

cal approach considers the significance of the social values attributed to Jesus as they present 'the human perspective and social arrangement marked by the relation of inside and outside, center and periphery' (p. x of Malina and Neyrey). Thus *Who Do My Opponents Say I Am* provides an analysis of seven ostensible accusations against Jesus: 'Jesus as Law-breaker' (Michael F. Bird), 'Jesus as Demon-Possessed' (Dwight D. Sheets), 'Jesus as Glutton and Drunkard' (Joseph B. Modica), 'Jesus as Blasphemer' (Darrell L. Bock), 'Jesus as False Prophet' (James F. McGrath), 'Jesus as King of the Jews' (Lynn H. Cohick), and 'Jesus as *Mamzer* ("Illegitimate Son")' (Scot McKnight).

Space does not permit discussion of each essay, but certainly some of them are rich and worthy of commendation. Dwight Sheets explores the claim that Jesus was in league with Beelzebul (i.e., 'demon-possessed'; Matt. 12.22-24). Sheets argues that certain traits or activities of Jesus may have led some Jews to believe that he was some kind of proto-Antichrist figure, a 'religious deceiver' or 'godless tyrant' (p. 36). Jesus' critique of the temple may have been interpreted by some as evidence that he is an eschatological antagonistic figure and a false prophet. Sheets' argument makes sense of the sort of name-calling that so easily happens against Jesus and why certain actions (like healing) are associated with deception or trickery.

Darrell Bock's essay on the accusation of blasphemy is also rewarding. He notes that just considering oneself to be the messiah was not 'inherently blasphemous' (p. 90). Rather, Jesus' expressions of self-exaltation and his self-perceived role in judgment and rulership (as messiah) seem to push him over the line: 'To claim to be able to share God's glory in Jewish context would mean pointing to an exalted status that is even more than a prophet or any typical view of the Jewish Messiah' (p. 92).

Though many of the essays shed new light on how to understand Christology, there are a few concerns worthy of note. In the first place, methodologically, we do not have direct statements from texts written by opponents of Jesus under investigation. Rather, we have statements made within narratives (the Gospels) that have been compiled and re-expressed through the Evangelists. Each scholar attempts to deal with the 'authenticity' of the saying/pericope, but I think the problem is more complex than a confirmation of genuineness. How did the Evangelists understand and cast these accusations rhetorically and theologically within the Gospels? Secondly, there is quite a variety in how the accusations are phrased and from where they come. Some are direct accusations (e.g. 'glutton and drunkard'), others are inferred from a number of smaller accusations (e.g., 'Jesus as law-breaker'), and still others are assumed but not stated in the gospels directly (e.g., 'Jesus as false prophet'). This is not a faulty approach, but appears a bit uneven. Finally, there is no chapter dedicated to the issue of Jesus supposedly opposing the temple – both the temple cleansing and the temple-logion play an impor-

tant role in the events leading to Jesus' crucifixion and I presumed the issue deserved a place in a study of the opposition against Jesus.

Collections of essays are always challenging to assess as the contributions differ in originality, cogency, perspicuity, and detail. Nevertheless, the unique approach itself will generate discussion and offer those interested in Christology a new avenue of investigation.

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Unlocking Romans: Resurrection and the Justification of God

J.R. Daniel Kirk

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008, xiv + 245 pp.,
£19.99, pb; ISBN 978 0 8028 6290 7

SUMMARY

Reading Romans as Paul's theodicy project in response to the rejection of the gospel by ethnic Israel, Kirk argues that by using resurrection as an interpretative key one is able to trace the argument of Paul's letter to Rome as it recasts the stories of Israel around the resurrection of Jesus. In this way, Paul is able to demonstrate that God has been faithful to his covenant promises contained in Israel's Scripture by acting to vindicate himself and his people in the crucified and resurrected Messiah.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Kirk liest den Römerbrief als Theodizeeprojekt, das Paulus als Reaktion auf die Abweisung des Evangeliums durch das ethnische Israel verfasst hat. Dabei argumentiert er, dass man durch die Verwendung der Auferstehung als interpretativem Schlüssel in der Lage ist, Paulus' Argumentation durch den Römerbrief hindurch zu verfolgen, da diese Argumentation Israels Storys um die Auferstehung Jesu herum in neues Licht rückt. Auf diese Weise ist Paulus in der Lage zu zeigen, dass Gott seinen in Israels Schriften enthaltenen Bundesverheißungen treu gewesen ist, indem er gehandelt hat, um sich selbst und sein Volk im gekreuzigten und auferstandenen Messias zu rehabilitieren.

RÉSUMÉ

Kirk lit l'épître aux Romains comme une théodicée visant à répondre au problème posé par le rejet de l'Évangile par l'Israël ethnique. Le thème de la résurrection lui apparaît comme une clé de lecture qui oriente toute l'argumentation de la lettre en reformulant les histoires d'Israël en lien avec la résurrection de Jésus. Paul montre ainsi que Dieu a été fidèle aux promesses de l'alliance contenues dans les Écritures d'Israël en agissant pour manifester sa justice et justifier son peuple par la mort et la résurrection de Jésus.

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Not since N.T. Wright's Oxford thesis has a scholar attempted such an ambitious synthetic reading of

Romans. For Kirk, as for Wright before him, the location of an 'interpretative key' provides the hermeneutical leverage to navigate the letter. For Wright, this 'key' was Jesus' messiahship; for Kirk the key is the resurrection of that Messiah.

Following Richard Hays, Kirk argues that Romans is Paul's theodicy project. The general rejection of Paul's gospel by ethnic Israel generated questions about God's faithfulness to his covenant promises. Romans addresses this crisis by demonstrating that the promises in Israel's Scripture find their fulfilment in the crucified and resurrected Messiah. This christological conviction requires Paul to recast the stories of Israel 'in order to show that the righteousness of God is on display in the dead and risen Messiah' (49).

Before turning to Romans, chapter two surveys the "functions" (as opposed to "nature") of resurrection in early Judaism. (14). Four functions are proposed: 1) eschatological act of justice which vindicates God and the righteous, 2) support paraenesis, 3) restoration of creation, and 4) restoration of Israel.

Chapter three examines the letter opening and closing and employs rhetorical and epistolary evidence to argue that the presence of resurrection in both these sections indicates the significance of this theme within the letter. The appearance of resurrection in connection with the scriptures of Israel in Paul's expansion of the letter opening is significant. However, the logic employed to read 'the one who will arise' in 15:12 as a reference to Jesus' resurrection feels a bit circular. Kirk argues that the centrality of resurrection in the letter is indicated by its presence in the letter opening and closing but then proceeds to argue for its presence in the letter closing by arguing from its centrality in the letter (51).

Turning to Romans 4, Kirk argues that Paul's answer to the question of Romans 3:31 ('do we nullify the law') is a 'revisionist definition of the people of God' and the contours of that God's faithfulness (59). Paul re-narrates the story of Abraham to highlight the resurrection character of his justifying faith and the resurrection personality of God. Abraham's paternity is not defined 'according to the flesh', but by God's resurrection power. This recasting of Abraham through the lens of resurrection addresses the twin-concerns of Paul's theodicy project: it demonstrates that God's action in the resurrected Messiah is continuous with Israel's scripture and it expands the boundaries of Abraham's paternity, thereby making theological space for non-Jews without closing the door on ethnic Israel.

Kirk's reading of Romans 5:9-10 (chapter five) and 8:12-39 (chapter seven) argues that Paul has rethought Israel's eschatological expectations around the resurrected Jesus. Paul retools the details of final judgment such that believers both have and will participate in a judgment presided over by their resurrected Lord. Additionally, a Jewish tradition of a (super)restored creation is reworked around Jesus as the image of God who thereby recreates those united to him and commissions them to

rule over a recreated world.

Chapters six and eight both address the question of the Mosaic Law. Paul's claim is that 'the purported goals of the law have been attained in the resurrection of Christ' (131). Kirk argues that this realization necessitated an *ex post facto* reading of the role of the law within Israel's story. Paul's use of Deuteronomy 30 demonstrates his retrospective conviction that the law was intended to witness beyond itself to the gospel of the resurrected Christ who, unlike the law, has the power to enable righteous living (108) and finally answer the theodicy question (131).

To say that the theodicy question has been answered, however, means that the question of the future of ethnic Israel has been addressed. Chapter nine argues that Romans 11 casts Israel's rejection and hoped for restoration in parallel to the christological pattern of death and resurrection.

Chapter ten examines Romans 13:8-14 and 14:1-9 and notes that in Paul's re-employment of resurrection to support paraenesis, the resurrection of Jesus provides more than motivation; provides power to live obediently (204). This is followed by a final chapter in which some of the findings about Paul's hermeneutic, ethnic unity and theodicy are translated into the current life of the church.

This work's greatest strength is also its greatest weakness. Synthetic readings have a power of persuasion by virtue of their scope and volume of evidence; but they make detailed engagement with the text difficult. There are a few passages where this author needed a bit more convincing that Jesus' resurrection was in view (e.g. 1:17; 15:12). Nonetheless, by highlighting and employing the interpretative significance of resurrection, Kirk has offered a sweeping reading of Romans which navigates old debates finding fresh solution, which (*ex post facto*) seem almost self-evident. It is a valuable contribution that will be hard to ignore.

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First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary

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The Anchor Yale Bible 32

New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008,
xxv + 660 pp., £30.00, hb; ISBN 978-0-300-14044-6

SUMMARY

This commentary is a welcome addition to the scholarly literature available on 1 Corinthians and is the most detailed treatment of it since Anthony Thiselton's NIGTC volume in 2000. The commentary begins with the author's original translation of the letter, followed by an introduction with several essays on preliminary issues. Fitzmyer's interpreta-