

Bauckham devotes a chapter to elucidating the significance of geography in the Bible, its move from the particular to the universal, and the Bible's tendency to use it symbolically in both testaments. Bauckham convincingly demonstrates that in biblical narrative and missionary movement there is no longer any one particular geographic centre.

In Bauckham's impressive application of his biblical theology he answers the postmodern charge that metanarratives by definition are oppressive and authoritarian. In contrast to the postmodern perspective, the Bible's metanarrative embraces both particularity and universality. The two do not conflict but make up the whole. The biblical worldview opposes the modern metanarrative and its concept of human mastery and the myth of progress. In opposition to the globalised economical worldview, the Bible rejects the totalizing notion that capitalistic economics is the universal panacea. The biblical God is true and requires witness in mission to this truth. However, due to the limits of human understanding the claims of universal truth must remain humble and open to debate and clarification. Missing in Bauckham's description of NT mission is the necessity of establishing witnessing communities (churches) in the multitude of particular localities globally. But overall, Bauckham provides good practical application.

In summary, Bauckham has presented a compelling argument for the organic way that mission provides the interpretive key for the biblical story. It is remarkable that he provides so much content and insight in such a concise fashion. However, some key issues, such as the Kingdom of God being the Bible's grand metanarrative are left undemonstrated. There is no bibliography or indices. Regardless, Bauckham has powerfully presented biblical theology in a way that is refreshingly relevant to the witness of the church globally. Readers interested in biblical theology or mission will need to engage with Bauckham's argument.

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***Blood Ritual in the Hebrew Bible:
Meaning and Power***
William K. Gilders

Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2004, x + 260 pp., £24.09, hb, ISBN 0-8018-7993-0

SUMMARY

Due to source-critical considerations, William K. Gilders argues that the theological meaning assigned to blood ritual in Lev. 17:11 was a late development within Israel. Therefore, he urges scholars to refrain from using it as an interpretive key for blood rituals elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. Alternatively, Gilders contends that a lack of theological explanation accompanying blood rites indicates that these served the practical function of "indexing" relations within the cultic realm and that this "indexing" was

intended to map an ideal social reality onto Israelite life.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Aufgrund quellenkritischer Überlegungen argumentiert William K. Gilders, dass die theologische Bedeutung, die in Leviticus 17,11 dem Blutritual gegeben wird, eine späte Entwicklung in Israel widerspiegelt. Er bittet daher die Gelehrten eindringlich, davon abzusehen, diesen Text als interpretativen Schlüssel für Blutrurale an anderen Stellen der Hebräischen Bibel zu verwenden. Alternativ behauptet Gilders, das Fehlen einer theologischen Erklärung bei Blutruritualen weise darauf hin, dass diese die praktische Funktion des "Katalogisierens" von Beziehungen innerhalb des kultischen Raumes einnahmen und dass dieses "Katalogisieren" dazu gedacht war, eine ideale soziale Realität auf das israelitische Leben zu projizieren.

RÉSUMÉ

Soumettant le texte de Lévitique 17 à une analyse selon la critique des sources, Gilders conclut que le sens théologique du rituel sacrificiel et du rôle du sang exposé dans le verset 11 constitue un développement tardif en Israël. Il recommande donc qu'on évite de se fonder sur ce texte pour y trouver la clé d'interprétation du rituel sacrificiel dans les autres textes de la Bible hébraïque. Il considère au contraire que l'absence d'une explication théologique du rôle du sang dans les textes décrivant ou mentionnant les rites sacrificiels indique que ces rites avaient simplement pour fonction de traduire des relations au sein de la sphère culturelle ayant pour but de représenter une organisation sociale idéale destinée à façonner la vie israélite.

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This published doctoral thesis argues that Lev. 17:11 should not be used as the interpretive key for blood rituals in the OT. William K. Gilders suggests that this misuse arises from a tendency on the part of scholars to supplement the lack of theological explanation accompanying blood rites in the OT. By contrast, he infers from this absence of explanation that these texts are more concerned with formal ritual practice than theology.

Drawing on the socio-cultic approaches of Catherine Bell, Jonathan Z. Smith and Nancy Jay, Gilders recommends that one ought to describe the practical outcomes of blood manipulation rather than hypothesise about its theological meaning. He views rituals as signs which "index" relationships within the ritual-realm. These relationships are "existential," no different from that established between oneself and an object to which one points. On this assumption Gilders proceeds to document the relationships "indexed" by blood-rites rather than assign theological significance to the latter.

In Chap. 1 Gilders argues that textual support is lacking for the traditional explanation for why blood is placed on the altar, namely that as a symbol of "life" it must be returned to the "source of life" (i.e. YHWH). Though he observes that Lev. 17:11 conceptualises blood as "life" within a cultic context, he considers that this verse is not applicable in the interpretation of P's

blood-rites because it is part of the later H-redaction (cf. Knohl and Milgrom).

Chap. 2 is transitional within Gilders' thesis. On the one hand, it continues to test the traditional assumption that blood ("life") belongs to YHWH ("source of life"). On the other hand, it proposes that the notion of "indexing" makes more sense of the passages examined. For example, in Exod. 24:3-8 he claims that Moses' tossing of blood onto both altar and people "indexes" an existential relationship between YHWH (represented by the altar) and his people. In Chaps. 3-6 he applies his "indexing" hypothesis to the exegesis of blood rituals within some P texts and within Ezekiel and 2 Chronicles. Putting aside the traditional assumption, based on Lev. 17:11, that the blood (i.e. "life") makes "atonement" (*kipper*) for the offerer in these texts, he concludes that the various blood rituals "index" cultic relationships, thereby mapping an ideal social reality onto Hebrew life.

In the final chapter (Chap. 7) Gilders examines Lev. 17:11 in its own right. He observes that elsewhere in H texts the formula *kipper-al nephesh* refers to the "ransoming" of a life. Therefore, he speculates that Lev. 17:11 represents "an attempt to import the concept of 'ransom payment' [i.e. *kopher*; cf. Exod. 30:11-16; Num. 31:48-54] into the sacrificial context by playing on the uses of the verb *kipper* to refer to blood manipulation" (173).

Some of Gilders' criticisms of previous interpretations of blood ritual are compelling. It would seem difficult to refute his criticism of the view that blood is applied to the altar because "all life belongs to God." Nevertheless, despite the carefully argued nature of his thesis, one may question the validity of two of Gilders' presuppositions. The first is his presupposition that, since there is no interpretation of blood as "life which ransoms life" outside Lev. 17:11 it did not have such a meaning elsewhere in the OT. On the one hand, one may respond to this argument by postulating that the meaning of blood was so widely assumed that it possibly did not require explanation. If this were the correct then it may only have been necessary to explain the significance of blood when its symbolic meaning was threatened. This would seem to have been the case in Lev. 17. On the other hand, since the blood rites are never explained as "indexing" relationships, one may argue that this presupposition of Gilders' undermines his own hypothesis.

Gilders' second presupposition is that the chronological sequence of the relevant sources proceeds from P to D and then H. Yet there are scholars who maintain that the chronological sequence of P and H is more complex than this (e.g. Wagner; Blum; Ruwe); that P is later than D (e.g. Otto) and those who argue that D post-dates H (e.g. Milgrom). The adoption of one of these positions would undermine confidence in Gilders' proposal that H invented a new meaning for blood within a cultic context (Lev. 17:11) that was unknown to P and D.

Finally, I would question Gilders' contention that there is "no evidence of a *penal* theory of substitution" lying behind Lev. 17:11 (185). He arrives at this con-

clusion because it is "life" which "ransoms" the offerer rather than death. However, one could argue that the placing of such "life" on the altar, to ransom its offerer, presupposes an animal's "death."

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*Narrative, Religion and Science:
Fundamentalism versus Irony, 1700 - 1999*

Stephen Prickett

Cambridge, CUP, 2002, viii + 281 pp., p/b, £21.99,
0-521-00983-9

SUMMARY

The basic argument of this book is revealed in the subtitle *Fundamentalism versus Irony*. Fundamentalism refers to the rational and scientific worldview that knowledge consists of the observation, recording and classifying of data with the assumption that we know the objective world objectively. Irony means the growing awareness of our subjective interpretation of reality that makes reality less 'objective'. Prickett argues that you have either a fundamentalist or an ironic understanding of the world.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die grundlegende These dieses Buches zeigt sich im Untertitel *Fundamentalism versus Irony*. Der Begriff Fundamentalismus bezieht sich auf die rationale und wissenschaftliche Weltansicht, in der Wissen aus der Beobachtung, Erfassung und Klassifizierung von Daten besteht, unter der Annahme, dass wir die objektive Welt objektiv erkennen. Ironie meint das wachsende Bewusstsein von unserer subjektiven Interpretation der Wirklichkeit, die die Wirklichkeit weniger „objektiv“ erscheinen lässt. Prickett argumentiert, dass man entweder einem fundamentalistischen oder einem ironischen Verständnis von der Welt anhängt.

RÉSUMÉ

L'argument principal de ce livre se révèle dans son sous-titre : *Fondamentalisme ou ironie ?* Par fondamentalisme, on entend ici la conception rationnelle et scientifique selon laquelle le savoir résulte de l'observation, de la description et de la classification de données, et qui se fonde sur l'idée que nous connaissons le monde réel de manière objective. Par ironie, on entend la prise de conscience croissante de ce que notre interprétation subjective de la réalité rend celle-ci moins « objective ». Prickett soutient que chacun a soit une compréhension fondamentaliste, soit une compréhension ironique du monde.

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Irony is the awareness that there is more to reality than what meets the eye. A famous metaphor of irony is the anonymous print of the tomb of Napoleon on display in the Royal Library in Copenhagen. Kierkegaard took this print as a metaphor of irony and very appropriately Prickett used it as the front cover of his book. In the