

plemental or peripheral to that good news. Instead, falling within the essentials of the good news, care for the poor was thought by Paul to be a necessary hallmark of the corporate life of Jesus-followers ... (1).

The introductory essay offers a survey of research, describes the outline of the investigation, and explains the terminology which is employed. *Part one* surveys poverty in the ancient world in order to establish the historical and theological contexts for understanding Paul and the poor. The individual chapters discuss poverty and charitable initiatives in the Greco-Roman World as well as Judeo-Christian theological traditions (Jesus, the early Jesus-movement and James). Longenecker highlights the 'elite acquisitiveness that so easily transpired in the advanced agrarianism of the ancient world'.

Part two examines the place and role of the poor in Paul's theology and in the communities that he founded. The author presents the evidence that care for the poor was an essential element of Paul's theology as well as a requirement within the communities of Jesus-followers. He surveys different interpretations of Galatians 2:10 in the patristic period and in modern scholarship. His own interpretation is informed by the earliest patristic paradigm as he examines Paul's collection and Galatians 2:10, the charge to remember the poor in its close rhetorical context, the present tense of the charge, the structure of Galatians 2:6-10 and 'remembering the poor' as a mission strategy. The author concludes that 'remember the poor' in Galatians 2:10 'was stipulated in order to obligate gentile Jesus-groups to care for the needy within their local orb of responsibility, thereby ensuring that Jewish and gentile Jesus-groups would be identical in certain key respects, even if they went their separate ways with regard to circumcision' (207).

Subsequently Longenecker places this fresh understanding of the charge within the theological emphases of Galatians as a whole, arguing that it is *not* peripheral to the issues at stake in Jerusalem and Galatia. He presents the economic profiles of Paul's churches and of certain individuals, including a consideration of Paul's rhetorical construct of his communities' economic level, and he describes the potential attractions of Christian churches for people of different economic levels and means in the cities of the Greco-Roman East. (See also the instructive study of E. Ebel, *Die Attraktivität früher christlicher Gemeinden: Die Gemeinde von Korinth im Spiegel griechisch-römischer Vereine* [WUNT II, 178 Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004] and my review in *Novum Testamentum* 53 [2011] 300-306.) He assembles 'the data pertaining to economic relations within Jesus-communities' and places them within the context of Paul's theology of gifting, difference and enhancement within groups of Jesus-followers. The discussion includes the resourcing and 'ownership' of Jesus communities, economic levels of well-being and Paul's theology of the 'body of Christ'. The author argues that Paul teaches neither communism nor charity, but community.

A Summary of the main argument appears in the final chapter, which includes a discussion of Paul's socio-economic location. I quote from Longenecker's Summary of the conclusions:

Paul, the follower of Jesus and apostle to gentiles of the Greco-Roman world, was concerned about the plight of the poor in the urban contexts in which he operated. ... Communities of Jesus-followers that Paul established were expected to offer care for the poor – albeit in their own groups, in the first instance, although theoretically beyond those confines as well, if/as resources permitted. ... Paul imagined care for the poor among gentile communities of Jesus-followers to be an expression and embodiment of the invading triumph of the deity of Israel who had made himself known in the scriptures of Israel, in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, and now through the Spirit/spirit that enlivened small groups of Jesus-followers. Proto-orthodox forms of Christianity from the second through fourth centuries are known to have enormously augmented the strategies and institutions for caring for the poor to an unprecedented extent in the Greco-Roman world (298-299).

There are three instructive appendices, a detailed bibliography and indices of modern authors and of ancient sources.

This challenging monograph is important for an understanding of Galatians, Paul's ministry and a significant aspect of the attitude and behaviour which he required of believers. It is also important for all who seek guidance and inspiration for their own existence and ministry among the poor of this world and/or seek to involve others in a biblically balanced way.

Christoph Stenschke, Wiedenest and Pretoria

The Throne Motif in the Book of Revelation Library of New Testament Studies 487

Laszlo Gallusz

London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014; xxii + 396 pp,
hb, £85.00; ISBN 978-0-567-33941-6

SUMMARY

This is an excellent dissertation by an Evangelical from central Europe. Dr Gallusz argues convincingly that the throne (of God) is a core motif in Revelation, which is essential for comprehending the message of the Book. He discusses its background, the passages in which it occurs, its contents, and its role in the historical situation and the theology of Revelation. His careful analyses enable a better understanding and use of the Book.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Bei vorliegendem Buch handelt es sich um eine ausgezeichnete Dissertation eines evangelikalen Wissenschaftlers aus Zentraleuropa. Dr. Gallusz tritt überzeugend dafür

ein, dass der Thron (Gottes) ein Kernmotiv im Buch der Offenbarung darstellt, was von grundlegender Bedeutung für das Verständnis der Botschaft dieses biblischen Buches ist. Er erörtert den Hintergrund und die Passagen, in denen das Motiv auftritt, sowie dessen Inhalt und Rolle in der geschichtlichen Situation und Theologie der Offenbarung. Seine sorgfältigen Analysen ermöglichen ein besseres Verständnis und eine vermehrte Nutzenanwendung dieses biblischen Buches.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette thèse de doctorat d'un évangélique d'Europe centrale est excellente. L'auteur montre de manière convaincante que le motif du trône (de Dieu) est un élément thématique essentiel du livre de l'Apocalypse qu'il est nécessaire de prendre en compte pour comprendre ce livre. Il traite de l'arrière-plan de ce motif, examine les passages dans lesquels il apparaît, étudie son contenu et son rôle dans la situation historique et la théologie du livre. Cette analyse rigoureuse permet une meilleure compréhension de l'Apocalypse.

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It is a particular pleasure to review in the *European Journal of Theology* the dissertation of a scholar from Serbia, Dr Laszlo Gallusz, which was written under the auspices of a scholar from Hungary, Prof Peter Balla, at the Karoli Gaspar University of Budapest. The pleasure is genuine because it is an excellent book, although it is partly spoiled by the book's price, which will keep it beyond the reach of most individuals, especially in the less affluent parts of Europe and the Majority World. Dr Gallusz is a Seventh Day Adventist who teaches at Belgrade Theological Seminary, Serbia. His English is good; the few unhelpful expressions never diminish the book's value and clarity of expression. Gallusz has consulted almost all the available literature, including numerous unpublished American dissertations as well as works in French and German. The index of authors and the bibliography show the dominance of Western Europe and the USA in (the publication of) theological research: I found only two titles in Hungarian and none in other languages from 'the rest of Europe'.

Gallusz looks deeply into the motif of the throne in Revelation. The published book still has the typical structure of a thorough dissertation. The Introduction argues that the preceding studies of this motif were inadequate and states that it is central both to the literary structure and the theology of the Apocalypse (10). Gallusz then offers a brief study of what a motif is and how it should be studied, plus an overview over the book's structure (17).

Part I is dedicated to the background to the throne motif and discusses the Old Testament (the ark, the temple, Jerusalem and 'heaven'), later Jewish literature and Graeco-Roman sources. Part II contains textual analyses of Revelation 4, 5, 7:9-17 and 22:1-5. Those who sit on thrones in Revelation include God, the Lamb, God's allies and his adversaries. In parts I and

II details receive ample attention, including references to the relevant literature. Gallusz is not afraid to allow that certain elements of Revelation remain unclear or disputed; one straightforward example is the sea of glass in front of the throne (Rev 4:6; 107).

Part III is the 'substantial analysis' of the structure of the motif and includes a brief discussion of the structure of the Book of Revelation as a whole (226-229); the author concludes to a basically sevenfold structure, in which chapters 12-14 (called 'the cosmic conflict vision') are central. (Later on he adds that all seven parts end with the throne motif, 267.) Next Gallusz argues that the Ark of the Covenant (11:19), the cloud in 14:14 and the Zion scene in 14:1-5 are equivalent concepts which have the same role as the throne of God. The fact that God is always depicted as seated (not standing, for example) evokes his sovereignty. Gallusz states: 'Theologically, the throne-room vision [ch.4-5] establishes the rightful cosmic rulers, picturing them as taking their place on their thrones' and says that all other throne references build upon this perspective of reality (263). The short section 14:1-5 is declared the centre of the book (269).

Part IV begins with an analysis of Revelation's rhetorical situation in the province of Asia with its pervasive emperor cult. Without arguing his case, Gallusz takes Revelation as basically referring to John's own time and to the Roman Empire in general, and as written under Domitian. He states that Revelation's 'countercosmos, with God's throne at the centre' has ethical force because it commands allegiance (294). The final chapter assesses the contribution of the motif to the theology of Revelation, arguing that the book's doctrine of God is far more important than its eschatology. Here Gallusz discusses other ways in which God's kingship is signified, and the role of the throne motif in the book's theology of judgment. The conclusions in parts III and IV are reached quicker, without all the previous circumspection, and some are less close to the throne motif. After a brief but helpful Conclusion, pages 336 to 396 are taken by excellent indexes and the bibliography; the latter is divided into many sections, which makes it hard to handle.

Throughout, the author uses evangelical literature in a positive way. Greek words are not translated or transliterated. Slightly arduous is the author's habit to call many passages 'central', 'strategic', etc. In parts I and II the conclusions are never surprising – although well-founded – but parts III and IV are more groundbreaking. All in all, Gallusz clearly shows how the throne motif is the 'central principle' or 'master motif' (268) of Revelation. One does not have to agree with every conclusion to recognise that this book is a major contribution to the understanding of Revelation as fully Christian Scripture. Let it be preached in the churches!

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