the very being of God with history, both God's freedom and the world's created freedom are jeopardized.[72] If creation is in some sense an "emanation" or "extension" of the being of God – as Rahner comes close to saying especially in his Christological discussion – it is not clear how this can be attributed to God's love. In Hill's words, "Rahner finds an explanation for creation and redemption in God's very *being* as Trinity; earlier theology preferred to find only its possibility there and to leave its actual occurrence to the mysteriousness of God's altruistic *love*."[73] What is more, we may surmise that under Hegel's influence, "the emphasis on the economic Trinity may be the way to compose the Trinity with the *man* Jesus, the man as such (*qua homo*) in the center."[74] We have noted above the universalism to which this move leads Rahner.

Therefore, in light of these serious shortcomings, we may only accept Rahner's maxim with some revision. If we intend it as a methodological principle about the order of knowing, then we may certainly agree with the first half of his statement that the economic Trinity truly reveals the immanent Trinity. In this sense, salvation history is not a modalistic play, but really reveals God as he is. The reciprocal aspect of Rahner's maxim, however, implicates one in an ontological construal of the copula and so endangers the distinction between God and world. This move has serious and detrimental theological consequences, and so must be rejected. Rahner has done a real service to Trinitarian theology by returning to a stress on salvation history, but he must not be followed in all of his conclusions.

Notes

1 I am grateful to Professor Henri Blocher for his comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

2 Karl Rahner, *The Trinity* (trans. J. Donceel; New York: Crossroad, 1997; orig. 1970), 22 and *passim*; emphasis removed.

3 Carl E. Braaten, "The Triune God: The Source and Model of Christian Unity and Mission," *Missiology* 18 (1990): 415-427; esp. 416.

4 Rahner, *Trinity*, 10-11. Happily, this is less the case now than in Rahner's day, thanks in part to his own

contribution, to that of Karl Barth, and several other prominent theologians over the past thirty years.

5 Ibid., 15-21.
6 Ibid., 17.
7 Ibid., 38.
8 Rahner wants "to make sure that this theology is the theology of the Church" (Ibid., 49), and spends a third of his book delineating the Magisterium's doctrine to show how his, while not identical, is certainly compatible with it.
9 Ibid., 42.
10 Ibid., 40.
11 Ibid., 115-116.
12 Ibid., 117-118.
13 Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity* (trans. William V. Dych; New York: Seabury, 1978), 135. Cf. idem., *Trinity*, 119.
14 Gary Badcock, "Karl Rahner, the Trinity, and Religious Pluralism," pages 143-154 in Kevin J. Vanhoozer, ed., *The Trinity in a Pluralistic Age: Theological Essays on Culture and Religion* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997). See 144.
15 On which see William J. Hill, *The Three-Personed God: The Trinity as a Mystery of Salvation* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1982), 130-145.
16 A quick glance at the table of contents of Rahner's *Foundations of Christian Faith* will serve to indicate the anthropological focus of his theology.
17 Rahner, *Trinity*, 21, emphasis original.
18
19 Karl Rahner, "Trinity, Divine," Pages 295-303 in *Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology* (vol. 6; New York: Herder & Herder, 1970). Here, 297.
20 Rahner, *Foundations*, 137.
21 Rahner, *Trinity*, 16, 84. Cf. Gregory Havrilak, "Karl Rahner and the Greek Trinity," *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 34 (1990): 61-77.
22 Ibid., 84-85.
23 Ibid., 102.
24 Ibid., 36, emphasis original.
25 Ibid., 98.
26 Ibid., 88-94.
27 Ibid., 98. He also says, "the divine self-communication has two basic modes, those of truth and of love. As truth, the self-communication takes place in history and is the offer of the free faithfulness of God. As love, it brings about acceptance and opens man's transcendence to the absolute future of God." (Rahner, "Trinity, Divine," 300).
28 Ibid., 100, emphasis original.
29 Ibid., 86, emphasis original.
30 Ibid., 44.
31 Ibid., 104-105.
32 Ibid., 106.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid., 109-110.
35 Ibid., 110, 112.
36 Ibid., 74. Jürgen Moltmann, (*The Trinity and the Kingdom: The Doctrine of God* [trans. M. Kohl; London: SCM, 1981]), says that Rahner is in danger of "Idealistic modalism" (144). But as Timothy F. Lull, ("The Trinity in Recent Theological Literature," *Word & World 2* [1982]: 61-68) has pointed out, it is not clear that Moltmann himself has successfully arrived at an articulation of the *unity* of God in his plurality.
37 Ibid, 35. He elsewhere writes that instead of "persons" one could "speak of three distinct ways of being there (in the economy of salvation) and three different ways of susbsistence (immanently) for the one God" (Rahner, "Trinity, Divine," 302).
38 See Randal Rauser's discussion of possible construals of the statement in his "Rahner's Rule: An Emperor without Clothes?" *IJST* 7 (2005): 81-94.
39 Cf. Catherine Mowry LaCugna, "Re-Conceiving the Trinity as the Mystery of Salvation," *SJT* 38 (1985): 1-23; here, 3.
40 Rahner, "Trinity, Divine," 299.
41 LaCugna asks this question in op. cit., 10.
42 Catherine Mowry LaCugna, "Introduction," in Karl Rahner, *Trinity*, xv. Cf. LaCugna, "Re-Conceiving," 10.
43 LaCugna, "Re-Conceiving," 11.
44 LaCugna, "Introduction," xv.
45 Rahner, "Trinity, Divine," 298.
46 Karl Rahner, "The Mystery of the Trinity," pages 255-259 in vol. 16 of *Theological Investigations* (trans. D. Morland; New York: Crossroad, 1983), 259.
47 Rahner, "Trinity, Divine," 298.
48 LaCugna, "Re-Conceiving," 13.
49 Colin E. Gunton, *Theology Through the Theologians. Selected Essays, 1972-1995* (London and New York: T&T Clark, 1996), 127.
50 Rahner, *Trinity*, 11.
51 Ibid., 23. Cf. p. 27. Eberhard Jüngel, ("The relationship between 'economic' and 'immanent' Trinity" *Theology Digest* 24 [1976]: 179-184), speaks of "the hypostatic union as the chief event of the unity of 'immanent' and 'economic' Trinity," 183.
52 Rahner, *Trinity*, 120, emphasis original.
53 Rahner, "Trinity, Divine," 301.
54 Ibid., 298.
55 Ibid.
56 LaCugna, "Introduction," xiii.
57 Badcock, "Karl Rahner, the Trinity, and Religious Pluralism," 147, emphasis original. Badcock goes on to critique Rahner for de-centering Christ in his theology, calling his a "theology of the Holy Spirit," but not Christocentric in any real sense. See 148-149.
58 Apt, but inexact. In fact, Rahner asserts that the two unions are different enough that we cannot rightly

call the Spirit's a "hypostatic union" with humanity. See "Trinity, Divine," 298 and *Trinity*, 28-30.

59 Rahner, *Trinity*, 28.

60 Karl Rahner, "On the Theology of the Incarnation," pages 105-120 in vol. 4 of *Theological Investigations* (trans. Kevin Smyth; New York: Seabury, 1974). Here, 117. Throughout this essay, Rahner's stress on the "transcendence" of humanity is evident.

61 Ibid., 116.

62 Hill, *Three-Personed God*, 137.

63 Rahner, *Trinity*, 33.

64 Ibid., 101.

65 Rahner, "Incarnation," 116.

66 Hill, *Three-Personed God*, 141.

67 Rahner, "Incarnation," 119. As Jüngel (op. cit., 184) points out, one consequence of Rahner's doctrine is that "The impossibility of natural knowledge of God will be counter-balanced by the revealed truth of faith that the whole of human existence is ontologically determined by the self-bestowal of the Father in the Son through the Spirit, so that the truth, 'outside Christ, no salvation,' includes a title benefiting all men and a corresponding universal promise." Badcock (op. cit., 144) also says, "In short, Rahner's claim is that all human being as such is graced by the presence of God and that it is precisely the closeness, the immediacy of God to us that is the source of all that is distinctively human in human life."

68 Paul D. Molnar, "Toward a Contemporary Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity: Karl Barth and the Present Discussion" *SJT* 49 (1996): 311-357. Here, 311.

69 Ted Peters, *God as Trinity: Relationality and Temporality in Divine Life* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 97.

70 Ibid., 103. For Peters, this is a welcome change.

71 Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God For Us: The Trinity & Christian Life* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991), 230. As David S. Cunningham (*These Three Are One: The Practice of Trinitarian Theology* [Oxford: Blackwell, 1998], 38) points out, however, LaCugna introduces a sharp distinction between the immanent and the economic that Rahner himself would have resisted.

72 See Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (2nd ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), xix, 127, 134-135. Cf. Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom*, 148.

73 Hill, *Three-Personed God*, 141, emphasis original. Likewise, Molnar, "Toward a Contemporary Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity," 352, writes, "Had [Rahner] kept to a clear doctrine of the immanent Trinity (which he believed was important) then he could have said consistently that God loves in freedom as the Father, Son and Spirit and thus could and did create in freedom. Instead he argues that creation is the continuation of God's immanent self-utterance and presumes that there is a void which God wishes to fill by means of creation and incarnation."

74 Henri Blocher, "The Trinity, An An-Archic Community?" Paper presented to Trinity Seminar at Wheaton College Graduate School, Spring 2005. Although at one point Rahner disavows Hegelian influence ("Incarnation," 114 n.3), Hill points to further links to Hegel's understanding of the God-world relationship (see Hill, 142).

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Book Reviews – Recensions – Buchbesprechungen

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Paulus der Jude: Seine Stellung im christlich-jüdischen Dialog heute

Sung-Hee Lee-Linke (Hrsg.)

Frankfurt am Main: Lembeck, 2005, VI+127 pp., kt., Euro 12,–, ISBN 3-87476-468-0

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der vorliegende Aufsatzband veröffentlicht Referate, die 2004 auf einer Tagung der Evangelischen Akademie im Rheinland gehalten wurden. Drei Aufsätze gelten der historischen Betrachtung des Juden Paulus, drei weitere der Rezeptions- bzw. Wirkungsgeschichte dieses Themas. Als Höhepunkt des Bandes empfindet der Rezensent den Beitrag des jüdischen Gelehrten D. R. Schwartz. Dieses Buch spricht Streitpunkte innerhalb der Paulusforschung an und kommt trotz unterschiedlicher Autoren zu einem einheitlichen Ergebnis. Obwohl unterschiedliche Aspekte des Juden Paulus betrachtet werden, stimmen die Aufsätze darin überein, dass sie das „Judesein" des Paulus betonen, sei es im Gesetzesverständnis oder im Vergleich mit dem pharisäischen Judentum. Sowohl in der Apg als auch in seinen Briefen bleibt Saulus-Paulus sein ganzes Leben lang innerhalb des Judentums. Der Band zeigt also einen sich deutlich abzeichnenden Konsens der Forschung auf.

SUMMARY

This collection publishes the papers which were read at a meeting of the Evangelische Akademie in Rheinland in 2004. Three papers provide a historical treatment of Paul the Jew, three others the Reception-or Effective-History of this theme. The reviewer considers the contribution of the Jewish scholar D.R. Schwartz to be the high-point of the volume. This book engages with controversial issues in Pauline research and for all the number of authors it comes to a unanimous result. Although distinct aspects of Paul the Jew are emphasised, the papers agree in their common emphasis on Paul's Jewishness, whether this has to do with his understanding of the law or in comparison with Pharisaic Judaism. Both in Acts and in his letters Saul-Paul remains within Judaism his whole life long. The volume points to a clearly significant consensus of research.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage reprend les exposés apportés lors d'une rencontre de la Evangelische Akademie à Rheinland, en 2004. Il contient d'abord trois contributions historiques sur Paul le Juif, et trois autres sur la manière dont ce thème a été abordé au cours de l'histoire. La contribution du spécialiste juif D.R. Schwartz paraît la plus intéressante. Le livre aborde des questions controversées dans les études sur Paul, et parvient à des conclusions qui font l'unanimité de ses nombreux auteurs. Bien que des aspects différents de la figure de Paul le Juif soient présentés, les exposés soulignent tous le caractère juif de l'apôtre, que ce soit lorsqu'il interprète la Loi ou lorsqu'on le compare au judaïsme pharisien. Dans les Actes comme dans ses épîtres, Saül-Paul se maintient à l'intérieur du judaïsme tout au long de sa vie. Ce volume est l'indicateur d'un consensus significatif dans la recherche.

* * * *

In den letzten 20 Jahren wurde das Thema „Jesus der Jude" sowohl von christlicher wie von jüdischer Seite her intensiv diskutiert. Aus diesem Kontext warf man auch einen Blick auf Paulus. Für Antworten zu diesem Themenkomplex ist es wichtig, sich mit der jüdischen Identität des Apostels und seiner Rolle als „theologischem Wegbereiter des Christentums" historisch und rezeptionsgeschichtlich zu beschäftigen (vgl. zu der generellen Fragestellung D. Wenham, *Paulus: Jünger Jesu oder Begründer des Christentums?*, Paderborn [u.a.]: Schöningh, 1999).

Dieser methodischen Zweiteilung folgt die Anordnung der Beiträge des vorliegenden Buches, die auf Vorträge bei einer Tagung der Evangelischen Akademie im Rheinland (Februar 2004) zurückgehen. Drei Aufsätze gelten der historischen Betrachtung des Juden Paulus, drei weitere der Rezeptions- bzw. Wirkungsgeschichte.

Unter historischer Fragestellung untersucht P. von der Osten-Sacken den Werdegang des Apostels „Vom Saulus zum Paulus?" (9-26). Dabei zeigt er das „durch die verschiedenen Phasen seines Lebens Bleibende in Person und Werk des Paulus" (11) auf, nämlich die Verkündigung „des einen Gottes" (16) in der Völkerwelt unter Berufung auf das Christusereignis und der Verankerung des Evangeliums in den Schriften Israels. Durch die Christusbezogenheit und dem Verweis auf die Treue Gottes an seinem Volk in Röm 11 heißt es: „Saulus Paulus von Anfang bis Ende". Der Apostel steht dabei weiter innerhalb des Judentums, als Apostel und Sohn Israels. Durch Paulus wird das neue Verhältnis von Christen und Juden erst ermöglicht mit der Gewissheit der bleibenden Erwählung Israels als Teil des christlichen Glaubens (23), was letztlich die Kunst und Aufgabe einer angemessenen Paulusauslegung zugleich darstellt.

G. Jankowski interpretiert den Acta-Bericht von der Ankunft des Apostels in Jerusalem bis zur Verhandlung vor dem Hohen Rat (21:15-23:11; S. 27-48) und zeichnet die lukanische Paulus-Darstellung nach. Dabei spricht Jankowski mit der Frage nach der Historizität der Apostelgeschichte eine Grundfrage der Paulusforschung an. Jankowski schließt richtig, dass die Apostelgeschichte nicht eine mit antijüdischem Akzent ausgestattete apologetische Propaganda beabsichtigt (42), sondern dass

Paulus als Verkündiger der Hoffnung Israels im Zentrum der lukanischen Paulusschilderung steht. Durch diese Verkündigung wird die Verbindung des Heidenapostels zum Judentum aufrechterhalten.

M. Vahrenhorst geht im Beitrag „Paulus und das pharisäische Judentum" (48-67) der Frage „nach dem Verhältnis des Apostels zum pharisäischen Judentum" (50) nach und zeigt anhand exklusiv pharisäischer Charakterzüge für die Zeit nach der Lebenswende des Paulus eine weitgehende Treue zu seinen pharisäischen Wurzeln auf. Aufgrund dieser Zugehörigkeit zum pharisäischen Judentum bezeichnet Vahrenhorst Paulus als „akribischen Schrifttheologen" (61), der seine Gedanken an der Tora entwickelt und verifiziert mit der – wenn nötig – entsprechenden christologischen Neubewertung durch die Offenbarung Christi Jesu. Paulus ist Pharisäer „um Christi willen", der das pharisäische Judentum von Christus her neu überdachte, ansonsten aber in der Gedankenwelt des Pharisäismus deutlich verwurzelt war und blieb.

Zum gegenwärtigen Verständnis des Paulus gehört seine Wirkungsgeschichte, unter anderem seine heute heftig diskutierte Rezeption im Zeitalter der Reformation. Der zweite Teil beginnt mit der Frage: „Paulus und Luther im Einklang?"(69-87). P. von der Osten-Sacken behandelt das christliche Paulusbild im Blick auf sein Gesetzesverständnis, im Vergleich zum Auslegungsverständnisses Luthers und als Herausforderung für den christlich-jüdischen Dialog. Luther und Paulus stimmen in der „theologica crucis" (85) überein, haben dagegen in der Rechtfertigungslehre und im Blick auf die eschatologische Erwählung Israels unterschiedliche Ansichten. Das Gesetz, zusammengefasst im Liebesgebot, dient als Spiegel des Menschen und als Weisung für das Miteinander. Christen bekommen die Kraft für die Ermöglichung des Unmöglichen, nämlich der Einhaltung des Gesetzes als unabdingbare Lebensanweisung, von Christus – so Luther im Einklang mit Paulus.

M. Leutzsch behandelt „Paulus in der jüdischen Kultur und Theologie der Moderne" (89-114), als bislang oft vernachlässigtes Thema in drei Zeitepochen (19. Jhdt., 1900-1945 und 1945 bis heute) anhand der jüdischen Paulusdeutung in Literatur, Kunst, Theater, theologischen Entwürfen, Psychoanalysen, usw. Der Schwerpunkt jüdischer Beschäftigung mit Paulus nach 1945 liegt eindeutig „auf dem Gebiet der neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft und des jüdisch-christlichen Dialogs" (112). Diese Konzentration auf die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und den jüdisch-christlichen Dialogs zu einer interreligiösen Betrachtung wurde unter veränderten Rahmenbedingungen vollzogen. Der Apostel gilt heute als Herausforderung und Bereicherung für die Gestaltung jüdischer Existenz, nicht als Bedrohung.

Die wirkungsgeschichtliche Betrachtung wird durch den Beitrag „Paulus aus jüdischer Sicht" (115-125) von D. R. Schwartz abgerundet. Dem Diasporajuden Paulus schien das damalige Judentum Jerusalems selbst fremd. Durch diese Unerfülltheit und Unzufriedenheit, stellte er auf dem Hintergrund seines hellenistisch-geprägten geistigen Denkens konsequent die „fleischliche" Seite des Judentums hinten an. Paulus löste sich nicht völlig, sondern predigte eine „neue Art von Judentum" (121) – ein anderer Weg mit geistigen Werten, der zum gleichen Ziel führt. Auf der Suche nach seiner Identität in der Lebenswelt der hellenistisch-römischen Zivilisation begründet der Jude Paulus, ein spirituelles, universalistisches Judentum, das er aus der hebräischen Bibel ableitete. Die konsequente Forderung des Monismus brachte Paulus dazu, die materiellen Werte mit seiner geistigen Lebensbedingung zu verknüpfen und dadurch auch geistig zu sehen und so auf die innere Spannung unter Ausklammerung der fleischlichen Seite zu verzichten.

Dieser Beitrag eines jüdischen Gelehrten stellt den Höhepunkt und Abschluss des Buches zugleich dar, da in der christlichen Paulusinterpretation oft die jüdischen Perspektiven außen vor gelassen wurden. Die herausfordernden Thesen von Schwartz bereichern diesen Sammelband, wenngleich sie kontrovers diskutiert werden können, ja sogar müssen. Dieses Buch scheut es nicht Streitpunkte innerhalb der Paulusforschung anzusprechen und kommt, trotz unterschiedlicher Autoren zu einem faszinierenden einheitlichem „Ganzen". Obwohl unterschiedliche Aspekte des Juden Paulus betrachtet werden, stimmen diese Aufsätze darin überein, dass sie das „Judesein" des Paulus betonen, sei es im Gesetzesverständnis oder im Vergleich mit dem pharisäischen Judentum. Sowohl in der Apg als auch in seinen Briefen bleibt Saulus-Paulus sein ganzes Leben lang innerhalb des Judentums. Der Band zeigt einen sich deutlich abzeichnenden Konsens der Forschung auf, und dies nicht nur, wenngleich in besonderer Weise unter der Perspektive des christlich-jüdischen Dialogs, nämlich die jüdische Identität des Völkerapostels Paulus neu zu entdecken und vielfältig zu bedenken.

Marco Lindörfer, Wiedenest, Deutschland

Erneuerung des Menschen: Exegetische Studien zu Paulus

Jürg Buchegger

TANZ 40, Tübingen, Basel: A. Francke, 2003,
XIV+409 pp. Euro 64,–, Pb., ISBN 3-7720-2832-2

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In seiner Untersuchung der paulinischen Begriffe „Erneuerung/ erneuern" stellt der Autor fest, dass es sich um ein von Paulus neu entwickeltes Wort und Konzept handelt. Der Verfasser untersucht mögliche Bezüge zum Alten Testament, zum Frühjudentum und zur Jesusüberlieferung. Schwerpunkt der Arbeit sind gründliche Exegesen der Vorkommen in 2 Korinther 4.16, Römer 12.2, Epheser 4.23, Kolosser 3.10 und Titus 3.5. Mit den Begriffen Erneuerung/ erneuern hat Paulus „Konzentratwörter" geschaffen, die wichtige Aspekte seiner Eschatologie, Soteriologie und Anthropologie in sich vereinen. Erneuerung steht für den Prozess der Umgestaltung des Christen in das Bild Gottes,

welcher durch seine Existenz im Einflussbereich der Herrlichkeit Gottes ermöglicht wird. Sie geschieht am neuen Menschen (in Christus) durch das Wirken des Geistes und der Kräfte des neuen Äons trotz Leidens und der Vergänglichkeit des alten Äons und Menschen. Abschließend zeigt Buchegger die Bedeutung der Ergebnisse für die systematische und praktische Theologie auf. Rundum eine wichtige und vorbildliche Untersuchung zu einem bisher vernachlässigten Paulusthema aus evangelikaler Perspektive.

SUMMARY

In his research into the Pauline concept of ‚Renewal/renew' the author maintains that Paul has himself developed this word and concept. The author studies possible links to the OT, to early Judaism and to the Jesus tradition. The focus of the work are the thorough exegeses of the occurrences of the term in 2 Corinthians 4:16, Romans 12:2, Ephesians 4:23, Colossians 3:10 and Titus 3:5. With the concept ‚Renewal/renew' Paul produced ‚condensing words' which unite the important aspects of his eschatology, soteriology and anthropology. Renewal stands for the process of the transformation of the Christian into the image of God which is made possible through his or her existence in the sphere of influence of God's glory. It happens in the new person in Christ through the working of the Spirit and the power of the new age, all in spite of the suffering and the passing nature of the old age and ‚the old man'. Finally Buchegger highlights the significance of his results for systematic and practical theology. In all an important and exemplary piece of research from an evangelical perspective on a hitherto ignored Pauline theme.

RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur étudie la notion paulinienne de renouvellement et considère que Paul a lui-même élaboré ce mot et ce concept. Il envisage divers liens possibles avec l'Ancien Testament, le judaïsme ancien et la tradition concernant Jésus. Le livre se concentre sur l'exégèse approfondie de 2 Corinthiens 4.16, Romains 12.2, Éphésiens 4.23, Colossiens 3.10 et Tite 3.5. Le concept de renouvellement unifie, chez Paul, d'importants aspects de son eschatologie, de sa sotériologie et de son anthropologie. Le renouvellement consiste en un processus de transformation du chrétien à l'image de Dieu, et il est rendu possible par son existence dans la sphère d'influence de la gloire divine. Il se produit dans la personne nouvelle en Christ grâce à l'œuvre de l'Esprit et à la puissance de l'âge nouveau, en dépit de la souffrance et malgré le fait que l'âge ancien et l'homme ancien sont en train de passer. Enfin, Buchegger montre les implications de son étude pour la théologie systématique et la théologie pratique. Il nous livre un travail de recherche important et exemplaire, dans une perspective évangélique, sur un thème paulinien jusque-là ignoré.

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Die vorliegende Untersuchung des Schweizer Pastors Dr. Jürg Buchegger geht auf eine Doktoraldissertation an der ETF in Leuven unter Erich Mauerhofer zurück. Sie geht der Frage nach: Was meint Pls, wenn er von der „Erneuerung des Menschen" spricht? B. geht von der Feststellung aus, dass die griechischen Begriffe *anakainosis* und *anakainoon* vor Ps nicht nachweisbar sind und mit großer Sicherheit auf Paulus selbst zurückgehen: „Die vorliegende Arbeit wird exemplarisch eine auf statistischem Weg festgestellte potentielle Neubildung des Paulus detailliert untersuchen und dabei auch versuchen, Gründe und Ursachen für deren Bildung zu eruieren" (2). Theologisch interessant ist, wie Pls zugleich vom Neu-Sein des wiedergeborenen Menschen und von seiner andauernden Erneuerung sprechen kann. Was versteht Pls unter dieser Erneuerung? „Wer bewirkt sie, und wo geschieht sie im oder am Menschen? Wie hängt sie mit seinen Aussagen über die ‚neue Schöpfung' des Menschen oder dessen ‚Umgestaltung' zusammen?" (7).

Im einleitenden ersten Kapitel beschreibt B. ferner das Thema und die damit gegebenen Problemstellungen und Abgrenzungen. Dem folgt ein ausführlicher Forschungsüberblick (7-36) und eine vorbildliche Darlegung der eigenen Voraussetzungen (Pls und seine Theologie, die traditionsgeschichtliche Herkunft theologischer Konzepte bei Pls und die Einschätzung des Kol, Eph und Titus) sowie eine Methodenreflexion (36-54).

Kapitel zwei, „Erneuerung des Menschen" vor Pls beleuchtet nach knappen methodischen Überlegungen mögliche traditionsgeschichtliche Bezüge zum AT und Frühjudentum sowie Aussagen zur Erneuerung/Neuheit bei Jesus (55-83). B. schließt, dass Pls zwar, was die Neuheitsthematik insgesamt betrifft, aus den untersuchten atl Stellen schöpft, aber die bei ihm mit Erneuerung bezeichnete Sache findet sich im AT erst indirekt angedeutet, denn „Zwischen den Aussagen der Propheten Jesaja, Jeremia und Hesekiel zur Neuheit und den Aussagen des Pls zur ‚Erneuerung des Menschen' steht eben noch das eine entscheidende Ereignis: Das Kommen des Christus in Jesus von Nazareth und das Kommen des Heiligen Geistes am Pfingsttag" (79).

Den Hauptteil der Arbeit bildet die gründliche Untersuchung der Vorkommen der pln Erneuerungsbegriffe, die B. in der wahrscheinlichen zeitlichen Abfolge behandelt und so eine zeitliche Entwicklung rekonstruiert. In 2 Kor 4.6 sieht B. die Erkenntnis des Pls, dass sich die gesamten Neuheitsthemen des AT plötzlich in einem einzigen Bild konzentrieren, nämlich in der Erkenntnis, dass das Neue durch Christus gekommen ist. Doch muss dieses Neue mit der existentiellen Erfahrung des Leidens und dem offensichtlichen Alterungsprozess des Leibes korreliert werden: „Wie konnte man angesichts der alltäglichen Erfahrung des Zerfalls, der Schwierigkeiten und Mühen von einer ‚Neuen Schöpfung' sprechen? Wie konnte man als ‚neuer Mensch' in dieser alten Welt leben?" Der Glaubende ist in der Spannung von neuer Schöpfung und der notwendigen täglichen Erneuerung: „Das ‚Erneuern' fasst also in einem einzigen Wort die am glaubenden Menschen wirkenden (Heiliger Geist) Vorgänge (umgestalten, verherrlichen) der neuen Realität in Christus angesichts des vergehenden Äons zusammen, wobei auch das Ziel (Bild Gottes, Leben, Herrlichkeit)

bereits mitanklingt" (141). Dabei meint Pls Vorgänge, die *bereits bekehrte Christen* betreffen. Auch nicht andeutungsweise kommt der Begriff in einem direkten Zusammenhang mit der Taufe vor.

In Römer 12.2 (142-87) werden Christen in enger Verknüpfung mit der Umgestaltung zur Erneuerung ihres Sinnes aufgefordert. Umgestaltung „sieht den Vorgang aus der Perspektive des Menschen und kann daher auch gefordert werden, während ‚Erneuerung' völlig das Einwirken von Gottes Welt betont und nur passivisch gesagt werden kann". B. fährt fort:

> Die Erneuerung des Sinnes soll zu rechten Erkennen des Willens Gottes und entsprechendem Tun und Handeln führen. ... Erneuerung ist eine Konsequenz des rechtfertigenden Handelns Gottes am Menschen, ist also – wie bereits in 2 Kor 4-5 klar geworden war – nicht mit der Neuschöpfung gleichzusetzen. Die Metastruktur des ganzen Briefaufbaus und Beobachtungen zur atl geprägten exegetischen Substruktur haben gezeigt, dass die Erneuerung zwar von der Umkehr und Taufe herkommt, aber nicht mit dieser identifiziert werden kann (187).

Ferner untersucht B. die Vorkommen in Epheser 4.23, Kolosser 3.10 und in Titus 3.5 (188-280; zu Titus schreibt B: „‚Erneuerung' ist auch hier ausdrücklich mit dem Wirken des Heiligen Geistes verbunden und dient offenbar wie bereits in Röm 12.2 als ‚Konzentratwort'. Es fasst das anhaltende, in das Bild Gottes umgestaltende Wirken des Geistes am Christen im Spannungsfeld des alten und neuen Äons, mit dem Ziel, das Tun der Gebote und des Willens Gottes zu ermöglichen, in sich zusammen", 280).

Im Abschlusskapitel zieht B. ein Fazit zum pln Verständnis der Erneuerung des Menschen (281-97). Er rekonstruiert die wahrscheinliche Genese des Ausdrucks und Konzeptes und seine heilsgeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen. Dem folgen Zusammenfassungen der exegetischen Erträge zu den einzelnen Vorkommen (wie bereits am Ende der einzelnen Kapitel) und Hinweise auf offen gebliebene Fragen. Bei Paulus ist Erneuerung „nicht etwa ein schwammiges Pendant für die ‚Neuschöpfung' oder Bekehrung des Menschen, sondern ein außerordentliches Konzentratwort, das die gesamten Vorgänge und Kraftwirkungen Gottes im Leben des Christen seit seiner Bekehrung bis zu seinem irdischen Lebensende und insbesondere dessen lebensnotwendige personale Christusbeziehung in sich vereinigt" (291). Ferner bietet B. eine hilfreiche Zusammenfassung in fünfzehn Thesen. Dem folgt ein hervorragender Überblick über die Erneuerung des Menschen als ein Thema in der systematischen und praktischen Theologie (298-310). In letzterer liegt der Schwerpunkt auf der Bedeutung für die Seelsorge. B. diskutiert vom pln Befund her den Veränderungsoptimismus oder -pessimismus moderner Seelsorgekonzepte: „Was darf im Leben eines Christen angesichts der biblischen Aussage einer ‚Erneuerung des Menschen' an tatsächlicher Veränderung und Erneuerung hier und jetzt erwartet werden, und welchen Beitrag kann dabei die christliche Seelsorge leisten?" (54). Ähnliche Brückenschläge vermisst man leider in vielen exegetischen Arbeiten! In einem Anhang gibt B. einen Überblick über Wortgeschichte und nachpln Belege des Erneuerungsvokabulars (311-18). Bibliographie, Stellen- und Autorenregister beenden den Band.

B. hat mit dieser Arbeit ein wichtiges, bisher kaum beachtetes pln Thema umfassend und überzeugend behandelt und damit eine Forschungslücke geschlossen. Anfragen habe ich lediglich an die Rekonstruktion der Entwicklung der pln Vorkommen und Verwendung. Konnte Pls bei den Lesern der zeitlich späteren Briefe die inhaltliche Bestimmung der Erneuerung in 2 Kor 4.16 voraussetzen, zumal er im Römerbrief und Kolosserbrief an Gemeinden schreibt, die seine missionarische Erstverkündigung und Gründungskatechese nicht kannten? Wie werden sie vom Kontext her die Begrifflichkeit der Erneuerung verstanden haben? Doch ist diese Rekonstruktion kein wesentlicher Bestandteil von B.s Argumentation.

Neben dem beachtlichen Ertrag der Untersuchung für die pln und ntl Theologie, für eine gesamtbiblische Anthropologie und Soteriologie und den skizzierten Linien in die systematische und praktische Theologie ist B.s Arbeit ein durchwegs gelungenes Beispiel für eine gründlich recherchierte und argumentierende Dissertation zu einem Paulus-Thema aus evangelikaler Perspektive, die sich vor der detaillierten Auseinandersetzung mit anderen Positionen nicht scheut, sie gekonnt führt und exegetisch begründet zu eigenen Positionen kommt. Sie zeigt dabei die Fruchtbarkeit evangelikaler Voraussetzungen auf (auch in Einleitungsfragen!) und kann zukünftigen Studenten und Doktoranden als Vorbild dienen. Gespannt wartet man auf weitere Beiträge aus Bucheggers Feder. Zum Thema vgl. auch M. V. Hubbard, *New Creation in Paul's Letters and Thought*, SNTS. MS 119 (Cambridge: CUP, 2002).

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Herodes: König der Juden, Freund der Römer

Manuel Vogel

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der vorliegende Band möchte aus der kritischen Lektüre der unterschiedlichen Josephusberichte über Herodes den Großen ein differenziertes Bild des Herrschers rekonstruieren. Frühere Darstellungen hätten sich zu stark von den jeweiligen Erzählabsichten des Josephus und der Wirkungsgeschichte leiten lassen. Vogel diskutiert die Quellenlage, reflektiert über antike Geschichtsschreibung und zeichnet Biographie und Lebenswerk des Herodes nach. An seiner jüdischen Identität, gekoppelt mit dem Streben nach dem Glanz der hellenistisch-römischen Welt, sieht Vogel keinen

Zweifel. Ferner geht es um seine Nachfolger und um die vielfältige Wirkungsgeschichte im NT, Talmud und verschiedenen spätantiken und mittelalterlichen Quellen. Vogel bietet einen guten Überblick über die neuere Forschung, ein interessantes Korrektiv und wertvolles Hintergrundwissen für die ntl Zeitgeschichte. Zum Verständnis der ntl Texte über Herodes in Mt 2 trägt der Band wenig bei. Andere ntl Stellen, die sich auf Herodes und seine Bauten beziehen, werden nicht erwähnt. Ferner wird man Studien ergänzen wollen, die die historische Glaubwürdigkeit der Evv höher veranschlagen.

SUMMARY

This volume aims to reconstruct a nuanced picture of Herod the Great from a critical reading of the differing reports on that ruler by Josephus. Former representations of the subject have been too strongly led by the respective agendas of Josephus and the history of reception. Vogel dicusses the sources, reflects on ancient historiography and sketches a biography and achievements of Herod. There is no doubt in Vogel's mind about Herod's Jewish identity—joined to his striving for the glory of the hellenistic-Roman world. The study advances to treat Herod's successors and the varied history of effects in the NT, the Talmud and a number of late antique and medieval sources. Vogel offers a good overview of the more recent research, an interesting corrective and valuable background infomtation for the history of NT times. The volume adds little however to the understanding of NT texts about Herod. Other NT passages which refer to Herod and his buildings are not mentioned. Furthermore one would look for studies which would estimate more highly the credibility of the Gospels.

RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur cherche ici a reconstituer un tableau nuancé du roi Hérode le Grand à partir d'un examen critique de ce que l'historien juif Josèphe a écrit à son sujet. Les traitements antérieurs de cette figure historique auraient été par trop influencés par les orientations propres de Josèphe, ainsi que par les perspectives que l'on a adoptées pour étudier ces textes au cours de l'histoire. Vogel examine les sources, apporte une réflexion sur l'historiographie ancienne, et trace une présentation de la vie et des réalisations d'Hérode. Il n'a aucun doute quant à l'identité juive de ce roi, même si celui-ci a manifesté le vif désir d'obtenir la gloire dans le monde gréco-romain. L'étude se poursuit par une présentation des successeurs d'Hérode et de son impact sur le Nouveau Testament, le Talmud et diverses sources antiques et médiévales. L'auteur offre un bon survol de la recherche récente et un correctif intéressant et précieux quant à la connaissance de l'arrière-plan historique du Nouveau Testament. Il n'apporte en revanche pas grand chose à la compréhension des textes du Nouveau Testament mentionnant Hérode. Les textes du Nouveau Testament qui parlent des constructions d'Hérode sont passés sous silence. Des études ayant une meilleure estime pour la fiabilité historique des Évangiles seraient les bienvenues.

* * * *

Alle Jahre wieder begegnet uns in der Weihnachtsgeschichte auch König Herodes der Grosse (37-4 v. Chr.), der die Weisen aus dem Morgenland empfängt, für seine Zwecke einzuspannen sucht, vorbildliche Frömmigkeit heuchelt und als seine Pläne durch Gottes Eingreifen vereitelt werden, den Kindermord in Bethlehem befiehlt (Mt 2). Herodes „spielt im NT nur eine Nebenrolle und hat es dennoch zu weltweiter Bekanntheit gebracht als Inbegriff des grausamen Tyrannen, als Gegenspieler Christi" (9). Doch, was ist sonst über Herodes bekannt? Vogel bemüht sich im vorliegenden Band um eine ausgewogene Würdigung. Er will „Herodes als antike Herrscherpersönlichkeit vorstellen und Einblicke in die bewegte Zeit am Vorabend der christlichen Ära eröffnen, in der er gelebt und gewirkt hat. Auch das Dunkle seines Lebens wird dabei zur Sprache kommen, doch ohne die Überzeichnung späterer Jahrhunderte" (9f).

Nach einer einleitenden ersten Würdigung des Herodes und Diskussion seiner späteren Wahrnehmung gibt Vogel zunächst einen Überblick über die Quellen („... über kaum einen antiken Herrscher sind wir so gut informiert wie über H.", 11). Der Schwerpunkt liegt bei Josephus Flavius, der in seinen beiden großen Werken *Bellum Judaicum und Antiquitates Judaicae* jeweils ein eigenes Herodesbild zeichnet: „Die Aussagen über H. fallen vielmehr deshalb so unterschiedlich aus, weil Josephus im Bellum eine andere Aussageabsicht verfolgt als in den Antiquitates und weil er die Figur des H. in beiden Fällen dieser Aussageabsicht bewusst und planvoll unterordnet" (18). Diese Beobachtung führt zur Reflektion der Frage: „Was ist antike Geschichtsschreibung?" (18-26, zumeist mit Bezug auf Josephus). Am Ende der Einführung ordnet Vogel seinen Beitrag in die gegenwärtige H.forschung ein (N. Kokkinos, P. Richardson, A. Schalit).

Den Hauptteil des Buches bildet die gut lesbare Darstellung der Biographie des Herodes (30-273). Nach einer Skizze des historischen Rahmens (Palästina in der Zeit der Diadochenkriege, der Aufstand der Makkabäer, die Ära der Hasmonäer, der Beginn der röm. Weltherrschaft, Antipaters Aufstieg), geht es um H.s Kampf um den Thron, seine Ernennung zum König von Judäa, sein folgenreiches familiäres Unglück, seine Rolle als röm. Klientelkönig, um Glanz und Elend seiner Herrschaft und die Baupolitik des Königs, deren stille Zeugen bis heute zu besichtigen sind (Festungen und Paläste, Tempel, Patriarchengräber, Davidsgrab, kulturelle Bauten und Stadtgründungen, das königliche Vermögen). Ferner stellt Vogel die Frage nach der ethnischen Identität des H. (210-31). Wichtig ist dabei, wie man zum einen die idumäische Herkunft und zum anderen das Verhältnis von Judentum und Hellenismus im Lebenswerk des Königs beurteilt. Nach Vogel war H. „de facto Jude idumäischer Herkunft mit einer starken Neigung zu allem, was seinem Reich und ihm als Herrscherpersönlichkeit den Glanz hellenistisch-römischer Weltkultur verlieh. Ob diese Neigung sein Judentum kompromittiert hat, sei dahingestellt. H. selbst hat dies vermutlich nicht so

gesehen" (231).

Anschließend schildert Vogel die letzten Jahre (das Ende der Mariamne-Söhne, den Nabatäerkrieg, das Zerwürfnis mit Augustus, Antipaters Fall, die sog. Adleraffäre) und den Tod des H. Für Leser des *European Journal of Theology* mag man noch ergänzend auf den Leichenzug bei dem Begräbnis des H. hinweisen, in dem auch die fremdstämmigen Soldaten aus Thrakien, Germanien und Gallien/ Galatien erwähnt werden (vgl. Jos. Ant 17.196-99; Bell 1.671-73; zum Militär des H. vgl. Shatzman, I., *The Armies of the Hasmonaeans and Herod*, TSAJ 25; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991, 129-309). Der vom König an dem jugendlichen Hohepriester (Jonathan) Aristobulos vollzogene Mord 35 v. Chr. geschah durch seine gallischen/ galatischen Leibwächter (*Bell* 1.437 – vgl. Ant 15.217), anders jedoch in Ant 15.53-56, wo „Freunde" (des H.?) den Mordplan ausführen.

Hilfreich ist ferner die Darstellung des Erbes des Herodes. Sie beginnt mit den Unruhen in Judäa nach dem Tod des Königs und dem Streit der Erben in Rom. Dem folgen Portraits der Nachfolger Archelaos, Philipp, Antipas, Agrippa I und Agrippa II (273-326). Im Rückblick auf das Leben des H. kommt Vogel zu folgendem, rehabilitierendem Resumée: „H. war nicht das unüberbietbare tyrannische Scheusal, als das er in die Geschichte eingegangen ist, eher schon eine tragische Gestalt. Vollends hat ihn freilich erst die josephische Darstellung dazu gemacht" (326).

Der Anlage der Serie *Biblische* Gestalten folgend, gilt der dritte Teil der Wirkung des H. (327-61). Unter dieser Rubrik erfolgt eine knappe Behandlung der mt Kindheitsgeschichte (diese Einordnung „... ist indirekt bereits eine Aussage über die Historizität dieser Überlieferung", 327), die scheinbar nicht zu den respektablen Quellen zu H. gehört, obwohl sie – auch bei einer Spätdatierung – wahrscheinlich noch vor Josephus entstanden ist. Weiter Abschnitte gelten H. im Talmud, in der christlichen Spätantike und im Mittelalter. Zur Rezeption gehört die Darstellung des H. in der christlichen Ikonographie und in verschiedenen liturgischen und geistlichen Dramen, ferner in verschiedenen H.-Dramen seit der Renaissance. Bei der Wirkungsgeschichte könnte man die Abschnitte im *Heliand* ergänzen (7-9), wo der Kindermord stark ausgemalt wird. Eine Zeittafel, Literatur- und Abbildungsverzeichnis (22 Abb.) runden den Band ab. Beigegeben ist eine Faltkarte zum Stammbaum der H.dynastie. Register fehlen.

Vogel zeichnet ein plastisches Bild dieses König von Roms Gnaden, der die Geschicke Israels um die Zeitenwende und darüber hinaus massgeblich bestimmt hat. Man erfährt viel über den historischen Hintergrund der Evangelien, vor allem in dem Kapitel über die Nachfolger des H. (273-326), die in den Evangelien mehrfach erwähnt werden. Vogel gibt hilfreiche Hinweise zu den einzelnen Vorkommen. Ferner wird deutlich, dass die Angaben bei Matthäus durchaus in das Bild passen, das andere antike Quellen von H. zeichnen.

Allerdings fällt für einen Band der Reihe *Biblische Gestalten* die Behandlung der ntl Hinweise auf H. selbst zu kurz aus. Nur im Rahmen der dargestellten Wirkungsgeschichte wird Mt 2 behandelt (327-31, S. 331-33 zu apokryphen Überlieferungen und Eusebius, *HE* I.8.16). Dies geschieht zudem unter problematischen kritischen Prämissen: „Das entscheidende Argument gegen die Historizität des Kindermordes ... sind jedoch die unabweisbaren legendarischen Züge des zweiten Kapitels des MtEv insgesamt" (329). Die Historizität „muss nach Abwägung sämtlicher Argumente verneint werden. Der Kindermord ... ist vielmehr Teil einer legendarischen Ausgestaltung der Kindheit Jesu, die durch die Herodesgestalt eine historisierende Einkleidung erhält" (327; neben der Einschätzung des mt Berichtes ist das Fehlen bei Josephus ausschlaggebend, 328f). Hier wird, wie in vielen Beiträgen zur mt Kindheitsgeschichte, im Zirkelschlussverfahren argumentiert.

Dass Einzelangaben dieser Kapitel durchaus auch anders betrachtet werden können und es bei ihrem Ernstnehmen zu historisch wie auch theologisch interessanten Perspektiven kommt, haben die verschiedenen Studien zum sog. Stern von Bethlehem hinreichend gezeigt (vgl. zum Beispiel K. Ferrari d'Occhieppo, *Der Stern von Bethlehem in astronomischer Sicht: Legende oder Tatsache?* 3. erweiterte Aufl., SBAZ 3; Giessen: Brunnen, 1999; vgl. meine Rez. in *EJT* 12, 2003, 127-35; allgemein zur historischen Glaubwürdigkeit der Evv vgl. C. L. Blomberg, *Die historische Zuverlässigkeit der Evangelien*; Nürnberg: VTR, 1999). Vogel erwähnt die Studie von R. T. France („Herod and the Children of Bethlehem", *NT* 21, 1979, 98-120), ohne sich allerdings mit den Argumenten auseinanderzusetzen.

Nach Vogel ist der Kindermord eher ein literarischer Topos. Zu fragen wäre daher auch, ob gerade angesichts anderer frühjüdischer Berichte von gottlosen Herrschern und ihren (Un)taten (z. B. der Heliodorbericht in 2Makk 3, die Wirkungsgeschichte von Daniel 4 oder das Buch Judith) oder angesichts der massiven (teils legendenhaften) Ausschmückung in der Wirkungsgeschichte die H.abschnitte der mt Kindheitsgeschichte (331-33) nicht gerade durch ihre *Schlichtheit* auffallen, als durch legendarische Überwucherungen!

Zum historischen wahrscheinlichen Vorgehen des H. im Falle einer Bedrohung durch einen neugeborenen König vermutet Vogel, dass – anstatt ein Massaker anzuordnen – H. eher beschlossen hätte „... seine Geheimpolizeit auf das messianische Kind anzusetzen und es ohne viel Aufhebens zu beseitigen" (327f). Überschätzt Vogel dabei – vielleicht selbst von der Wirkungsgeschichte beeinflusst – das Ausmaß des Kindermordes? Muss man an Dutzende von Säuglingen unter zwei Jahren an einem Ort denken, der zu den kleinsten in Juda zählt (Mt 2.6)? War der Kindermord vielleicht genau so eine Geheimpolizeiaktion oder eine Aktion der (fremdstämmigen?, auch dreißig Jahre später?, siehe oben) Leibwächter des H. ohne viel Aufhebens? Dies würde seine Nichterwähnung bei Josephus hinreichend erklären. Interessanterweise erwähnt der mt Bericht keine Soldaten, die Identität der

Ausführenden bleibt ominös. Wie an vielen ähnlichen Stellen bei Josephus bleiben die Ausführenden der Hinrichtungsbefehle des H. hinter der 3. Person Plural der Verbformen verborgen. Nur beim geplanten Massaker direkt nach dem Tod des Herodes erwähnt Josephus explizit Soldaten als Handelnde (*Ant* 17.178; Antipater wurde auf Befehl des Königs von einigen der Leibwächtern umgebracht, 17.187). Hatten beide Autoren Gründe, die Identität der Ausführenden wegzulassen?

Im Abschnitt zum herodianischen Tempelbau in Jerusalem (195-201) fehlt der Hinweis auf Joh 2,20, wo auf die lange Bauzeit angespielt wird („Dieser Tempel ist in sechsundvierzig Jahren erbaut worden ..."). Zum zeitgenössischen Staunen über diesen Tempel vgl. auch Mk 13.1f („Meister, siehe, was für Steine und was für Bauten!"). Insgesamt ein anregender Band für die Umwelt des NT, weniger für das konkrete Verständnis einzelner Passagen.

In der auf vierzig Bände ausgelegten Serie Biblische Gestalten sind bereits erschienen: R. Lux, *Joseph*; C. Böttrich, *Petrus*; J. Ebach, *Noah*; J. Becker, *Maria*; U. B. Müller, *Johannes der Täufer*; G. Hentschel, *Saul*; A. Kunz-Lübcke, Salomo, E. Reinmuth, *Paulus*; M. Meiser, *Judas Iskariot* und J. Hausmann, *Rut* (vgl. www.eva-leipzig.de). Im Herbst 2005 erscheint Band 12, *Barnabas: Der Mann der Mitte* von M. Oehler.

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Johannesevangelium – Mitte oder Rand des Kanons?: Neue Standortbestimmungen

Thomas Söding (Hrsg.)

QD 203; Freiburg etc.: Herder, 2003, 317 pp, Euro 26,–, pb., ISBN 3-451-02203-6

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die sieben Beiträge dieses Sammelbandes geben einen guten Einblick in die neueren Entwicklungen der Forschung zum Johannesevangelium. Dabei zeigt sich, dass das JhEv nicht als problematischer Außenseiter an den Rand des ntl Kanons gehört, sondern in dessen Mitte. Die Beiträge gelten einer differenzierten Darstellung der Entstehungsgeschichte des JhEv, der Bedeutung des jh Beitrags für die Jesusforschung (mit wichtigen Korrekturen am häufigen Ausschluss des JhEv), dem Verhältnis zwischen JhEv und synoptischen Evv sowie den paulinischen Schriften, dem Schriftverständnis und der Schriftauslegung im JhEv, möglichen Hinweisen auf die Eucharistie in Jh 6 und der Bedeutung des JhEv im biblischen Kanon. Ein guter Einstieg in die neuere Forschung, die viele radikalen Thesen hinter sich läßt und teilweise zu Ergebnissen kommt, die evangelikalen Positionen nahe stehen.

SUMMARY

The seven contributions in this collected volume offer a good view of the recent developments of research on John's Gospel. It becomes evident that the Gospel of John's place is not as a problematic outsider somewhere on the edge of the NT canon, but in its centre. The contributions make for a nuanced account of the history of the origins of John, of the significance of the Johannine contribution for the research into Jesus (with important correctives to the frequent exclusion of John), of the relationship between the Gospel of John and the synoptics and also the Pauline writings, of the understanding and interpretation of Scripture in John and possible allusions to the Eucharist in John 6 and of the significance of John in the biblical canon. A good introduction to the recent research which presupposes many radical theses and yet in part comes to conclusions which are close to evangelical positions.

RÉSUMÉ

Sept contributions, dans cet ouvrage collectif, s'intéressent aux développements récents de la recherche sur l'Évangile de Jean. Il devient évident que le quatrième évangile ne constitue pas un outsider problématique à la périphérie du canon du Nouveau Testament, mais qu'il lui est central. L'ouvrage rend compte de manière nuancée de l'histoire et des origines de l'Évangile de Jean, de la contribution johannique à la recherche sur Jésus (et apporte à cet égard d'importants correctifs à l'habitude qu'ont les spécialistes de l'exclure du champ de la recherche historique), du rapport entre le quatrième évangile et les synoptiques, ainsi que de son rapport avec les écrits pauliniens, de la compréhension et de l'interprétation des Écritures chez Jean. Il aborde aussi la question d'éventuelles allusions à la cène en Jean 6, et celle de la place de cet évangile dans le canon biblique. C'est là une bonne introduction à la recherche récente qui présuppose de nombreuses thèses critiques et qui, cependant, parvient en partie à des conclusions proches des positions évangéliques.

* * * *

Lange Zeit war die Johannesforschung ein besonderes „Minenfeld" für evangelikale Neutestamentler sowie für Vertreter anderer Disziplinen und für Studenten. Als besonders problematisch galt das Johannes*evangelium*. Seine literarische Einheitlichkeit, seine Christologie, seine möglichen gnostischen Bezüge, seine Historizität, seine Verfasserschaft und Datierung, seine Ethik und seine teils scharfe Polemik gegen „die Juden" wurden massiv hinterfragt. Auch hier hat sich die deutschprachige Forschung mit besonderer Intensität hervorgetan. Konservative Forscher nahmen mit Freude die wenigen Studien zur Kenntnis, die die Glaubwürdigkeit geographischer Angaben und geschichtlicher Details in der jh Darstellung erwiesen oder die Beiträge, die gegen die allgemeine Spätdatierung (und damit einhergehend oft Abwertung), gar für eine Frühdatierung des JhEv plädierten; vgl. K. Berger, *Im Anfang war Johannes: Datierung und Theologie des vierten Evangeliums* (Stuttgart: Quell, 1997, meine Rez. in *EJT* 9, 2000, 192-98); P. L. Hofrichter (Hrsg.), *Für und wider die Priorität des Johannesevangeliums*, Theologische Texte und Studien 9 (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 2002); J. A. T. Robinson, *Wann*

entstand das Neue Testament? (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus; Paderborn: Bonifatius, 1986); J. A. T. Robinson, *Johannes – Das Evangelium der Ursprünge: Aktualisierte Ausgabe herausgegeben von H.-J. Schulz*, TVG BWM 4 (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, 1999 = *The Priority of John*, hrsg. J. F. Coakley; London: SCM, 1985); H.-J. Schulz, *Die apostolische Herkunft der Evangelien*, 2. Aufl., QD 145 (Freiburg, Basel, Wien: Herder, 1995), 291-391 (meine Rez. *NT* 38, 1996, 298f).

Doch seit zwei Jahrzehnten hat ein erfreuliches Tauwetter eingesetzt. Viele der beinahe klassisch gewordenen kritischen Positionen zum JhEv werden hinterfragt – und das nicht nur von evangelikalen Forschern. Man begegnet Johannes wieder mit mehr Respekt und Sympathie. Zu diesem Trend gehört auch der vorliegende Sammelband, der zeigt, dass das JhEv keineswegs ein Außenseiter am Rande des ntl Kanons ist, sondern mit seinem Christuszeugnis ins Zentrum des Urchristentums gehört. Söding fasst die neuen Einsichten wie folgt zusammen: „Die ‚hohe' Christologie ist tief in ältesten Bekenntnistraditionen verwurzelt. Die Polemik gegen die ‚Juden' ist die Kehrseite einer außerordentlich großen Nähe zum Judentum und einer intensiven Rezeption des Alten Testaments. Die Perspektive des ‚anderen Jüngers', die Johannes öffnet, ermöglicht einen neuen Blick auf Jesus, sein Wirken, seinen Tod und seine Auferstehung" (hintere Umschlagseite). Gemeinsames Anliegen der Autoren ist es aufzuzeigen, „dass wenig dafür spricht, bei einer theologischen Isolation des Vierten Evangeliums im Neuen Testament zu bleiben, und dass aus einer Neubestimmung seiner literarischen Genese, seines historischen Umfelds und seiner sprachlichen Form erhebliche Anstöße für eine neue Diskussion seiner Theologie erwartet werden dürfen" (8).

Die sieben Aufsätze zeigen Ansätze und Einzelaspekte dieser Neuorientierung auf, ohne sich dabei ganz von der teils problematischen Forschungsgeschichte sowie den Prämissen und Methoden zu lösen, die sie bestimmt haben. In „Ein gewachsenes Evangelium: Der Relecture-Prozess bei Johannes" (9-37) zeigt J. Zumstein (Zürich), dass der literaturwissenschaftliche Ansatz der „Relecture" neue Perspektiven auf einen möglichen Entstehungsprozess des JhEv ergibt. Gegen den neueren, auch von verschiedenen literaturwissenschaftlichen Perspektiven geprägten Konsens will Zumstein das JhEv sowohl diachron als auch synchron lesen, denn „Die diachrone Lektüre deckt auf, wie sich die theologische Reflektion im johanneischen Milieu konstatiert und entfaltet hat; die synchrone Lektüre nimmt das Evangelium als kohärentes Werk wahr" (15). Ob der Weg der Jh-Forschung der letzten hundert Jahre zu dieser Frage auf neue und irgendwie gesicherte Ergebnisse für einen diachronen Ansatz hoffen läßt, bleibt fraglich. Hat nicht die Konzentration auf die sog. „kanonische Endgestalt" weiterführende Ergebnisse gebracht? Zudem läßt sich das viel diskutierte „jh Milieu" kaum greifen. Zu fragen ist wie – unter anderem historisch – wahrscheinlich die einzelnen diesbezüglichen Vorschläge sind.

K. Berger (Heidelberg) zeichnet in „Das Evangelium nach Johannes und die Jesustradition" (38-59) nach, wie und aus welchen, teilweise sehr fadenscheinigen Gründen immer wieder Motive aus dem JhEv in der Jesusforschung nicht berücksichtigt wurden. Er beginnt mit einer hilfreichen Darstellung und Kritik der herrschenden Forschungsprämissen, um dann einzelne umstrittene Stellen zu behandeln, deren Beitrag zum Verständnis Jesu meist ausgeschlossen wird. Dabei weist Berger auch auf die Konsequenzen hin, die sich ergeben, wenn diese Beiträge gebührend berücksichtigt würden. Berger geht diesen Weg,

> "a) weil die Forschung keine haltbaren Kriterien für die Unterscheidung zwischen vor- und nachösterlicher Jesustradition erbracht hat;
> b) weil die Alternative "synoptisch oder johanneisch" falsch ist und in ein abseitiges Fahrwasser treibt; man halte sich vor Augen, dass so wichtige Hypothesen wie die der Markuspriorität noch immer auf der recht windigen Gesamthypothese aufruhen, das Markusevangelium zeige "Erdgeruch" Palästinas;
> c) weil die Chancen wirklich ergebnisoffener Jesusforschung weitaus größer sind als ein beschränkter Forschungskonsens wahrhaben möchte. Dass jede Abweichung von diesem als Fundamentalismus deklariert wird, zeigt nur dessen Hilflosigkeit (59)".

J. Frey (München) beleuchtet in seinem Beitrag „Das Vierte Evangelium auf dem Hintergrund der älteren Evangelientradition: Zum Problem Johannes und die Synoptiker" (60-118) das Verhältnis zwischen JhEv und den synoptischen Evangelien nach den Ergebnissen der neueren Methoden. Frey beginnt mit dem Nachzeichnen der Problemgeschichte von antiken Wahrnehmungen und Lösungsversuchen über Aufklärung und liberale Theologie zum Siegeszug der Unabhängigkeitshypothese im 20. Jh. und der Auflösung dieses Konsenses. Zum gegenwärtigen Stand zeichnet Frey die schwindende Evidenz der Annahme nichtsynoptischer Quellenschriften hinter dem JhEv nach, bietet methodische Reflexionen zum Nachweis von Abhängigkeit und Unabhängigkeit und beschreibt Umfang und Bewertung von Differenzen und Berührungen zwischen JhEv und den Synoptikern. Behandelte Einzelbeispiele sind die markinische Gethsemaneperikope (14.32-42) und das JhEv, die Rezeption der Traditionen über Johannes den Täufer in Joh 1 sowie die Rede vom Reich Gottes und ihre Transformation im Johannesevangelium. Frey geht von einer tiefgreifenden Transformation der älteren Jesusüberlieferung im JhEv aus (unter der nicht unproblematischen Prämisse einer Spätdatierung). Frey schließt:

> "Gemessen an externen Kriterien – wie etwa einer rein paulinisch definierten "Kreuzestheologie" oder gar dem neuzeitlichen Konstrukt eines "historischen Jesus" – muss die johanneische Christologie fragwürdig erscheinen. Doch ist es nicht weniger fragwürdig, diese Kriterien zum Maßstab dessen zu machen, was als "kanonisch" gelten kann. Das hypothetische

Rekonstrukt des "historischen Jesus" kann kein solcher Maßstab sein, ebenso wenig eine an bestimmten paulinischen Konflikten entwickelte abstrakte Kriteriologie. Die johanneische Darstellung lässt sich nur angemessen bewerten, wenn man das von ihr selbst benannte Erkenntnismedium theologisch ernst nimmt – die aufgrund der österlichen Geisterfahrung erfolgte Anamnesis des Christusgeschehens im Horizont der Schrift. An diesem Maßstab ist zu prüfen, ob und inwiefern die johanneische Christologie die Doxa Christi zur Darstellung bringt, ohne seine Sarx, seine Menschlichkeit und seinen Kreuzestod, zu überspielen" (118).

U. Schnelle (Halle) interpretiert das JhEv als eine Weiterbildung sowohl des MkEv als auch der paulinischen Christologie („Theologie als kreative Sinnbildung; Johannes als Weiterbildung von Paulus und Markus", 119-145). Nach Schnelle vereinigt das JhEv zwei Hauptlinien frühchristlicher Theologiebildung als „Meistererzählung": „Während Paulus eine kerygmatisch ausgerichtete Jesus-Christus-Geschichte präsentiert, entfaltet Markus eine narrative Jesus-Christus-Geschichte. Johannes verbindet beide Tendenzen, indem er die Erinnerungen an den Irdischen konsequent aus der Perspektive des Erhöhten gestaltet. Er übernimmt die Gattung Evangelium, erweitert sie in Kontinuität zu Paulus um die Präexistenzchristologie und intensiviert (anders als Matthäus und Lukas) die bei Markus und vor allem bei Paulus vorherrschende kreuzestheologische Ausrichtung" (144f). Zu fragen wäre, ob der Rückgriff des Markus und des Paulus (sowie der anderen ntl Autoren!) auf gemeinsame urgemeindliche Tradition (eine erweiterte Traditionshypothese) die Gemeinsamkeiten und die unterschiedliche Ausrichtung nicht besser erklären können als die Annahme literarischer Abhängigkeit, an der dieser Beitrag und andere festhalten. Das wäre eine nahe liegende Alternative zur These einer literarischen Unabhängigkeit.

K. Scholtissek (Würzburg) umreißt in „‚Die unauflösbare Schrift' (Joh 10.35): Zur Auslegung und Theologie der Schriften Israels im Johannesevangelium" (146-177) das Schriftverständnis und die Schriftauslegung des JhEv und zeigt seine bewusste und intensive Verwurzelung in der Glaubensgeschichte Israels auf. Nach klarer, detaillierter Darstellung folgert Scholtissek: „Die umfangreiche Schriftrezeption im JhEv verdankt sich dem Bemühen, das Christusereignis gerade nicht im Sinne eines *deus ex machina* zu isolieren und abzukoppeln, sondern es einzuschreiben und zu deuten im Horizont der biblischen Verheißungsgeschichte Gottes mit seinem erwählten Volk. In diesem Sinne kennt und thematisiert das JhEv die Sendung Jesu zum Gottesvolk Israel (vgl. 1.11-13.31) und reflektiert die dramatische Ablehnung dessen, der, obwohl er ‚in sein Eigentum kommt', ‚von den Eigenen nicht aufgenommen wird' (1.11-13)" (176).

M. Theobald (Tübingen) widmet sich möglichen Anspielungen auf die „Eucharistie in Joh 6: Vom pneumatologischen zum inkarnationstheologischen Verstehensmodell" (178-257, wenn denn tatsächlich in Jh 6 von der Eucharistie die Rede ist!). T. Söding (Wuppertal) beschreibt in „Die Perspektive des Anderen:..." (258-317) die Bedeutung des JhEv im biblischen Kanon. Dabei schreitet er drei Problemfelder ab: „das Verhältnis zwischen dem JhEv und Jesus von Nazareth, das zwischen Johannes und den anderen Theologien des Neuen Testaments und das zwischen Johannes und dem ‚Alten Testament'" (260). Der Abschnitt „Israels Heilige Schrift und das Christuszeugnis des Johannes" (298-305) gibt einen hervorragenden Überblick über die Diskussion (inkl. des Vorwurfs des Antijudaismus) über die Forschung, zeigt den Ursprung der Polemik gegen „die Juden" und zeichnet die jh Sicht des Judentums nach. Der Band endet mit Södings Plädoyer: „Johannes gehört nicht an den Rand des NT, weil er weder ein theologischer Einzelgänger und Außenseiter ist noch in der Höhe und Tiefe seiner christologischen Reflexion den Kontakt zu den anderen Aposteln und Evangelisten verloren hat. In seiner Besinnung auf die Einheit zwischen dem Vater und dem Sohn markiert er den Höhepunkt neutestamentlicher Christologie und erhellt ihn als Voraussetzung der Sendung Jesu von Nazareth" (317).

Indirekt sind einige Ergebnisse des Bandes eine Bestätigung konservativer und evangelikaler Positionen. Vielleicht waren die als ewig gestrig und unwissenschaftlich Gescholtenen der Wahrheit näher als eine selbstsicher agierende radikale Kritik! Nach der massiven Kritik an der These einer jh Schule durch Chr. Cebulj (in Th. Schmeller, *Schulen im Neuen Testament? Zur Stellung des Urchristentums in der Bildungswelt seiner Zeit*, HBS 30; Freiburg etc.: Herder, 2001, 254-342) und teilweise auch der jh Gemeinde durch R. J. Bauckham (Hrsg.), *The Gospels for all Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), könnte man angesichts vieler zu begrüßender Entwicklungen der neueren Johannesforschung fast erwarten, dass eines Tages sogar die altkirchliche Autorenbestimmung mit dem Jünger Johannes wieder salonfähig wird, für die es übrigens nicht nur traditionelle, sondern auch eine ganze Reihe guter historischer Gründe gibt. Leider fehlt im Band eine detaillierte Auseinandersetzung mit den oben erwähnten Arbeiten zur Frühdatierung und deren weit reichenden Implikationen. Interessant wäre auch ein Beitrag, der der geographischen Verortung des JhEv nachgeht, da einige neuere Studien das JhEv – altkirchl. Tradition folgend – in Ephesus verorten und teilweise sogar Spuren von Lokalkolorit meinen entdecken zu können (vgl. S. van Tilborg, *Reading John in Ephesus*, NT.S 83; Leiden: Brill, 1996; erstaunlicherweise wird das JhEv in P. Trebilco, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius*, WUNT 166; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004 nicht berücksichtigt). Stellen- und Personenregister wären wünschenswert gewesen.

Der Band ist – bei mancher Anfrage – ein guter Einstieg für fortgeschrittene Studenten in die neuere Forschung zum Johannesevangelium, der durch einige

Beiträge aus evangelikaler Feder ergänzt werden sollte.

Christoph Stenschke, Bergneustadt, Deutschland

Wahrheit und Erfahrung – Themenbuch zur Systematischen Theologie. Band 1: Einführende Fragen der Dogmatik und Gotteslehre

Christian Herrmann (Hrsg.)

Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus; Gießen: Brunnen 2004, 264 pp., Pb., EUR 16,90, ISBN 3-7655-9484-9; 3-417-29484-3

SUMMARY

This volume contains essays from the pens of 19 German authors. The collection thematically spreads over a wide range of subjects. We find here easily understandable introductions to many essential issues in dogmatics, offering treatises on the background of conservative evangelical hermeneutics. The articles discuss only the most important points, referring the reader to the literature for further studies. Every contribution ends with 2-4 useful questions to deepen the matter. So the editor and the authors are well aware of the incomplete character of the collection as not representing an overall picture. In its first part the book's focus is on "scriptology": The Scriptures as a means of grace; two articles about the true attitude towards the Bible ("Bibeltreue") and the concept of inerrancy; pneumatic understanding; the relationship between OT and NT; finally there are some questions about the Canon and canonisation. Later on some texts are about revelation and faith, revelation and reason (resp. natural science), about the possibility of natural theology. These are followed by some texts of more immediate practical signifiance: Theodicy, Living as a Theologian, Prayer, Church. – The book offers students of theology and laymen who are interested in theological themes a suitable introduction. It offers biblically based analyses of the problems, basic information and well-argued positions.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Themenbuch enthält Aufsätze von 19 deutschen Autoren zu verschiedenen Themen. Wichtige zentrale Themen der Dogmatik werden auf dem Hintergrund eines konservativen evangelikalen Schriftverständnisses behandelt. Die Essays behandeln nur die wichtigsten Aspekte des jeweiligen Themas und verweisen zum weiteren Studium auf die Literatur. Jeder Beitrag endet mit zwei bis vier Arbeitsvorschlägen. Der erste Teil des Buches konzentriert sich auf die Lehre von der Heiligen Schrift und die Trinität. Weitere Texte behandeln Offenbarung und Glaube bzw. Verstehen und auch das Verhältnis zur Naturwissenschaft. An diesen Teil schließen sich Texte an, die praktischere Themen behandeln: Theodizee, Theologie und Leben, Gebet und Kirche. Das Buch enthält Erstinformationen für Theologiestudenten und interessierte Gemeindeglieder. Es enthält biblisch fundierte Analysen, grundlegende Informationen und begründete Positionen.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage collectif contenant des essais de dix-neuf auteurs allemands couvre un large champ thématique. On y trouve des introductions très accessibles à de nombreuses questions dogmatiques essentielles, écrites avec un arrière-plan d'herméneutique évangélique conservatrice. Seuls les points les plus importants sont abordés, et le lecteur qui veut aller plus loin est renvoyé à des études spécialisées. Chaque chapitre se termine par deux à quatre questions en vue d'un approfondissement. L'éditeur et les auteurs sont bien conscients du caractère incomplet de cet ouvrage. La première partie traite de l'Écriture et en particulier des sujets suivants : les Écritures comme moyen de grâce, l'attitude par rapport à l'Écriture (la confiance en la Bible) et la notion d'inerrance, la compréhension pneumatique de l'Écriture, la relation entre l'Ancien Testament et le Nouveau, le canon et le processus de canonisation. Ensuite sont abordées les sujets de la révélation et de la foi, de la révélation et de la raison (et du rapport, en particulier, aux sciences naturelles), et de la possibilité d'une théologie naturelle. Viennent ensuite des essais à la portée pratique plus immédiate et traitant de la théodicée, de la manière de vivre en théologien, de la prière, de l'Église. On a là une bonne introduction pour l'étudiant en théologie et les laïcs qui s'intéressent à des questions théologiques. Les auteurs analysent les problèmes abordés en se fondant sur la Bible, et apportent une information de base en argumentant bien leurs positions.

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Der Aufsatzband enthält Beiträge von 19 Autoren; darunter sind auch einige jüngere Leute (Doktoranden) und nicht so bekannte Namen. Die Sammlung bietet zu vielen wesentlichen dogmatischen Fragen einen für Theologen ohne weiteres verständlichen Einstieg und eine meist kurze Abhandlung des jeweiligen Themas auf dem Boden einer der Bibel verpflichteten („evangelikalen") Hermeneutik. Die Darstellung umfasst meist nur wenige Seiten, umreisst die wesentlichen Problemlagen und verweist für die Detailfragen auf die Literatur. Ausserdem werden dem Leser immer am Schluss des Beitrags zwei bis vier „Anregungen" oder „Aufgaben zur Vertiefung" gegeben – einerseits ein Hinweis auf die Unabgeschlossenheit der Darstellung und andrerseits eine nützliche Wegleitung zur Weiterarbeit. Herausgeber und Autoren sind sich bewusst, dass hier eine Auswahl getroffen wurde und auch innerhalb dieser Auswahl manches nicht erschöpfend behandelt wird. Das Buch bzw. die mit ihm eröffnete dreibändige Reihe eignet sich somit als *Einstieg für Theologiestudierende und theologisch interessierte Laien*, die eine biblisch begründete Problemfeldanalyse und Stellungnahme suchen, ohne eine geschlossene Gesamtdarstellung zu erwarten.

Die Wahrheit des christlichen Glaubens(gutes) ist ein wichtiges Thema und somit die Frage, wie wir

zu der Überzeugung kommen, so und so von Gott, Jesus Christus, dem Heil usw. zu reden. Daher geht es um Geschichte, Offenbarung und Erfahrung. Dies erklärt den Titel der Themenbuchreihe: „Wahrheit und Erfahrung". Ethische Fragen werden im 1. Band nicht behandelt. Dafür nimmt nach einer Besinnung auf den Glauben an den dreieinen Gott (J. Eber) die Schriftlehre breiten Raum ein (S. 23-90). Dabei geht es um die „Schrift als Gnadenmittel" (C. Hägele), zweimal um die Frage der Bibeltreue (H. Hempelmann; Th. Schirrmacher), die auch schon zu einer innerevangelikalen Kontroverse Anlass gab (vgl. JETh 17, 2003, S. 297-303), um „Geistliche Schriftauslegung" (Th. Jeromin), das Verhältnis von Altem und Neuem Testament (S. Felber) und um die Kanonfrage (A. Hahn). Daran schliessen sich Fragen um das Verhältnis von biblischer Offenbarung und Glaube einerseits, Vernunft andererseits an (inkl. der Frage nach der Möglichkeit natürlicher Gotteserkenntnis, R. Kubsch und Th. Schirrmacher). In „Christlicher Glaube und Naturwissenschaft" erörtert H. Hafner die spannungsvolle Beziehung zwischen diesen beiden Größen, um dann am Beispiel von Karl Heim zur unerschrockenen Auseinandersetzung mit dem naturwissenschaftlichen Zugang zur Welt Mut zu machen. In Zuspitzung der damit angeschnittenen Fragen folgt eine beachtenswerte Darlegung zum Kreationismus (R. Junker), den viele von uns weniger belächeln als vielmehr ernsthaft bedenken sollten. – Die weiteren Aufsätze haben einen unmittelbarer praktischen Bezug. R. Hille äußert sich hilfreich zum Theodizeeproblem, E. Hahn zu Sinn und Wichtigkeit der Zuwendung zum Dogma, d. h. zur Glaubenslehre angesichts einer heute da und dort spürbaren Unlust zum Theoretischen und Dogmatischen. O. Bayer bedenkt in „Theologie als Lebensform" anhand von Luthers Trias *oratio*, *meditatio* und *tentatio*, die erst eigentlich den Theologen mache, wie das Theologisieren wieder näher an das Leben und die Gemeinde heranrücken kann. M. Liebelt setzt sich mit dem Verhältnis von tradierter Schrift und kirchlicher (Auslegungs-)Tradition auseinander und dabei vom römisch-katholischen Traditionsprinzip ab. Dem „Gebet als praktizierter Gottesbeziehung", seiner Bedeutung und inhaltlichen Vielfalt geht P. Zimmerling nach. R. Meier geht es bei der Rechtfertigung des Gottlosen „nicht nur um ein Lehrstück der Theologie, sondern auch um eine persönliche und existentielle Erfahrung" (S. 225). Er bezieht sich bei seinen Ausführungen stark auf Luther (vgl. meine Schlussbemerkung unten). Schliesslich kommt das Thema Kirche und Gemeinschaft auf dem Hintergrund des neuzeitlichen Individualismus und Privatisierens des religiösen Lebens noch kurz zur Sprache („Wozu Kirche?", M. Abraham). Das Themenbuch schliesst sinnigerweise mit einem bezugsreichen und schönen Aufsatz des Herausgebers zur „Auferstehungsgewissheit".

Luther spielt in den Beiträgen der rein deutschen (und übrigens rein männlichen) Autoren eine herausragende, Calvin eine untergeordnete, Zwingli und andere Reformatoren spielen keine Rolle. Ist deshalb der überaus wichtige Zusammenhang von Rechtfertigung und Heiligung, die Zusammengehörigkeit von Glaube und Gehorsam nur am Rand ein Thema (S. 38.51.62.98.100.212)? Vielleicht wird ja dem schon von Bonhoeffer (Nachfolge, München 13. Aufl. 1982, S. 20-24) so klar erkannten, nicht Luther anzulastenden Defizit im Luthertum, das genauso als ein Defizit unter Schweizer Reformierten zu beklagen ist, nämlich dem in sich selber vergnügten „Glauben", der den Gehorsam bzw. die Konsequenzen scheut, in einem der folgenden Bände des Themenbuchs theologisch zu Leibe gerückt.

Thomas Hafner, Zurzach, Schweiz

An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination

Walter Brueggemann

Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003, xiv + 434 pp., £20.00, pb, ISBN 0-664-22412-1

SUMMARY

Brueggemann's introduction has all his characteristic trademarks: ludicity and clarity, social and theological sensitivity, and numerous engaging interpretations of the biblical text. Each book of the Hebrew Bible is examined for its major themes and theological message. As is usual there is much in Brueggemann that will be of value for the pressed minister who is not able to remain abreast of biblical scholarship and who struggles to know how to use the Old Testament theologically and pastorally. For those familiar with Old Testament scholarship in general and Brueggemann's work in particular there may be less that surprises. For this reviewer the subtitle raised questions about the nature of Christian imagination which cannot be limited to Brueggemann's reflections on recent Old Testament scholarship, but covers art, music, literature and much else from the first century until now.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette introduction présente toutes les qualités auxquelles Brueggemann nous a habitué dans ses travaux : lucidité et clarté, sensibilité sociale et théologique, avec de nombreuses interprétations convaincantes du texte biblique. Il expose les thèmes majeurs et le message théologique de chaque livre de l'Ancien Testament. Le pasteur pressé, qui ne peut pas rester au fait de la recherche biblique, et qui cherche comment faire usage de l'Ancien Testament pour la théologie et le ministère pastoral, y trouvera beaucoup d'éléments utiles. Pour ceux qui sont au courant de la recherche en Ancien Testament en général, et des travaux de Brueggemann en particulier, il y aura peu de surprises. Le sous-titre de l'ouvrage soulève des questions sur la nature de l'imagination chrétienne. Chez Brueggemann, cela ne se limite pas à une réflexion sur la recherche récente en Ancien Testament, mais couvre des domaines variés comme l'art, la musique, la littérature et beaucoup d'autres choses encore, du premier siècle à l'époque actuelle.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Brueggemanns Einleitung zeichnet sich durch alle Qualitätsmerkmale aus, die man von ihm gewohnt ist: Übersichtlichkeit und Klarheit, soziale und theologische Sensibilität, und zahlreiche Interpretationen des biblischen Textes, die Text und Leser in fruchtbaren Dialog bringen. Jedes Buch der hebräischen Bibel wird auf seine Hauptthemen und theologische Botschaft hin untersucht. Wie üblich bietet Brueggemann viel Wertvolles für den viel beschäftigten Pastor, der nicht in der Lage ist, auf der Höhe der Bibelwissenschaft zu bleiben und der damit kämpft, wie er das Alte Testament theologisch und pastoral benutzen soll. Für diejenigen, die mit der alttestamentlichen Wissenschaft im Allgemeinen und mit Brueggemanns Werk im Besonderen vertraut sind, gibt es eher wenig Überraschendes. Beim Rezensent warf der Untertitel Fragen zum Wesen christlicher Imagination auf, die nicht auf Brueggemanns Reflektionen über neuere Beiträge zur alttestamentlichen Wissenschaft beschränkt werden kann, sondern Kunst, Musik, Literatur und vieles mehr vom ersten Jahrhundert bis heute umfasst.

* * * *

Walter Brueggemann is well known as one of America's foremost Old Testament theologians and, if the stream of books from him is anything to go by, surely the most industrious. In this volume Brueggemann presents an introduction to the Old Testament – his second in recent years if you include the volume he co-edited with Birch, Fretheim and Peterson. It has all his characteristic trademarks: lucidity and clarity, social and theological sensitivity, and numerous engaging interpretations of the biblical text. As might be expected from his other work this volume is aimed at Christian ministers and their congregations. If Brueggemann occasionally finds it difficult to resist a homiletical turn, he has every reason to be forgiven.

The vast majority of this introduction is given over to short accounts of the individual biblical books and recent critical scholarship on them. Rather surprisingly for a work that explicitly sets forth a 'Christian imagination' the books are discussed in the canonical order of the Jewish Bible: Torah, Prophets (Former and Latter) and Writings. Brueggemann provides no clear justification for this procedure, but he seems to hold that the Septuagint ordering is a secondary development. In recent years, however, the presumption that the Hebrew ordering is earlier has been questioned. However the development of the canonical orders is to be accounted for historically, one might not wonder whether in fact the ordering of the canon familiar to Christians is not, in fact, an important act of the Christian imagination that must be taken into account.

Something of Brueggemann's approach may be appreciated by examining his discussion of one particular book. With the book of Numbers Brueggemann begins by noting the various attempts to structure the material using chronological, geographical and theological markers. He finds Dennis Olson's contrast between the old and new generation suggestive, yet this distinction cannot be taken as a historical reality but as a 'highly imaginative articulation designed precisely for the exilic crisis' (77). This is the work of a Priestly tradition that has shaped older traditions according to sixth century realities. The book of Numbers' solution to the exile turns on holiness and cultic purity which Brueggemann illustrates with specific exegesis of the Priestly Blessing (Num. 6.24-26), the wilderness and Kadesh Barnea rebellions (11-14), the Balaam episode (22-24) and the account of the journey's stages (33). 'In the book of Numbers, purity, cleanness, and holiness are decisive preconditions for a future in the land of promise, a land YHWH generously gives, a land a holy God gives to his holy people' (83).

As is usual there is much in Brueggemann that will be of value for the pressed minister who is not able to remain abreast of biblical scholarship and who struggles to know how to use the Old Testament theologically and pastorally. For those familiar with Old Testament scholarship in general and Brueggemann's work in particular there may be less that surprises. My own sense of disappointment circles around the word 'imagination' in Brueggemann's subtitle: 'The Canon and Christian Imagination'. 'Imagination' has been one of the leitmotifs of Brueggemann's theological scholarship. Earlier works have spoken of *The Prophetic Imagination*, *The Bible and Postmodern Imagination*, and *David's Truth in Israel's Imagination and Memory*. For Brueggemann it captures Israel's rhetorical and creative response to her own historical and social situation which helps to explain how the Bible's divergence from 'what actually happened' can nevertheless be of relevance to the communities of faith. It also provides a point of hermeneutical correspondence because Israel's act of imagination is analogous to our own acts of re-imagination. The subtitle of this volume adds a further nuance, for 'imagination' is juxtaposed with 'canon' – the creative tension between fluidity and fixity. Now all of these nuances of 'imagination' are important correctives to some aspects of modern scholarship and I have no quarrel with Brueggemann's talk of prophetic, postmodern or Israel's imagination. Yet I cannot help wondering about the term 'Christian imagination'. Whose Christian imagination?

The Christian imagination that is in dialogue with canon is Brueggemann's own: 'The present book is my effort – albeit a personal effort and at some points idiosyncratic – to mediate and make available fresh learnings of Old Testament studies that will be of peculiar force for pastors and Christian congregations' (xi). Surely this is a rather attenuated notion of Christian imagination? Brueggemann's reflections on recent scholarship are not without their value, but the Christian imagination has a far longer history than recent Old Testament scholarship and has included commentary, theological scholarship and apologetics, art, music, spirituality and much more. Recent work on the reception history of the Bible is only just beginning to appreciate the richness and subtlety of Christian appropriations of the Old Testament, but none

of this seems to have impacted Brueggemann's introduction. In this sense Brevard Childs' *Introduction* (1979) was much more prescient for each section concluded with a bibliography of the history of exegesis, and this concern was already present in his earlier Exodus commentary (1974) and has continued in his most recent work on the interpretation of Isaiah (2004). To begin to map something of the Old Testament as it has been perceived in the Christian imagination would really have been a task worthy of the title *Introduction* (where *Introduction* is the classical genre of a detailed description of critical scholarship [i.e. German *Einleitung*], the understanding Brueggemann seems to intend).

In Brueggemann's subtitle, then, we can see a fruitful direction that future scholarship must go. There is a land full of promise that awaits the new generation of Old Testament scholars. With his appropriation of the language of 'imagination' Brueggemann has helped us see that our task is not so different from that of earlier generations. He has also enabled pastors and congregations over the last twenty-five years with works such as this introduction to emerge from what seemed like a desert of historically-orientated scholarship.

Nathan MacDonald, St Andrews, Scotland

How Are the Mighty Fallen? A Dialogical Study of King Saul in 1 Samuel (JSOT Supp. 365)

Barbara Green

London: Continuum, 2003, x + 492 pp., £80.00, hb, ISBN 0-8264-6221-9

King Saul's Asking (Interfaces)

Barbara Green

Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2003, xxii + 130 pp., $14.95 (US), pb, ISBN 0-8146-5109-7

SUMMARY

In these books, Green applies the literary theories of Bakhtin to the character of Saul in 1 Samuel. She argues that Saul is an epitome of Israel's experience of kingship, and shows why this should not be the path taken after the exile. In spite of many helpful insights, the thesis is unpersuasive. The application of Bakhtin's theories is uneven and does not always seem appropriate. *King Saul's Asking* is a more disciplined book and worth reading for Green's insights. How are the Mighty Fallen? has more detail, but the extra expense cannot be justified.

RÉSUMÉ

Dans ces deux ouvrages, Barbara Green applique les théories littéraires de Bahtkin au personnage de Saül dans le livre de 1 Samuel. Elle essaie de montrer que Saül est une figure typique de l'expérience israélite de la royauté et que son histoire sert à montrer pourquoi la monarchie n'est pas la voie à emprunter après l'exil. Malgré de nombreux apports, la thèse n'est pas convaincante. L'application de la théorie de Bahtkin est inégale suivant les cas et ne semble pas toujours appropriée. *King Saul's Asking* est le plus rigoureux et le plus intéressant des deux ouvrages. L'autre est plus détaillé, sans que cela suffise à faire valoir la peine de la dépense supplémentaire.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In diesen Büchern wendet Green die Literaturtheorien von Bakhtin auf Saul als Charakter in 1. Samuel an. Sie argumentiert, dass Saul ein Inbegriff der Erfahrung Israels von Königsherrschaft ist, und sie zeigt, warum dies nicht der Weg sein sollte, der nach dem Exil gegangen werden soll. Trotz vieler hilfreicher Einsichten ist die These nicht überzeugend. Die Anwendung der Thesen Bakhtins ist uneinheitlich und scheint nicht immer angemessen. *King Saul's Asking* ist ein disziplinierteres Buch und um Greens Einsichten willen wert, gelesen zu werden. How are the Mighty Fallen? ist detaillierter, aber die Extraausgabe ist nicht zu rechtfertigen.

* * * *

Although these books are obviously aimed at different audiences, they have so many similarities that it is appropriate that they be reviewed together. Both represent an attempt by Green to apply the interpretative approach of the Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin to the figure of King Saul in 1 Samuel. Green acknowledges that the first chapter of *King Saul's Asking* (*KSA*) is an abridgement of chapter 1 of *How are the Mighty Fallen?* (*HMF*), though they have numerous points of contact. Given that they were written at much the same time as one another, cover the same material and work with the same methodology, this is to be expected. But the similarities here are so marked that even the chapters of each book match each other perfectly. Both are also concerned with providing a transformative reading of the biblical text. What distinguishes them, and results in their great divergence in length, is the intended readership. KSA is part of a new series called "Interfaces" edited by Green, which seeks to provide a methodologically conscious set of readings of the biblical text aimed at undergraduates, though with the hope expressed that they might be of benefit to those commencing postgraduate study. *HMF* is clearly aimed at scholarly community and seeks to provide the detailed reading of Saul that cannot be given when one has to be more conscious of the requirements of a less trained readership. That said, it would be unfair to describe *KSA* as *HMF Lite*, so as well as commenting on the shared elements of the books, some comment will be made on how they achieve their discrete goals.

Although Green has previously written a helpful introduction to Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Studies, both these books commence with an introduction to Bakhtin's thought, whilst also indicating Green's understanding of the Deuteronomistic History (DH). Her unargued-for position in *KSA* is that DH is to be read from the context

of exile, and in spite of the extra details in *HMF*, there is not much more in the way of argument. The more important point for Green is that we do not read the story of Saul from the perspective of the eleventh century in which the narrative is set, but at a later time, when people are debating the question of whether or not the community should still look for a king. Literary method is employed, but still linked to a specific historical situation. Saul, argues Green, becomes the epitome of Israel's experience with kingship, and provides the reason why DH suggests that kingship does not represent the future. This understanding of DH is linked to her exposition of Bakhtin, particularly his emphasis upon genre and varieties of discourse. It is intriguing that she does not provide an argument here for why Bakhtin alone provides the literary foundations for reading this narrative and not more recent theorists who engage with Bakhtin and develop alternative reading methods. Methodology is something that is in the foreground here, but although Bakhtin has clearly provided a framework in which literary theory and biblical interpretation comes together, it is not clear why we cannot also engage with other theorists. Once we have decided that modern literary theory provides the means by which we read the biblical text, can we cherry-pick theorists because we find them helpful for our ends as readers? Or does engagement with literary theory mean that we need to enter the whole field and develop an eclectic methodology that recognises that guild's criticisms of theorists like Bakhtin ? In short, if literary theory provides the critical mechanism by which we read the biblical text, what critical mechanism controls our application of such theory? Bakhtin provides a set of tools with which to read the text, but works that seek to be methodologically conscious need to provide a rationale for their choices. Along with her commitment to Bakhtin, Green also utilises Robert Polzin as her principal dialogue partner in the study of Saul, principally because of his application of Bakhtin's theories to the books of Samuel. Green seeks to develop Polzin's conclusions through her specific focus on the figure of Saul. Although a worthwhile choice, even if one is not committed to Polzin's reading, the reasons for choosing Polzin are not clear. Arguably, the contribution of Fokkelman might have been more effective because he would have provided someone with whom Green could have engaged in a critical dialogue precisely because he does not operate within the same theoretical framework.

With her methodology thus stated, Green proceeds to read the whole of 1 Samuel 1 – 2 Samuel 1, not just those chapters in which Saul appears. This is to be applauded, because in doing so she highlights the way in which the question of kingship and inherited dynastic structures are brought to the fore before we actually meet Saul. Hannah's story, and those of Eli and Samuel, all point to the problem of sons, and all stress the fact that dynasties may not operate as one might wish. The issue of the problem with sons is something that Green is able to explore in subsequent chapters, each of which addresses a logical block of narrative within 1 Samuel. In *HMF*, Green achieves this by following a fixed structure in which she outlines her point of entry to the text, develops an aspect of Bakhtin's thought that is relevant to it, summarises Polzin's contribution and then offers her own reading. *KSA* is not quite as rigid in its structure, but the same elements are there. Green's reading is frequently insightful, and her exploration of the language of sonship throughout 1 Samuel opens up new perspectives on the text. Anyone who engages with her reading will find many new insights, whilst her commitment to the ways in which her reading might be transformational for others is refreshing because of its commitment to reading Scripture, even if her essentially fictional reading might not sit well with all. Whether or not all of these insights derive from the impact of Bakhtin, or whether Green is simply an astute reader of texts is another matter, and this reviewer at least is unsure how ascribe the relevant weighting.

There are questions about her use of Bakhtin, especially the fact that each chapter introduces a different element of his thought, an element then applied to the passage being analysed. Bakhtin's model of interpretation is inclusive of a range of elements, and though it is helpful to break them down in terms of analysis, it is not meant to be applied piecemeal. Moreover, I am unconvinced by the decision to focus on Saul alone. Saul is only one character in a narrative, and he is clearly not its hero. 1 Samuel is only one part of a text that Green acknowledges stretches for some way both before and after. Is it possible to develop a reading of the Saul as the epitome of monarchy without placing him more firmly in the larger narrative? Whatever one makes of Saul, 2 Samuel 7 does make the promise of an enduring dynasty to David, and that promise does not seem to be overly troubled by the difficulties that king's pose. It could also be argued that the characterisation of Saul is developed as a foil for David. Green's exclusion of these elements creates a potential distortion in genre and characterisation, and could run counter to her own commitment to Bakhtin. There is, therefore, a fundamental tension at the heart of these books where the method employed does not conform fully to the text being examined. In spite of the many insights, Green's central thesis cannot be considered to be proved.

As indicated, each book seeks to achieve Green's aims for a different readership. *KSA* is also marked by Green's concern for the students that she imagines to be reading it, and there are several points at which she addresses them directly. The pastoral concern is a real strength, and links in well with her transformative goals, even if not all of her conclusions are accepted. The shorter length also results in a book that is much more disciplined in its writing, and which keeps the central focus more clearly in front of the reader. *HMF* packs in more theoretical detail, but I am not sure that the extra length provides much more depth to the argument. There are many points at which Green offers discursive illustrations of her points

which probably work well in a classroom, but which are distracting in a book of this nature. Also, the editing is not of the same standard, and there are several points where a discussion of a key theme from Bakhtin includes the note "[Russian Word]" in which some key term from Bakhtin was clearly meant to be placed but no one has got around to doing it. *HMF* does offer more than *KSA*, but the benefits are nowhere near enough to justify the significant price difference. Although Green's thesis is unpersuasive, there are many insights to be harvested, but unless one has a large amount of spare cash and time for reading, preference should go to *King Saul's Asking*.

David G. Firth, Calver, England

Isaiah's Christ in Matthew's Gospel
Richard Beaton

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, 197 pp., £45.00, hb, ISBN 0-521-81888-5

SUMMARY

In an effort to further the discussion regarding Matthew's use of the Old Testament and his composite Christology, Richard Beaton examines Matthew's quotation of Isaiah 42.1-4 in Matthew 12.18-21. Beaton demonstrates that Matthew's use of this (and other) Isaiah text(s) is more complex than previously believed, exhibiting a bi-referential function in the final form of Matthew: the quote contributes both to the near context and entire narrative of Matthew's Christology. In this work, Beaton also examines various issues regarding Matthew's use of the Old Testament and the text-form that he used.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In einem Versuch, die Diskussion um den matthäischen Gebrauch des Alten Testaments und die im Matthäusevangelium zusammengestellte Christologie voranzubringen, untersucht Richard Beaton das Zitat von Jesaja 42,1-4 in Matthäus 12,18-21. Beaton zeigt, dass der matthäische Gebrauch dieses (und anderer) jesajanischer Texte komplexer als bisher angenommen ist. Das Zitat hat in der Endgestalt des Matthäusevangeliums eine zweifache Funktion: es trägt sowohl zum unmittelbaren Kontext als auch zum gesamten Narrativ der matthäischen Christologie bei. Beaton untersucht in seiner Arbeit auch verschiedene Fragen bezüglich des Gebrauchs des Alten Testaments und der von Matthäus benutzten Textform.

RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur étudie la citation d'Ésaïe 42.1-4 chez Matthieu (12.18-21) dans le but de contribuer à la recherche sur l'usage de l'Ancien Testament par cet évangéliste, ainsi qu'à l'étude de sa christologie composite. Il montre que l'usage que fait Matthieu de ce texte isaïen, ainsi que d'autres du même prophète, est plus complexe qu'on ne l'avait pensé auparavant, et qu'il a une fonction biréférentielle dans la forme finale de l'évangile : la citation contribue à la fois au contexte immédiat et à la narration de la christologie matthéenne dans son ensemble. Beaton aborde encore diverses questions concernant l'usage de l'Ancien Testament par Matthieu et le type textuel qu'il a utilisé.

* * * *

This book is a minor revision of the author's doctoral dissertation completed under the supervision of Dr. Ivor H. Jones at Cambridge University. The author states from outset the overriding question: 'if Mathew's text-form does not support the traditional presentation of a meek and lowly Jesus, then Matthew's portrait of Jesus may be more complex than is otherwise thought' (p. 2). This quote contains two dominant concerns that reoccur throughout the book: 1) the text form that Matthew used, and 2) the overall presentation of Christ in Matthew. The author attempts to further this discussion by examining the lengthy quotation of Isaiah 42.1-4 in Matthew 12.18-21.

The book begins with the typical introduction setting out the question at stake (pp. 1-13), followed by a chapter surveying the history of research up to this point (pp. 14-43). Beaton concludes his survey: 'Even a brief survey such as this reveals that the two fundamental questions which confront this investigation concern the state of the text-form prior to AD 100 and the early Jewish usage of Isa. 42.1-4' (p. 43). Thus, his third chapter titled 'Texts and Early Jewish Exegesis' examines these twin issues of the various text forms available to Matthew in the first-century, and the common Jewish exegetical practices of the day. Regarding the former issue (text forms), Beaton draws heavily on the work of E. Tov regarding Old Testament textual criticism. Tov's work has been the most influential in showing that the common tripartite view of the text (LXX, MT, Sam. Pent.) is really a misnomer. Thus, Beaton argues that Matthew wrote his gospel during a 'period of textual fluidity and variety' (pp. 60-61). While Matthew certainly made some changes to the text in order to support his narrative and theological agenda, there still remains the strong possibility than he had before him a text form unknown to us.

Next, though still in chapter three, Beaton examines the possible early uses of Isaiah 42.1-4 in Early Judaism. I say 'possible', because as Beaton recognizes, the text is not explicitly quoted in any second-temple text that we now have. Nevertheless, we do have the LXX, targums, and various allusions and echoes that might be traced back to this Isaianic passage. Regarding these later allusions, Beaton finds traces of this passage in 1QH, the *Similitudes of Enoch*, and the *Psalms of Solomon*. Furthermore, Beaton argues for the potential that according to these references, Isaiah 42 was read messianically.

Beaton then includes a chapter on Matthew's use of Isaiah 7.14 (Mt. 1.23), Isaiah 8.23b-9.1 (Mt. 4.15-16), and Isaiah 53.4a (Mt. 8.17). In this section, he includes a comparison of the known text forms that were available to Matthew, a discussion on which one he used and

why he used it, and most interestingly an analysis of the 'bi-referential' function of these citations in Matthew. For instance, when Matthew cites Isaiah 7.14 (Mt. 1.23), he does so for two reasons: 1) to give OT support for the virgin birth, and 2) to initiate the theme of 'God with us' (Immanuel) prevalent throughout the rest of the gospel.

Chapter 4 is titled 'Isaiah 42.1-4 within the context of Matthew 11-13' (pp. 122-73) and comprises the main focus of the study. As with the previous chapter, Beaton analyses the text form of Isaiah 42.1-4 and after a lengthy (and somewhat tedious) discussion (30 pages) he concludes: 'Matthew's unique text-form, it seems, demonstrates his use of either the Hebrew, or more likely a Greek (or Aramaic) text conformed to the Hebrew, which he then altered in the light of his own concerns' (p. 141). The rest of this chapter and the next are an exposition of what these concerns were. In the end, Beaton is convinced that 'Matthew's employment of the Old Testament is fundamentally theological and best described as complex' (p. 192). 'Matthew is the source of many modifications' (p. 193) and his quotations 'are essentially bi-referential' functioning both on a narrative and theological level' (p. 194).

Beaton has certainly made a fine contribution to the field of Judeo-Christian exegetical practices and toward a better understanding of Matthean Christology. I particularly found his discussions regarding the text form available to Matthew to be the most enlightening. However, as with many dissertations that reach the printing press, this work is dense. The reader should be prepared to read slow, think hard and even re-read the various sections that fail to make sense at first glance – there are a few.

Preston Sprinkle, Aberdeen, Scotland

Les Derniers Jours de Jésus

François Bovon

Genève: Labor et Fides, 2004.

P.b., n.p., 109 pages. ISBN: 2-8309-1116-4.

SUMMARY

This brief volume is a reprint with minor changes of a book originally published in 1974 but now published in the wake of the controversy aroused by Mel Gibson's film, *The Passion of the Christ*. In fact, the book does not address issues relating to the film but rather provides a historical-critical perspective on the ancient accounts of Jesus last days in Jerusalem, both canonical and non-canonical. While Bovon's measured treatment of the sources offers the reader insight into the process of historical-critical evaluation of texts, his reading of the passages is ultimately unsatisfying due to considerable scepticism concerning the historical foundations of the accounts.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce court ouvrage est une réimpression comportant quelques changements mineurs d'un livre publié en 1974, mais qui reparaît maintenant dans le contexte de la controverse suscitée par le film de Mel Gibson, *La passion du Christ*. Le livre ne traite pas directement de questions liées à ce film, mais présente, d'un point de vue historico-critique, les récits anciens, tant canoniques que non canoniques, des derniers jours de Jésus à Jérusalem. L'auteur traite les sources de manière mesurée et apporte ainsi au lecteur une bonne compréhension de la démarche d'évaluation historico-critique des textes, mais sa lecture des textes reste en fin de compte insatisfaisante à cause d'un grand scepticisme concernant la fiabilité historique des récits.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieser kurze Band ist ein mit unwesentlichen Veränderungen versehener Neudruck eines ursprünglich 1974 veröffentlichten Buches. Es ist jetzt im Nachlauf der von Mel Gibsons Film Die Passion Christi erzeugten Kontroverse erschienen. Das Buch bespricht allerdings keine auf den Film bezogenen Fragen, sondern bietet eine historisch-kritische Perspektive auf die alten Darstellungen der letzten Tage Jesu in Jerusalem. Es werden sowohl kanonische als auch nicht-kanonische Texte benutzt. Bovons maßvolle Behandlung der Quellen bietet dem Leser Einblick in den Prozess der historisch-kritischen Bewertung von Texten, aber seine Leseweise der Passagen ist letztlich aufgrund der beträchtlichen Skepsis bezüglich der historischen Grundlagen der Darstellungen unbefriedigend.

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This slim volume by the Professor of New Testament at Harvard Divinity School is, in fact, a reissue of a book first published in 1974 with only minor corrections and updating. A significant reason for the reissue of the book at this time appears to be (according to the 'blurb' on the back cover) the controversy stirred up by Mel Gibson's film, *The Passion of the Christ*, and particularly the notion that it presents 'history as the Bible tells it' since 'the gospel is a complete script' ('l'évangile est un script complet' – the quotation is not attributed but it is presented as if it were Gibson's view).

The short main text (pages 13-78) is divided into six sections: a brief introduction (13-14); a discussion of available sources (15-34); some comments on methodology (35-37) which affirm Jesus' crucifixion under Pilate as a securely attested fact of history; the major section (39-65) which highlights some of the distinctive aspects of Jesus' ministry, with particular reference to the events of the final week before Jesus' crucifixion; a short note on issues relating to time and place of the events; and, finally, a conclusion which draws the discussion to a close (71-78).

The final fifteen pages of the book are appendices which simply reproduce the French text of Luke 22:1-24:53 and of the Gospel of Peter.

If the reader is looking for a scholarly response to Gibson's film here, he or she will be disappointed. In fact, Bovon makes no mention of the film in the text of the book and one cannot help feeling that the reference

to it on the cover is a piece of opportunistic marketing on the part of the publisher. (Those looking for a readable yet scholarly discussion of Gibson's film may wish to read a recently published collection of essays edited by R. L. Webb and K. E. Corley, *Jesus and Mel Gibson's The Passion of the Christ* [London: Continuum, 2004] which is devoted entirely to consideration of the film.)

If, on the other hand, the reader simply takes this book on its own terms then it provides a generally helpful introduction to the events leading up to and including the crucifixion, as viewed through the historical-critical method. Bovon helpfully examines the various canonical and non-canonical sources. He rightly comments that the gospel accounts are not 'disinterested reports of objective witnesses' (24), but he appears to accept that the faith of the authors necessarily affects their ability to provide a sober account of what has taken place – a highly contestable position. For example, he claims that the gospel accounts of Jesus' predictions of his passion derive from church tradition rather than from Jesus himself (18). I was also surprised at his claim that the resurrection account of the Gospel of Peter, with its sky-high figures and moving, speaking cross, is 'neither more miraculous nor more legendary than the canonical accounts' (28). He explains 'There is, here as there, cohabitation of memories and interpretation.' Fair enough, to a point. Human beings have no access to such a thing as an uninterpreted fact. Yet there must surely be some recognition of the difference in character between the restrained canonical accounts and the startling features of Gospel of Peter.

Bovon's brief sketch of the events of the last week of Jesus' life prior to the crucifixion is typical of discussions of the 'historical Jesus'. It deals with standard historical questions relating to the passion narrative (e.g., whether the Sanhedrin had the authority to pronounce a capital sentence) and, in general, is characterised by even-handed treatment of the evidence. Even in the very brief compass of the discussion, one has the sense that Bovon is carefully evaluating the sources. Yet, once again, I was left frustrated when Bovon concluded his comments on the sayings from the cross (which were sensitive to the significance of these sayings in the gospel narratives) by claiming that these sayings are not historical (63).

In his conclusion, Bovon addresses the issue of the resurrection. It is commendable that he does so, but it is unfortunate that he excludes this event, to some extent, from the realm of history. Contrast this with, for example, the very different argument of N. T. Wright in *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (London: SPCK, 2003).

The bibliography largely reflects literature prior to 1974, but around two-dozen more recent works are added.

The brevity of this book might suggest that it is a popular paperback for a general readership. In fact, although Bovon writes clearly, the level of the discussion would probably be demanding for those without some theological training. Those who are ready to weigh carefully the arguments in this slight book will doubtless learn much, even in disagreement.

Alistair I. Wilson, Dingwall, Scotland

Contours of Pauline Theology
A Radical Survey of the Influences on Paul's Biblical Writings
Tom Holland

Geanies House, Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, 2004, 384 pp., £14.99, hb, ISBN 1-85792-469-X

SUMMARY

The thesis of this book is that two important axioms have been missing from the interpretation of Paul's writings. The first is that the story of the Passover and the exodus are the interpretive keys to Paul's thought and, in particular, to his interpretation of Jesus' death. The second lens is that the Pauline writings should be read as being implicitly corporate and covenantal in their approach. Holland excludes the literature of Second Temple Judaism and the pseudepigraphical writings from the interpretation of Paul's writings. The strengths of the book are its robust challenge to many scholarly presuppositions and an impetus to new research on Paul's debt to the Old Testament.

RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur défend la thèse selon laquelle deux axiomes importants ont fait défaut à l'interprétation des écrits pauliniens. Premièrement, l'histoire de la pâque et de l'exode constitue à ses yeux la clé de la pensée de l'apôtre Paul et, en particulier, de sa compréhension de la mort de Jésus. Deuxièmement, il pense que les textes devraient être lus en tenant compte du fait que Paul pense implicitement en termes de communauté et d'alliance. Holland exclut que la littérature du judaïsme du second Temple et les pseudépigraphes soient pertinents pour l'interprétation des écrits pauliniens. La critique sévère de bien des présupposés des spécialistes et la stimulation à explorer la dette de Paul à l'égard de l'Ancien Testament sont les points forts de ce livre.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die These dieses Buches lautet, dass zwei wichtige Axiome bei der Interpretation der paulinischen Schriften bisher gefehlt haben. Das erste besteht darin, dass die Geschichte vom Passah und vom Exodus der interpretative Schlüssel zur paulinischen Gedankenwelt und insbesondere zu seiner Interpretation des Todes Jesu ist. Die zweite Linse lautet, dass die paulinischen Schriften als solche gelesen werden sollen, die in ihrem Ansatz implizit gemeinschafts- und bundesorientiert sind. Holland schließt die Literatur des Judentums der Periode des zweiten Tempels und die pseudepigraphen Schriften bei der Interpretation der paulinischen Schriften aus. Die Stärken des Buches liegen in seiner robusten Herausforderung vieler wissenschaftlicher Voraussetzungen und in einem Anstoß zu neuer Forschung

über das, was Paulus dem Alten Testament verdankt.

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The thesis of this book is clear and well-expressed throughout. Stated simply it is that two important axioms or reference points (which the author calls 'lenses') have been missing from the interpretation of Paul's writings. The first such lens is that the story of the Passover and the exodus are the interpretive keys to Paul's thought and, in particular, to his interpretation of Jesus' death. Allied to this – but not one of the 'lenses' – is that, in the author's view, Paul's thought can only be properly understood when we see him to be an exegete and theologian of the Old Testament. According to Holland, it is wrong to interpret Paul's thought as containing the alloy of Hellenistic thinking. He did not, he says, 'Hellenise' the Christian message but he remained faithful both to the thought patterns and expectations of the Old Testament and also to what Jesus had proclaimed. The second lens is that the Pauline writings should be read as being implicitly corporate and covenantal in their approach. The 'rediscovery' of these two axioms, claims the author, 'bring [*sic*] a far more coherent understanding of the teaching of the apostle Paul in the areas of Christology, salvation and anthropology' (p. 291).

This is a difficult book to review because it is good in part – indeed, sometimes very good – but in other places, I am not so sure.

The strengths of the book are its robust challenge to many scholarly presuppositions and an impetus to new research on Paul's debt to the Old Testament. In addition, Holland offers an impressive restatement of much in the Pauline corpus to demonstrate that Paul's thought is paschal, new-Exodus, corporate and covenantal. For these reasons alone, this is a book that should be read by all who are interested in reading and understanding Paul. That said, I have questions about aspects of Holland's method, style and presuppositions.

Holland doubts the value of two sources for interpreting Paul: the literature of Second Temple Judaism and the pseudepigraphal writings. Rather, according to Holland, Paul stayed 'within the framework of Old Testament theology' (p. 43) – but this begs an important question: Which is Paul's Old Testament interpretive framework of that theology? Is it ancient Israel's, Paul's own (however derived) or twenty-first century? At least Second Temple literature and the pseudepigraphal writings provide some clues as to how the Old Testament were being interpreted in Paul's era within the many 'Judaisms' that Holland, acknowledging Neusner, agrees existed. Paul clearly is an exegete and theologian of the Old Testament – but, we should note, of the Septuagintal version of it. To exclude from Paul's thinking *all* other cultural influences – including the pervasive influence of Hellenistic thought – is an overstatement of a case. In my view, there is too much accumulated evidence to say otherwise, and Holland does not go much beyond asserting this point, although I acknowledge it would take more than one book to prove his case.

I also wonder whether some of Holland's conclusions may be overstated: for example, with Holland I would say that, of course, Paul interprets Jesus' death as the fulfilment of the Passover – but, I would add, not *only* as the fulfilment of the Passover. What of II Corinthians 8:9, for example?

The author sometimes knocks down what I see to be 'straw men'. For example, he demolishes the view that in his pre-Christian days, Paul persecuted fellow Jewish Christians because they proclaimed a law-free gospel to Gentiles. Some, including me, would argue that Paul persecuted Jewish Christians because the teaching they proclaimed *to other Jews* was heterodox in the view of the Jewish party Paul represented. Holland's targets are (to mix a metaphor) more nuanced than he sometimes admits and, as a result, sometimes does not address other viewpoints.

Another example is on p. 11, the first page of Chapter One. Holland says that scholars claimed for generations that Paul changed Jesus' message to such an extent that Jesus would not have recognised what Paul taught. But a mainstream scholar such as Hooker has recently written most unexceptionally: 'Although Paul's contribution to Christianity was enormous, his understanding of the gospel was not a distortion of Jesus' own message and mission' (M D Hooker, *Paul. A Short Introduction* [2003], p. 148).

There are some wider issues that Holland does not deal with. On the narrative substructure to Paul's thought, much important work is being carried out and Holland does not engage with it. On the corporate nature of Paul's thought – and of all thought in 'the Mediterranean world' – see, for example, chapter Two of B J Malina's *The New Testament World* (2001).

There is much that is very good and stimulating in this book. My reservations aside, the book is an important contribution to the way we read Paul. Scholars will need to engage with it.

Anthony Bash, Durham, England

Revelation
Ben Witherington III

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, 307 pp. £15.99, pb., ISBN 0 521 00068 8

SUMMARY

This commentary, the first in the *New Cambridge* series, applies socio-rhetorical criticism to Revelation. There is a 50-page introduction and notes on the (mostly English) secondary literature organised by category. The commentary proper is more helpful on verses and on sections of text than in supplying book-wide insights, somewhat regrettably for a rhetorical approach and inadequately given Revelation's organic unity. A polemic in the Graeco-Roman context is overstated and Revelation's Jewish matrix cor-

respondingly neglected, with insufficient attention given to OT allusions or to inner-textual developments. Despite the author's proven stature, his work here lacks a cutting, specialist edge.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce commentaire inaugure la série *New Cambridge*, en appliquant une approche socio-rhétorique à l'Apocalypse de Jean. Une introduction de 50 pages est suivie d'une annotation par catégorie de la littérature secondaire (surtout en anglais). Il est à regretter que l'approche rhétorique soit plus à même de commenter versets ou sections du texte que d'aider à comprendre le livre en tant que tel, sous-estimant ainsi son unité organique. L'importance d'une polémique anti-gréco-romaine est exagérée, au détriment de la matrice juive du livre, tandis que les allusions vétérotestamentaires ou les développements internes au texte sont négligés. Auteur de renom par ailleurs, son travail de non spécialiste ici manque un côté incisif.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieser Kommentar, der erste in der New Cambridge Reihe, wendet sozio-rhetorische Kritik auf die Offenbarung an. Es gibt eine 50seitige Einleitung und Anmerkungen zur (größtenteils englischen) Sekundärliteratur, die nach Kategorien geordnet ist. Der eigentliche Kommentar ist hilfreicher zu Einzelversen und Textabschnitten als bei der Bereitstellung von Einsichten, die sich auf das ganze Buch beziehen, was ein wenig bedauerlich für einen rhetorischen Ansatz und inadäquat angesichts der organischen Einheit der Offenbarung ist. Die Polemik im griechisch-römischen Kontext ist überbewertet und die jüdische Matrix der Offenbarung wird im Gegenzug vernachlässigt; alttestamentlichen Anspielungen oder innertextlichen Entwicklungen wird zu wenig Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt. Trotz der bereits unter Beweis gestellten Fähigkeiten des Autoren fehlt seiner Arbeit in diesem Falle die innovative Klasse eines Spezialisten.

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Readers may have one or more of Ben Witherington's many books, such as his *New Testament History* – recently made available in French translation – or his previous socio-rhetorical work on Acts and Galatians. The present commentary applies this latter methodology to the Book of Revelation, as the first in a new series (the New Cambridge Bible Commentary) aiming to update the achievements of its predecessor. The author is general editor.

The commentary is framed by a fifty-page introduction not surprisingly devoted mainly to socio-rhetorical issues and by a short appendix focussing, apparently for American readers, on Rev 20.4-6. Then the author presents by category what he considers to be significant in the huge secondary literature devoted to Revelation; not himself a Revelation specialist, unlike those to whom he declares his debt (xii), Witherington's rather idiosyncratic preference here is for works in English, with only occasional and unrepresentative note of German scholarship and hardly any French studies.

In the commentary proper, the author's comments about individual verses or discrete sections are mainly helpful. However, few book-wide insights help the reader understand the relation of all these parts to the whole – either Witherington is not convinced of Revelation's unity or this factor does not govern interpretation. This reviewer's impression was of a disjointed approach, although socio-rhetorical issues may be said to predominate. For example, whereas the rhetorical strategies of the seven oracles (Rev 2-3) are examined, the septet is still assumed to be best elucidated not via its sevenfold literary framework but, in the tradition of Ramsey and Hemer, through our reconstructed knowledge of political, socio-economic and religious life in Asian cities. It is doubtful if this popular hermeneutical move of stepping outside the text of Revelation is justified – even supposing the extra-textual frame of reference used to be the right one. And here, Witherington neither postulates nor explores a Jewish or Jewish Christian matrix for what he agrees to be a thoroughly Jewish book, following a trend of recent American scholarship in uncritically construing Revelation as a polemic against Graeco-Roman powers-that-be in general and as an attack on the imperial cult in particular.

A device already familiar from Witherington's previous books is his use of excurses to elucidate special problems of interpretation. In this case, the approach is of limited value. Given the complexity of Revelation as literature and the intricacies of its composition, the space allotted to wider issues would have been better used for solid hermeneutical gain, helping readers explore the basic mechanics and significance of Revelation's unrelenting Old Testament allusions or charting at least some of the crucial inner-textual developments which occur as Revelation's story unfurls.

Witherington's explanation of the text of Revelation is punctuated by one or more "bridging" articles of varying length aimed at bending the horizon of John's book to yours and mine as current readers. A good idea in principle, it is compromised by Witherington's unsatisfactory understanding of the first horizon. The same sort of "mixed results" which, he says, come from Malina's inadequate "typical socio-cultural approach" to Revelation, also accrue ironically from his own reading – on the one hand, due to overestimation of how accurately modern scientific inquiry may extrapolate from the ancient text to the first readers' reconstructed life situation; and on the other, by parallel underestimation of Revelation's Jewish-messianic character related to the omnipresent Jewish Scriptures (and to the Gospels) and of the inner-Jewish polemic which, to my mind, these overlooked aspects strongly presuppose. Whether current readers' own horizons are addressed by these articles, is a more subjective question: Those influenced by or interested in populist millenarian readings of Revelation will probably appreciate them most.

Should you buy this book? It lacks the quality, reliability and flair of recent American commentaries by Beale, Keener or Koester (for example), or of European studies

written by such as Bauckham, Giesen or Prigent. In all these, the authors show hard-won expertise in handling an extraordinarily sophisticated, and therefore demanding, piece of ancient literature. Witherington's stature as a New Testament specialist is amply confirmed by other published work, but in this commentary he relies on his mentors at almost every significant point, referring to them frequently and with nearly six hundred footnotes , mostly acknowledgements.

When viewed from the standpoint of specialised work on Revelation, the scholarly perspective and academic rigour of the back cover's hype are not especially in evidence. At a time of too many commentaries, this one resembles a sort of digest. By the end of my read, I still had no clear answers concerning what was so "innovative" about this contribution, what its author – as a non specialist – had added to the sum of Revelation scholarship to date, or what he had said better than the many who have recently gone before.

Gordon Campbell, Aix-en-Provence, France

God and History in the Book of Revelation: New Testament Studies in Dialogue with Pannenberg and Moltmann (Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 124)

Michael Gilbertson

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, xiii + 235 pp., £ 47.50, hb, ISBN 0-521-82466-4

SUMMARY

God and History in the book of Revelation, one of the fruits of the recent surge of interest in the relationship between biblical studies and systematic theology, places Jürgen Moltmann's and Wolfhart Pannenberg's respective views of history into a constructive dialogue with the way in which the Book of Revelation uses spatial and temporal categories to account for God's relationship to the world. The book is highly recommended, especially for its deft analysis of how John the Seer places the ambivalent situation of his audience within God's ultimate purposes for both heaven and earth.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce livre est l'un des fruits de l'intérêt que l'on porte ces temps-ci à la relation entre les études bibliques et la théologie systématique. Il considère la pensée de Moltmann et de Pannenberg sur l'histoire à la lumière de l'usage, dans le livre de l'Apocalypse, de catégories spatiales et temporelles pour présenter la relation de Dieu au monde. Nous avons trouvé profonde l'analyse de la manière dont Jean le visionnaire situe la condition ambivalente de ses lecteurs dans le cadre des desseins ultimes de Dieu pour le ciel et la terre.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

God and History in the book of Revelation ist eine Frucht des gegenwärtigen Anstiegs des Interesses an der Beziehung zwischen Bibelwissenschaften und systematischer Theologie und bringt die jeweiligen Ansichten über Geschichte von Jürgen Moltmann und Wolfhart Pannenberg in einen konstruktiven Dialog mit der Art und Weise, auf der die Offenbarung räumliche und zeitliche Kategorien benutzt, um Gottes Beziehung zur Welt zu begründen. Das Buch ist sehr zu empfehlen, besonders wegen seiner geschickten Analyse des Weges, auf dem der Seher Johannes die ambivalente Situation seiner Adressaten mit Gottes letztendlichen Absichten mit Himmel und Erde verbindet.

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In *God and History in the Book of Revelation* Michael Gilbertson constructs a dialogue between the Book of Revelation and Wolfhart Pannenberg's and Jürgen Moltmann's respective views of history. In addition to this theological concern, a methodological question runs throughout the book: how can we relate biblical studies and systematic theology, which have usually been held at arms length in modern academia? The heart of Gilbertson's methodological argument is set out in the second chapter of the book, where he first clearly and concisely analyses a variety of attempts to account for the purpose of and relationship between the two disciplines, and then proposes a dynamic relationship where both the contemporary concerns of modern theology and the historical particularity of the text are given their due weight. Gilbertson justifies his method with an appeal to Alister McGrath's defence of a modified propositional approach to theology in which dogmatics is seen as an elaboration of what is found in Scripture, where "Christian doctrine is…concerned with the unfolding and uncovering of the history of Jesus of Nazareth, in the belief that this gives insight into the nature of reality." (McGrath, as quoted, 44) Apart from a not uncommon but unfortunate neglect of the church's tradition of reading and interpreting Scripture, Gilbertson approach is sensible; he neither diminishes the concerns for the historical contingencies which has been the emphasis of biblical studies nor downplays the role of theological construction within the social, cultural and philosophical circumstances in which we find ourselves. In Christian theology, biblical studies and systematic theology need one another because the former always draws us back to the particularity of the biblical texts that the latter is based upon while the latter seeks to articulate a Scriptural view of reality within which we ought to read the text. One may add, which Gilbertson does not state explicitly, that it is perhaps time for Christian scholars to stop viewing the two as distinct disciplines but see them as the exegetical and conceptual aspect of the one theological task—to speak the truth as informed by Scripture within and for the world in which we find ourselves.

Gilbertson concern to give biblical studies and systematics their due concern shapes the structure of the book's positive theological argument. In the first chapter Gilbertson sets out the modern philosophical and theo-

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 Panneberg 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.

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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 they 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 Tauferzählungen 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 Commandment, 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. Ostmeyer, *Taufe und Typos: Elemente und Theologie der Tauftypologie 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 is 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 though 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 Hiddeness 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.

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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

needs careful interpretation. Words such as principalities, powers and thrones, for example, are used both human rulers and of the spiritual forces that lie behind them. There is in consequence a danger of demonising particular individuals and the advocates of other faiths. The book concludes on a positive note. We must take seriously the fact that Christ is now the head of every rule and authority and has driven out the Prince of this World. This being so, it is somewhat presumptuous for Christians to bind the spirits of nations. It is also a mistake for Christians to imagine that spiritual warfare is an elitist activity that super-Christians engage in. It is rather the case, Wright contends, that the 'ordinary activities of the Christian community are the heart of spiritual warfare.' It is in the proclamation of the crucified, risen and exalted Christ that the war against the Dark Side is won. This is a book of scholarship and practical pastoral wisdom that should be on the shelves of both academics and church leaders.

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The Possibility of Salvation Among the Unevangelised: An Analysis of Inclusivism in Recent Evangelical Theology

Daniel Strange

Carlisle: Paternoster, 2002 £24-99, p/b,
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SUMMARY

This book is an analysis of inclusivism, the view that many people will be saved by Christ, through God's grace, who never heard his name. In other words, the view that an ontological relationship with Christ may not require an epistemological one. Some of those who take this view believe that there will be a post-mortem opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel. Strange rejects inclusivism as being incompatible with Scripture. He concentrates on one significant representative of the inclusivist position, namely, Clark Pinnock. The question of the eternal destiny of the unevangelised is one that will not go away and, as evangelicals, we must develop a coherent theological answer. This book certainly persuaded me that Strange's answer is more coherent and more biblical than Pinnock's.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage examine le point de vue inclusiviste, selon lequel de nombreuses personnes seront sauvées par Christ, par grâce, sans avoir jamais entendu parler de lui. Cette position implique qu'une relation ontologique avec Christ est possible sans relation épistémologique. Certains de ses tenants croient à une possibilité posthume d'entendre l'Évangile et d'y répondre. Strange rejette ce point de vue comme étant incompatible avec l'enseignement scripturaire. Il concentre son étude sur la pensée de l'un des représentants majeurs de la position inclusiviste, Clark Pinnock. La question de la destinée finale des personnes qui n'auront pas eu accès à l'Évangile de leur vivant va demeurer et les évangéliques se doivent de lui apporter une réponse théologique cohérente. Ce livre m'a convaincu que la position de Strange est plus cohérente et plus conforme à l'Écriture que celle de Pinnock.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieses Buch ist eine Analyse des Inklusivismus, der Ansicht, dass viele Menschen von Christus und durch Gottes Gnade gerettet werden, die niemals seinen Namen gehört haben. Es handelt sich mit anderen Worten um die Ansicht, dass eine ontologische Beziehung zu Christus nicht unbedingt eine epistemologische Beziehung verlangt. Einige Anhänger dieser Ansicht glauben, es wird eine postmortale Möglichkeit geben, das Evangelium zu hören und darauf zu antworten. Strange weist den Inklusivismus als mit der Schrift unvereinbar zurück. Er konzentriert sich auf einen bedeutenden Repräsentanten der inklusivistischen Position, Clark Pinnock. Die Frage nach dem ewigen Schicksal der Unevangelisierten wird nicht verschwinden, und als Evangelikale müssen wir eine kohärente theologische Antwort entwickeln. Dieses Buch überzeugte mich, dass Stranges Antwort kohärenter und biblischer als diejenige von Pinnock ist.

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This book by Dr Daniel Strange, formerly Secretary of the Religious and Theological Studies Fellowship of UCCF, is in the Paternoster Biblical and Theological Monographs series and is closely based on his PhD thesis. It is an analysis of a recent trend within evangelical theology, namely, inclusivism. This is the view that, in addition to those who are saved through hearing and responding to the gospel of Jesus Christ, many will be saved who never heard his name. Those who take this position are careful to insist that such people will be saved by Christ, through God's grace, but insist that an ontological relationship with Christ may not require an epistemological one. Some of those who take this view argue that one of the means of accomplishing this will be a post-mortem opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel message.

Strange rejects inclusivism as being incompatible with traditional evangelical theology. In order to provide a focus for his argument, Strange concentrates on one significant representative of the inclusivist position, namely, the Canadian theologian Clark Pinnock. In recent years, Pinnock has become famous because of the debates surrounding his advocacy of what is called 'Open Theism', but he has long advocated an inclusivist position. During his research, Strange met with Pinnock and interviewed him. Interestingly, Pinnock has written a commendation on the cover of the book. He writes, 'In a painstaking critique, Daniel Strange has laid his axe to the root of the tree and provoked a more profound discussion. In doing so, he makes an important contribution.' That a scholar of the international stature of Pinnock should so commend the work of a research student, especially one

which attacks his own position, is a measure of the competence of this young scholar and an indication of the strength of his argument.

Part one of the book contains a very helpful chapter on the various ways in which evangelicals have tried to answer the difficult question as to whether or not those who are unevangelised, perhaps because of geography, can be saved. The question arises in the 'theology of religions', although Strange writes as a systematic theologian whose main interest is in such dogmatic questions as the uniqueness of Christ and the nature of revelation. This chapter also includes some helpful definitions and outlines the area of study covered in the book.

Part two of the book consists of four chapters, which are devoted to a detailed description of Pinnock's inclusivism. These chapters are extremely thorough in presenting and explaining Pinnock's views and also very judicious and balanced. The author does not make the mistake, to which many evangelicals have succumbed, of launching into a critique before fairly presenting the views of the writer under discussion.

Part three of the book, containing four chapters, comprises Strange's analysis and critique of Pinnock's views. These chapters range widely over the spectrum of Christian doctrines, demonstrating that the inclusivist position leads logically to other theological conclusions. One minute Strange is discussing the nature of saving faith, then we are on to the nature of the atonement, then we find ourselves in the deep waters of *filioque* and *perichoresis*. Justification by faith is analysed, as is Union with Christ. More significantly, Strange demonstrates that inclusivism also leads from other positions and argues that Pinnock's open theism is a factor in reaching the conclusions he does. In short, Strange demonstrates clearly that the position we take on the unevangelised influences and effects what we believe about almost every doctrine.

Strange is not without his own position, of course. He self-consciously critiques Pinnock first, from the standpoint of evangelical theology in general and then, from the standpoint of Reformed covenant theology in particular.

The book is a real achievement and one can only agree with Gavin D'Costa, Strange's doctoral supervisor, when, in the Foreword to the book, he describes his student as 'a fresh young theologian who is one of the sharpest and most able of his generation writing in England.' As one who was very familiar with Pinnock's Arminianism and his published views on Open Theism but very unfamiliar with his inclusivism, I found the book to be of tremendous value and would highly recommend it. The question of the eternal destiny of the unevangelised is one that will not go away and, as evangelicals, we must develop a coherent theological answer. This book certainly persuaded me that Strange's answer is more coherent and more biblical than Pinnock's.

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