

# Book Reviews

**THE TRIUMPH OF IRONY IN THE BOOK OF JUDGES** Lillian R. Klein  
Sheffield Academic Press (The Acorn Press), Sheffield 1988 264pp. £25 hb.  
ISBN 1 850751005

What an eye-opener this book is into the inner artistic realities of the book of Judges and what a treat and refreshment after years of turgid commentaries! Dr. Klein's 'major claim' is that the book of Judges is a unity and this claim is borne out by her close examination of the book as it stands and her exposure of the lines of connexion that bind it together.

Artistically, she sees the book in three parts. It opens with an 'exposition' (1:1-3:11). 'Exposition' is used much as we might say 'scene-setting'. The situation is sketched in by means of quickly told summaries of events, where the author's concern is not with how much time passed as these events happened but what the events reveal about Israel. The first 'exposition' (1:1-36) is anthropocentric: how Israel, as typified in various individual tribes, began to distance itself from its true covenant relationship by acting from the human standpoint; the second exposition (2:1-3:11) is theocentric: how Yahweh viewed this process. The two expositions run in parallel. Chapter 2:6 is described as a 'flash back' to 1:1. The 'narratives' - the heartland of Judges - follow (3:12-16:31) and these are followed by a three-section 'resolution' in which, by means of carefully selected and narrated events, the main issues brought to the fore by the 'narratives' are drawn out into their inevitable consequences.

Dr. Klein adorns everything she touches and has a sharp eye for detail and especially for inter-connexions - for example, how the sequence of the 'resolutions' recapitulates in reverse order the sequence of the exposition: the ultimate outcome of Danite compromise (1:34-36; chs. 17-18); the shocking contrast between Othniel and Achsah on the one hand and the Levite and his concubine on the other (1:12ff.; chs. 18ff.); and the abysmal fall from grace in a book which opens with wars of conquest and possession under the direction of Yahweh (1:1ff.) and ends with the near destruction of an Israelite tribe at the hands of the other tribes (ch.21). Time would fail to give examples of the detailed and perceptive connexions which Dr. Klein works out both within the main narratives, between the narratives, and between the actual wording of Judges and for example many accounts in Genesis.

Sometimes enthusiasm seems to drive Dr. Klein too far too fast. Her insistence that Achsah provides a 'type' for Israel as Yahweh's bride is not greatly persuasive, for example, nor is the meaning found in the verbal similarity between Deborah and Delilah as names. But what is this among such treasure? It is a more important disappointment that she did not turn her great talent to a satisfying discussion of 'There was no king in Israel'. Readers will find it helpful to read Appendix I before reading the main text: why is it an appendix and not chapter 1? This is a great, great book, meriting a multitude of readers.

**THE NEW INTERNATIONAL COMMENTARY ON THE OLD  
TESTAMENT: THE BOOK OF JOB John E. Hartley**

Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1988 591pp. £19.50 ISBN 0 8028 2363 7

In this welcome addition to the well-known N.I.C.O.T. series, John Hartley – Professor of Old Testament at Azusa Pacific University – has written a first-rate commentary on a difficult book. As with the other volumes in the series, the commentary incorporates the author's own translation of the Hebrew text, and a wealth of explanatory footnotes for the benefit of the student and the scholar. This feature is especially valuable since the Book of Job presents (in addition to its own share of textual problems) a very large number of linguistic problems, due to the fact that it is written in rather unusual and distinctive Hebrew.

Throughout, Hartley shows a thorough acquaintance with current biblical scholarship, which he handles with care, discernment and skill. His discussions are fair and open-minded, and he shows a refreshing lack of dogmatism. He goes on to offer his own conclusions, giving persuasive reasons for them, and presenting them in a very lucid and readable fashion. At the same time, he is perfectly willing to leave some questions open. For instance, he is cautious as regards date and linguistic background; and notably, he does not wish to insist on the historicity of Job, even though he supplies good reasons for thinking it may well be historical.

The chief problem about Job is to establish its message – given not only its size and complexity, but also the debates about its unity. For instance, the present structure of the book suggests that the climax must be the divine speeches towards the end of it; but there are scholars who doubt the originality of most of the material in the two speeches. It is obvious that any such radical reduction of the size and shape of Job is bound to have considerable effects on one's interpretation of its message. There is also a hermeneutical issue: how are we meant to read and apply the lengthy passages which appear on the lips of Job's friends – those who according to 42:7 did not speak 'what is right'? If we take as our criterion of a good commentary on Job its ability to satisfy the reader on these issues, then it must be said that Hartley has passed the test with flying colours. In his Preface he states that he has 'concentrated on the book's message', and endeavoured 'to interpret each pericope as it relates to that message. He has achieved this desirable end not only in his running commentary and by his section entitled 'Message' in the Introduction, but also by the separate sections entitled 'Aim' which appear throughout the commentary. These latter are particularly helpful.

As regards the unity of the book, Hartley is ready to argue for a single author, but at the same time accepts both that the author began by reworking an older epic story and also that he did not write the book as we know it all at once, but worked and reworked it over a period of years. By this means he can meet the substantial arguments which have been made against the originality of chapter 28 or the Elihu chapters without relinquishing his conviction that such disputed passages make a real and demonstrable contribution to the message of the whole book. This approach will certainly please all aficionados of Canonical Criticism, but indeed it should commend itself to a wider public than they – it is well and convincingly argued. It is

surely vital to any adequate understanding of Job to appreciate its dramatic qualities, to which Hartley gives due emphasis.

Many a reader will turn quickly to Job 19:23–27 to see how Hartley interprets this famous problem passage. Of course, no commentator can hope to satisfy all opinions here, but Hartley's treatment is a model. He argues carefully and thoroughly, showing proper concern for the function of the passage within its literary context. On such grounds he establishes that the 'redeemer' must be God himself, and that the vindication Job sought in faith was anticipated before the grave. But he is very properly cautious about the meaning of verse 26, with all its difficulties.

This commentary, then, looks like being a standard work for some time to come, and it deserves to be. Any weaknesses? It needs to be said that Hartley is not quite so sure-footed in the realm of Hebrew semantics as elsewhere. (Is it coincidence that James Barr's name does not appear in the Index, and only his brief article on Job is mentioned?). Fortunately the issue rarely arises, but for instance the discussion on page 92 of the meaning of various Hebrew words for 'man' is old-fashioned and indeed fallacious (betraying the so-called root fallacy). However, the message of the book of Job rarely depends on detailed expositions of well-known theological words; whereas to achieve the task of translating all the rare vocabulary in Job, all too often the scholar can do little except explore the Hebrew root, whether it is a good guide or not. So it is not often that one can fault the linguistic discussion.

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DAVID PAYNE

**HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, MALACHI R.J. Coggins**

J.S.O.T. Old Testament Guides, Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield 1987

88pp. £3.50

ISBN 1 85075 025 4

This brief paperback is important out of all proportion to its size and well worth the difficulty of actually trying to read it – not that Dr. Coggins is ever anything but lucid and attractive in his writing, but the binding is such that, when one starts to read, the book will not stay open and by the time one has finished it will not stay closed. No prizes at all for the format! But the content is brilliant. One would not think so much could be packed into a mere 88pp. It is intended as praise indeed that the first thing one wants to do after reading this book is to come afresh to the three prophets concerned.

Coggins plays fair with his task of providing 'introduction' and concerns himself manfully with dates, form, opinions and the whole range of material customary under that heading. But ever and anon there bubbles up what seems to be a continuing fascination with the canonical critical approach. If ever a longer version of this book were contemplated these fruitful hints and seminal thoughts are surely the points for development. We would have benefited from a great deal more, for example, (ch.9) about the canonical shape of the Book of the Twelve itself. Rightly he urges us to take the concept of the editing of the books of the prophets seriously but he is too confident that the editors used the remains of the prophets in order to publicize their own message. This cannot be proved and it is surely a safer as

well as a sounder assumption that, if the prophets were not their own editors, the work was done 'along the grain' of what the prophet in question had left of his work?

Unimpressed by Hanson's critique of Haggai, Coggins does not take time to develop a more positive view of Haggai's message than that he was a Temple builder. The thought of re-ordering the community around their God in preparation for the 'great shaking' is barely sketched in. He accepts the consensus that Zec. 9-14 is separate from Zec. 1-8 (while taking appreciative note of both Baldwin's rejection and Gese's modification of this view). The treatment of Malachi is possibly the least satisfactory of the three and most of us would have been more helped by a detailed following up of the comment that Malachi has the unique structure of the 'question and answer' method.

But 'tis a naughty world, my masters', and one has to be thankful for small mercies. In this case the book is small, the benefits are great.

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ALEC MOTYER

**LUKE: A NEW PARADIGM Michael D. Goulder**

J.S.O.T., Sheffield, Academic Press, Sheffield, 1989 2 vols. 824 pp. £40 hb.  
ISBN 1 85075 101 3

We have here a further example of the present ferment in synoptic problem studies. This two-volume work of 824 pages, packed with lucid argument and great learning, offers a root-and-branch challenge to the 'standard' position. It is both a going back to challenge the complex of hypotheses which constitutes the old 'paradigm' and a going-forward into a new and even more sceptical paradigm. The 'standard' position holds that all the major strata of the gospels go back to the events and words of Jesus' lifetime, and that these traditions were both eroded and amplified by the communities which collected them. Mark (c.70AD) was the first collection to survive. There was a second collection, Q, now lost. Matthew (c.80AD) combined Mark, Q and a third body of tradition, M Luke (c.90AD) did not know Matthew, but combined Mark, Q and a fourth source, L.

Goulder's new paradigm accepts the priority of Mark at about 70AD, but regards all the other hypotheses as false. Some parts of Mark go back to Jesus, but Goulder considers it doubtful whether there are reliable traditions in any of the other gospel strata. Q is the grandfather of all synoptic errors. Matthew is an elaboration of Mark without the aid of other sources. Luke is an elaboration of Mark and Matthew which are used in successive blocks 'in order', the new material being Luke's own creation, though based sometimes on material from Old Testament, 1 Corinthians and 1 Thessalonians. The writing of Luke was triggered off by a pastoral need to reconcile the disharmonies between Matthew and Mark. By eliminating Q, M and L it is claimed that a simpler paradigm results. The argument is set out in the first 194 pages and the detail of how Goulder supposes Luke to have worked is given in the remaining 600.

There is much in this thesis which is of value. The demolition of Q is impressive, as is the demonstration of the failure of redaction critics to show

any difference of style between the redactors and their supposed sources. The ten-page Lukan Vocabulary is excellent and the chapter on Luke's Special Material is valuable. But to me far the most interesting section is the opening discussion on the nature of paradigms and on the enormous difficulty of effecting a change of paradigm, particularly when it represents the cast of mind and lifelong stance of generations of scholars. I believe as strongly as Goulder that such a change is needed, but I do not see it coming his way, which is based on a highly sceptical approach to the gospels. The present 'standard' consensus has already abandoned the patristic testimony and repudiated great tracts of gospel history. It is committed to a solution of the synoptic problem which relies almost entirely on literary connexions to explain the likenesses and differences between the gospels, giving no importance to the possibility that an evangelist may be drawing on reliable memories for his special material. Redaction criticism favours immense 'creativity', so that one passage which *prima facie* shows no signs of being literarily related to another is said to be a redaction of it. The gospels are dated to times when only a tiny handful of geriatrics remained who had witnessed the ministry of Jesus. Goulder builds on this and greatly extends the creativity of the evangelists, Luke in particular. Though Luke never creates without some basis in Matthew, Mark, the Old Testament, 1 Corinthians or 1 Thessalonians, virtually all the special-Lukan material is his invention.

Though argued with boundless skill and ingenuity, this scheme does not agree with the intentions of accuracy expressed in Luke's prologue and it is certainly not a simple paradigm. It does not reconcile the supposed disharmonies between Matthew and Mark. For the greatness of Jesus it substitutes the genius of evangelists, who created their masterpieces on the slenderest historical foundations. How much simpler to accept the gospels as honest records by men faithfully recording what they had either witnessed themselves or had heard from reliable witnesses. I do not see the standard paradigm being overthrown by those who work with the presuppositions of the Enlightenment, but I think it possible and highly desirable that those with Christian presuppositions should come to a new consensus. Goulder provides much ammunition for those who wish to see such a revolution.

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## **JOHN**

**Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 36 G.R. Beasley-Murray**

Word Books Waco, Texas 1987 441pp. No price ISBN 0 8499 0235 5

## **1 PETER**

**Word Biblical Commentary Volume 49 J. Ramsey Michaels**

Word Books Waco, Texas 1988 338pp. No price ISBN 0 8499 0248 7

The publication of volumes in the 'Word Biblical Commentary' series is continuing apace (although they seem to be unavailable in this country for a long time after publication in the United States). These two are worthy additions to an already prestigious series.

They both have the same format as earlier volumes. An Introduction, covering matters of special importance relating to background, composition, purpose, structure and theology, precedes a paragraph by paragraph commentary. Each section of this contains (1) a full Bibliography (multi-language), (2) a translation by the author, (3) 'Notes' dealing particularly with matters of textual criticism, (4) a division entitled 'Form/Structure/Setting' which looks at the paragraph in general terms and relates it to the surrounding sections, (5) 'Comment' on the paragraph verse by verse (or phrase by phrase), and finally (6) 'Explanation', which acts as a summary of the message and a final reflection on it. Both volumes also contain full indices and main Bibliographies.

The level of the writing makes scholarly demands. Greek is used throughout. Readers with no Greek at all could cope with Beasley-Murray without difficulty, but Michaels would be hard going. There is constant interaction with the world of scholarship, also, which for some of the other volumes in the series has meant that the commentary does not meet the needs of 'ordinary' readers. This is not true for these two volumes, however. Both of them would be very useful indeed for the studious pastor in his or her sermon-preparation, and both of them are written with a refreshing lightness of touch, particularly Beasley-Murray.

Both are written too from a solidly evangelical viewpoint, in the sense that they are enthusiastic Bible students willing to give great pains to elucidating the text exactly. But both are open to all that scholarship has to offer, and show not the slightest tendency to argue for old evangelical certainties just for their own sake. For instance, Michaels cautiously accepts the Petrine authorship of 1 Peter, but for wholly historical, not dogmatic, reasons. Interestingly, he also suggests that the letter should be dated c. 80 AD, thus questioning the traditional view that Peter died in the persecution under Nero (65 AD).

Beasley-Murray's position on the authorship of John has a similar openness about it. He does not believe that the 'Beloved Disciple' was the author – he does not think that this is what John 21:24 teaches. The author does not identify himself, he believes, but claims the authority of the Beloved Disciple for his writing.

Similarly, evangelicals of a more traditional stamp may be disappointed by Beasley-Murray's treatment of the historicity of John. In fact he never discusses this directly: he comes at it through his discussion of John's treatment of 'tradition', and here he affirms wholeheartedly the view which is currently the dominant one in Johannine scholarship – namely, that John wanted to show 'the unity of Christ's action in the flesh and in the Spirit' (p.xlix). That is, John makes no distinction between the historical ministry of Jesus and his continuing ministry in the Church through the Paraclete, but rather merges them in a presentation of Jesus which deals with the concerns of the church towards the end of the first century. This view, if correct (and personally I feel it has some merit), raises sharply the issue of the historical reliability of John's account of Jesus, but Beasley-Murray never touches on the implications of his view in this area. Historicity is simply set on one side: for instance, in his introduction to chapter 4, he refers the reader to the discussions of historicity by Schnackenburg, Brown, Cullmann and Haenchen, and says nothing himself (p.59).

This negative feature has a corresponding positive. The commentary is beautifully *theological*. It represents the mature reflections of a senior scholar and pastor who has spent a life-time in ministry and study (a bit like John himself), and abounds in helpful insight. Because of this overall theological interest, it is eminently preachable, and thus a good investment for the hard-pressed minister seeking a usable, reliable guide. He does not get bogged down in detail except where it is vital, but keeps the commentary moving along briskly.

Michaels, on the other hand, gives a much fuller and more detailed exegesis of 1 Peter. In this respect, and because of its greater use of Greek, he is harder to use than Beasley-Murray. But I venture to suggest that, in the long run, this volume will turn out to be the more significant and enduring of the two. For fullness, clarity and sensitivity it is certainly a rival of the now classic commentary of E. G. Selwyn, and at several points I felt that Michaels wins the argument with Selwyn. His discussion of the difficult passage in 1 Peter 3:18–22 (pp.194–222), for instance, is a master-piece of patient, careful exegesis, resting upon a very wide knowledge of both ancient and modern literature. He shows how dogmatic considerations have so often skewed exegesis (including that of Selwyn), and resists these pressures himself to give an exegesis in which I am sure Peter speaks with his own voice. He has a particular concern throughout to relate Peter to the rest of the New Testament, identifying both differences and similarities. I did not find him so impressive in his discussion of the historical background of the letter, but I do not want to quibble. He really has put us all in his debt with a commentary which I feel will become a classic itself.

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### **THE BOOK OF ACTS IN THE SETTING OF HELLENISTIC HISTORY** Colin J. Hemer

J.C.B. Mohr, Tübingen 1989 xiv + 482pp. £44 approx. ISBN 3 16 145451 0

This posthumous work is a tremendous book. In the period 1895–1915 there was a high-level debate over the historicity of Acts prompted by the archaeological researches of W.M. Ramsay. This was interrupted by the First World War and was never properly resumed, because after the war scholars (particularly in Germany) had quite different interests, such as form criticism. Although F.F. Bruce took a conservative line in his commentaries, there has been no formal development of Ramsay's views in spite of the immense growth in knowledge of the Graeco-Roman world of the first century in the past seventy years. Hemer has now done this with learning and lucidity.

He shows that the best ancient historians had rigorous standards of accuracy and that it is wrong to write off Luke as a historian without examining the detailed links between Acts and its historical background. He devotes chapters 4 and 5 to a massive study of these links. In chapter 6 he deals with the theoretical notion that because the Pauline epistles are primary sources and Acts (in spite of Luke's participation in its happenings?) is secondary, therefore the latter is of little value as history. He shows that in

fact the epistles and Acts throw much light upon one another and even make possible a credible chronology. This involves for Galatians a South Galatian destination, a date before the apostolic council of Acts 15 and an identification of the Jerusalem visit of Gal.1 with that of Acts 9. He dates Acts firmly at about 62AD, the year at which the narrative ends.

The least satisfactory section is his treatment of Paul's release from his Roman imprisonment and his subsequent doings as indicated by the pastoral epistles. Though it is a valiant and worthwhile attempt, it seems to make unnecessarily heavy weather through arguing that Acts was written just after his release, rather than just before; and it is by no means clear that he is right about the pastorals. But it is a great work, and published in Germany. It is to be hoped that its plea for the historicity of Acts will be heeded in the land of its publication and throughout the scholarly world.

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**THE TRUE IMAGE: THE ORIGIN AND DESTINY OF MAN IN CHRIST Philip E. Hughes**

Inter Varsity Press, Leicester 1989 430pp. £9.95 ISBN 0 85110 680 3

Dr. Hughes's latest book is one which will find a welcome place on many bookshelves. It is an extended discussion of the nature of man, and of the Person and Work of Christ. The author sees these as of a piece; because man was created in the image of God, he was also created in the image of Christ, the perfect man. When Adam sinned, God's original purpose for man was thwarted, and only Christ, the Son of God incarnate, could put right what had gone wrong in the Garden of Eden.

The book is divided into three parts. The first deals with Creation, and the nature of the image of God in Adam. The second is an excursus on the origin of evil, original sin and God's saving purposes in election and predestination. This prepares the ground for the third part, which is a study of the Person and Work of Christ. Dr. Hughes gives us an extremely able summary of the great debates which led up to the Council of Chalcedon, and of the various theories of Atonement which were propounded in the Middle Ages and which continue to be debated today. The concluding chapters deal with a number of subsidiary subjects like the Second Coming, the immortality of the soul and so on.

Readers will immediately appreciate Dr. Hughes's wide learning, and the book is worth its weight in gold for this alone. He has not confined himself to the standard commentaries, but has gone in search of his own sources. This has enabled him to push Anselm's theory of the Atonement beyond *Cur Deus Homo* (whose limitations Dr. Hughes is quick to recognize) and take us into his little known sermons, where the pastoral touch leads to a much firmer, and dare one say, more 'protestant' line than one would normally have expected. In the same manner, he is quick to defend Irenaeus against his mediaeval supporters, who took certain aspects of his teaching and distorted them in the interests of a theology that Irenaeus would not have recognized.

Occasionally one notices that there are gaps, caused mainly by failure to



take into account the latest research. Thus, for example, what Dr. Hughes says about Arius needs to be supplemented by the recent work of Dr. Rowan Williams, and his attempts to defend Nestorius against the charge of heresy curiously neglect the findings of A. Grillmeier, though the latter's book is frequently referred to in the chapter concerned. The same can probably be said about the chapters on the Atonement; great attention is paid to the view of Hastings Rashdall and the debates of the early years of this century and nothing is said about the very recent upsurge of Atonement writing (C. Gunton, R. Swinburne, etc.). Probably this is inevitable in a book of this kind, but the reader must occasionally be on the lookout for an approach which in places has dated.

The most serious reservations however, concern the author's treatment of double predestination, and his concept of the image of God in man, around which the entire book is based. On the former, he takes issue with Calvin, who, he believes, went too far in trying to tie up the plan of God in terms of human logic. This may well be true, but it is important to say that Calvin's main concern was to maintain that God is sovereign even over unbelief. Man may rebel against Him, but ultimately he cannot thwart the purposes of God. Does this mean that in the end all men will be saved, because that is God's purpose? Dr. Hughes clearly rejects this idea, but it must be wondered whether he has done full justice to the concept of divine sovereignty over the reprobate.

On the question of the image of God in man, Dr. Hughes insists that this is a Christological concept from the very beginning. As the title of the book suggests, Christ is the true image of God, in whose likeness Adam was originally made. In saying this, he follows a theological position which has been common since ancient times, but which unfortunately is not based on very solid exegesis of the New Testament. There, Christ as the image of God appears in *contrast* to man, an aspect of the question to which Dr. Hughes has not done full justice. There are occasions too, when he speaks of human nature in the Scholastic, rather than in the Biblical sense, with the result that there is a confusion between them. This is most apparent when he is discussing the question of the image of God in fallen man, which cannot be obliterated because it is part of human nature (Biblical concept) but which has nevertheless suffered a radical corruption (Scholastic concept, adopted by the Reformers). Sin and redemption are undoubtedly a central theme of the Scriptures, and this Dr. Hughes brings out admirably. But it is not so clear that they are tied to the concept of the image of God in man in the way that is suggested here. More work is needed in this area, if the Biblical doctrine of sin is to be expounded clearly and without contradiction.

Nevertheless, it can be said that this is a book which will delight all serious students of theology with its depth of penetration in some crucial areas of thought, and its breadth of knowledge and sympathy. It should be read and studied by all who are interested in the great theme of our salvation in Christ.

**GOSPEL AND WISDOM** Graeme Goldsworthy

Paternoster Press, Exeter 1988 202pp. £4.95

ISBN 0 85364 459 4

The writer of this book, an Australian now in a pastoral ministry in Queensland, has brought the fruits of his study in America in a helpful form for lay understanding. His purpose is to apply the method of biblical theology in order to place the wisdom literature in its Christian context. So as to help its intended readers, each chapter begins with a summary and ends with a number of questions. The author's first concern is 'to look at the whole question of how a Christian may read and apply to himself as Christian Scripture the books of Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes and other parts of the Old Testament which we classify as wisdom literature'. He insists we have minds to use though the only way we can understand the wisdom of God is through the fear of the Lord, in other words it is only through a mind converted by the power of the Holy Spirit. True reality can only be grasped by a Christian mind.

He traces the development of wisdom from Solomon onwards, as he only sees the maturity of the Israelites from that period contributing to the wisdom which culminates in Christ. Solomon's wisdom is grounded in a close relationship to the temple. Proverbs goes on to remind the reader that wisdom is both a gift of God and a responsible task, calling for a response. The question raised in Job is the source of wisdom. Some order may be found in the universe, but a mediator is still needed to be heard. The book is a warning against any rigid interpretation of reality which clashes with experience. True wisdom must always be seen in the light of trust in God. Although accepted intelligently, it cannot be found intellectually. Ecclesiastes continues to show that the search for order does not mean that everything is open to men's view. Men cannot predict what God's actions are going to be, and the writer warns against any slick solutions to life's mysteries. In these books and other parts of the Old Testament wisdom is paralleled with salvation history as two perspectives of the one reality. God's Word is the final arbiter in an understanding of the complexities of human experience. God has given a revelation which is the essential complement to human knowledge. Thus Christ, as the Wisdom of God, reveals to men the purposes and will of God. All human knowledge, other than atheistic, has a basis in the existence of God. The fulness of wisdom can, however, only be found in Christ.

This theme of wisdom is one of the links of the two testaments, emphasizing their complementarity. Men's intellectual powers cannot lead to the knowledge of a personal God, yet they must be used in the understanding of God's revelation. This study is to be recommended for its perceptive suggestions and would certainly reward the reader.

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JOHN BOURNON

Twelve intriguing pictures from the New Testament show us what a Christian is and what a Christian ought to be, including such pictures as 'A Sheep in God's Flock', 'A Runner in the Race', and 'Seeds and Loaves of Bread'.

Picture One is 'A Child in God's Family'. We examine how we enter the Family (John 3: 1-16) and the 'birthmarks' of God's children. Enjoying the Family including its food, fellowship and future. Enlarging the Family by witnessing, following up new believers and helping them to grow in the Lord. This picture lays the foundation for the following ones. How can we be 'A Member in Christ's body', 'A Dedicated Debtor', or indeed, 'An Ambassador of the King' without first being born into God's Family?

Although the pictures are taken from the New Testament the rest of Scripture is not neglected. Nowhere is this better shown than in Picture Five, 'A Priest at God's Altar'. We look at 1. The Process: Becoming a Priest from Exodus 29, and the Old Testament ceremony of the induction of Aaron and his sons into the priesthood, how they were chosen and called by God, they were washed, clothed, anointed and satisfied; 2. The Privileges: Ministering as a Priest - caring for God's dwelling-place, including 'Keeping the fire burning, entering the veil and offering spiritual sacrifices; 3. The Perils: Defiling the Priesthood (Malachi 1: 6-2:9). We examine how all this applies to us as 'a holy priesthood . . . a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation' (1 Peter 2: 5, 9).

My personal favourite picture was number six: 'A Stone in God's Building' (1 Peter 2: 4-8). We looked at Jesus Christ the Stone, Jesus Christ the Building, and Believers as Builders - as living stones. This came to life for me, having read recently *Living Stones* by Helen Roseveare (Hodder & Stoughton, London).

The last picture, number twelve, is 'The New Creation'. In these days of the New Age Message it was good to be reminded that 'God's "New Age" burst on the scene when Jesus Christ came into the world and completed the work of redemption. He died for the sins of the world, He arose from the dead and He returned to heaven and sent the Holy Spirit to his people. All who trust Jesus Christ are "in Him" and are part of God's "new age"'. Paul wrote: 'Therefore if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new' (2 Cor. 5:17; New King James' Version).

We examine the Old Creation (Genesis 1). God's new creation (2 Cor. 5) and God's future creation (Rev. 21-22). The book finishes on this glorious note and with the words that God's people are 'the community of the new creation'. I found these pictures of the Christian life very helpful for my own walk with the Lord and enjoyed studying God's word in this way.

**THE GIFT OF PROPHECY, IN THE NEW TESTAMENT AND TODAY** Wayne Grudem

Kingsway Publications, Eastbourne, 1988 351pp. £7.95 ISBN 0 86065 508 3

This is a reference and study book, not a quick handbook for dealing with strange phenomena in worship! And all the more welcome for that. Wayne Grudem is a very capable, pastorally committed guide through a minefield of a subject. His book is a distillation and more popular version of his research in 1 Corinthians, expanded to deal with most of the New Testament issues. There is also a conscious attempt to relate to the 'down-to-parish' issues applicable to our situations here or overseas.

Prophecy, in Grudem's view, appears in two aspects in the New Testament. The first is the unique prerogative of the 'apostle-prophets' (Ephesians 2:20; 3:5). Like the O.T. prophets they are empowered to speak 'Thus says the Lord. . . .' There is an authoritative ministry, now to be found in the written scriptures and to become the sole and sufficient basis of faith and doctrine. The formula then is: Old Testament prophet equals New Testament apostle. There is an extended section of exegetical work and several good appendices on scripture, apostles and canon to substantiate the argument here.

The second aspect of prophecy (Grudem does not wish to speak of two 'types' though it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this is what he is ending at!) is 'congregational prophecy'. This is defined as 'speaking merely human words to report something God brings to mind' (p.67). Here the person can say, at most, 'I think God is saying. . . .' It is not 'speech that assumed the right to enforce obedience or belief' (p.86). It is 'an unreliable speech-act' like that of Agabus in Acts 21:10f.: right in the main but inaccurate in details. Congregational prophecy of this sort is what continues into the post-New Testament era and should be encouraged in the churches today.

In this respect attention is given in helpful chapters on the encouragement and regulation of prophecy in the local church as well as the rôle of women in prophecy. Grudem understands the injunctions to keep silent as referring to the evaluation of prophecies given in the fellowship. The leaders should do this, and leadership is male.

It is commonly said that teaching or preaching are the modern forms of New Testament prophecy, and, by others, that the early church was governed by charismatic personalities who later were 'squashed' out of existence for up to eighteen centuries. These contrasting opinions are examined briefly and satisfactorily on the basis of the 'congregational prophecy' idea. It surely is true that throughout the centuries believers have been impelled by the Spirit to speak out or pray aloud in certain ways: 'I felt the Lord would have us pray for. . . .'; 'It seems God may be saying to us. . . .' In sober conservative evangelical circles, in the Brethren worship sessions and elsewhere too it may be that prophesying has never died. It was just called something else.

The whole edifice of Grudem's argument rests, however, on the limited equivalence that he makes between the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament apostles. This really needs more than the very slight and generalizing chapter on the Old Testament which starts the book. Could it be

## Churchman

that there were several 'aspects' of genuine prophecy in the Old Testament period too?

There certainly would have to be more factors than the 'truth test' to establish a true prophet when his words were frequently contingent on people's responses, or destined for fulfilment two hundred years ahead.

Over-extended church leaders need this book and will be helped to negotiate the occasionally over-long and convoluted exegetical passages by the author's clear construction and paragraphing of conclusions and applications. Kingsway have performed for us a useful service with this publication.

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AILISH EVES

### **JESUS AND POWER David Prior**

Hodder and Stoughton, London 1987 192pp. £6.95

ISBN 0 340 39084 0

This is a hard book to review and it must have been an even harder book to write. The difficulty lies in the title and the way the subject matter is circumscribed by it. At many points Jesus' life and teaching touches on the subject of power, but it can hardly be said that the main priority of his mission is orientated around this theme.

David Prior has therefore made a good job of pulling together some of the threads of Jesus' ministry which impinge on the subject of power. He never falls into the trap of making facile generalizations from particular gospel incidents and always examines the text very carefully. Indeed the chief value of this book is found in some of the helpful comments he makes on the biblical passages he deals with. The chapters are arranged thematically centring on subjects such as religious, political and financial power, as well as the way Jesus relates to the downtrodden and to his friends.

However the book leaves a sense of dissatisfaction with the reader. For the subject of *Jesus and Power* to be properly treated two further areas need to be examined. One is the rest of the biblical teaching about the rôle of human authorities and governments. If this is ignored then the impression can be given that the Bible and Jesus himself has very little to say to those in such positions of responsibility. The other matter which needs discussion is how far Jesus is an example for us where power is concerned. At the very least it must be acknowledged that the power associated with Jesus Christ's divinity is hardly something to which we can aspire.

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MARK BURKILL

### **GOD THE EVANGELIST: HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS TO BRING MEN AND WOMEN TO FAITH David F. Wells**

Eerdmans, Grand Rapids: Paternoster, Exeter 1987 128pp. No price

ISBN 0 8028 0271 0

This volume is the product of a theological consultation held in Norway in 1985. However anyone who might be inclined to think that this book suffers from having been written by a committee would be wrong. David Wells was

commissioned to write a digest of the substance of what was discussed during the consultation, and he has produced an excellent work.

The book is a reminder of how God the Holy Spirit must be recognized as the fundamental author of all true evangelism. Evangelism can all too easily become institutionalized and organized in a way which assumes the operation of the Holy Spirit. This book shows where the true work of the Holy Spirit is to be found in evangelism. It consists of succinct chapters on the Trinity, Christianity and other religions, the Holy Spirit's application of the benefits of Christ's death, and the Holy Spirit's activity in the life of the church. The fifth chapter contains a very good discussion on the vexed question of the rôle of miracles, and the final chapter reminds us that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth and holiness. Where he finds truth and holiness amongst us, there the ministry and witness of Christians will be powerful today.

This is a very worthwhile theological study which can be thoroughly recommended. We can never afford to lose sight of the truths which it contains. Would that all theological consultations produced such admirable results!

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MARK BURKILL

## **LINGUISTICS AND BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION**

**Peter Cotterell and Max Turner.**

S.P.C.K., London 1989 348pp. £9.95pb.

ISBN 0 281 04358 2

'Hand Crafted' say the makers when they want to imply that special skill has gone into their product. No other description will do for this marvellously precise book. Quite apart from its intrinsic value in relation to its chosen topic it is a delight to anyone with a love and feeling for words. The verbal illustrations are so apt, the definitions so carefully drawn – and the intermittent appearances of 'Uncle George' (who cannot be wholly mythical but must be in part a portrait from family life, whether Cotterell or Turner) – all come together in a piece of reading as compulsive as it is important. Let the authors, if they must, disavow any intention of writing an introduction to Linguistics; no one could foreseeably provide a better or sharper introduction to the bearing of linguistics on Holy Scripture.

The scene is set in two opening chapters (Language, Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation, and Semantics & Hermeneutics). The third chapter (Dimensions of the Meaning of a Discourse) launches into the task proper. If you have ever had the desperate experience of writing to your mother-in-law in a jocular spirit only to find that your letter arrived on one of her sour days and that she read it as sober prose and a personal insult to boot, you will know all too well how important it is for reader and writer to share the same 'presupposition pools'. Personally I thought the authors took their case too far when they claim that without a knowledge of the respective plumbing arrangements at Laodicea and Hierapolis (presupposition pools indeed!) we cannot understand the 'hot, cold, luke-warm' allusions in Rev.3. But was there ever an enthusiastic author who did not overpress his case?

Chapters 4 & 5 constitute the essential heart of the book. They deal with 'The Use and Abuse of Word Studies in theology' and 'The Grammar of

Words: Lexical Semantics'. The former opens the distinction between 'word' and 'concept' – or, putting it more widely, between word, sense, concept and things signified. This is done by using Barr's strictures against Kittel's Wordbook as a stalking horse but the chapter leaves unanswered the question of what positive place words and word study have in biblical investigation. It is to this that chapter five turns, dealing with Diachronic and Synchronic analysis; Polysemy and Homonymy, the 'sense' of a word, Lexical sense, contextual sense and specialized sense, and Context and the Choice of senses. We are rightly cautioned regarding too great a reliance on etymology – though possibly we might look for more positive direction actually how to make word study an adjunct to our Biblical research. These two chapters are, nevertheless, a most mind-stretching and rewarding experience and need to be read again and again.

The remaining chapters round off the subject by dealing with sentences, discourse analysis, conversation, and non-literal language. While these chapters maintain the interest in the whole subject they do not register as being of the same practical importance as chapters four and five and certainly both discourse analysis and conversation analysis savour of technicality for its own sake without compensating benefit in Biblical illumination. I could not find anything in the close analysis of the Nicodemus pericope which was not equally apparent without the technical help of linguistics.

There are two matters on which I would personally have wished for fuller discussion. On page 195 – and from time to time afterwards – much sport is made of an average student's attempt to translate Hebrews 2:1–4. On page 217 the same passage is analysed as a series of related 'nuclear sentences'. For my money, translation along the line of the student's attempt began to bring out the grammatical structure of the passage in a way that the nuclear sentences failed to do. I would have been helped to see a fully worked out translation resulting from the analysis into nuclear sentences. What would it have been like? Does this approach to Biblical analysis lead to *Good News Bible* material (in which case may God help us!) or to *New International Version* type material (in which case may God pity us!) – or what? I really wondered whether as a preparation for *éxégesis* or for translation the approach from the standpoint of linguistics could be inherently more correct or more fruitful than, for example, the exclusively grammatical and syntactical approach of H.P. Liddon to Romans and 1 Timothy (respectively 1893 and 1897!). Until I am persuaded to the contrary I cherish my possession of Liddon and covet to match his discernment.

Secondly, what bearing has the Bible's claim to verbal inspiration on the consequently special way in which the Bible uses words? It is not for a reviewer to try to answer such a question. I only regret that these gifted authors did not attempt to answer themselves.

But I cannot be thankful enough to them for their book or over-command it as a fresh entrance to the Scriptures.

**IT IS WRITTEN: SCRIPTURE CITING SCRIPTURE****Edd. D.A. Carson and H.G.M. Williamson**

Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1988 381pp. £37.50 (cloth)

ISBN 0 521 32347 9

This series of essays, grouped around the single theme of Scriptural quotations appearing in other parts of Scripture, is dedicated to Barnabas Lindars S.S.F. on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday. It is a noble monument to a scholar whose interests span both Testaments and reach out from there into the life of the Church today.

Barnabas Lindars would not be considered a conservative in the usual sense of that word, so it is all the more remarkable that so many of these essays have come from the pens of recognizably Evangelical writers. Perhaps that has something to do with the commitment of the editors, who would certainly be far more sympathetic to that position than the one in whose honour the collection has been compiled!

The book is divided into three sections, the first of which deals with the Old Testament. The four chapters examine history, prophecy, the psalms and wisdom in turn, pointing out the various ways in which the authors were dependent on the Torah and on each other. The second section covers the intertestamental period, and deals with questions of translation and commentary, as well as strict quotation. There is also a chapter on the retelling of various old Testament stories in other writings, and one on Apocalyptic literature. The final section covers the use of the old in the New Testament, and here the treatment is by author, except towards the end, when James is tied in with 1 and 2 Peter as well as Jude, and Revelation is regarded as distinct from John.

In the nature of the case, the last section is bound to be more comprehensible than either of the first two, since the New Testament writers were dealing with a recognized body of canonical texts (even if the precise limits remained undefined, which is not certain). The first section suffers from the defect of not knowing when the writers are quoting 'Scripture' and when they are merely drawing on common sources of a still-developing tradition. This appears most clearly in the chapter on prophecy, where we are even told that 'Trito-Isaiah' *quotes* from 'Deutero-Isaiah'! The second section is more satisfactory in that the canonical tradition has by now acquired a sharper identity, but of course, the books under discussion are not themselves regarded as canonical, so that we are not, strictly speaking, dealing with the subject of the symposium as a whole.

In the third section, there are some excellent survey articles which will be very useful introductions to the subject. The one partial exception is the chapter on the Pauline literature, where the writer's approach is marred by an undue scepticism regarding Pauline authorship. Of particular importance is the last chapter, on Revelation, because it brings out just to what extent that book is the product of Old Testament influence.

To conclude, one should not forget the excellent survey article at the beginning, in which Professor I. Howard Marshall gives an overall assessment of recent developments in the field. The editors are to be congratulated for having assembled a first-rate team of scholars and writers, and for having so judiciously planned the scope and extent of the volume as a whole. It will



certainly prove to be an indispensable reference work for students and scholars alike, and if it appears in paperback before it is too outdated, its sales should be wide.

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GERALD BRAY

**THE LIVING GOD Keith Ward**

S.P.C.K., London 1984 viii + 136pp. £1.75

ISBN 0 281 04126 1

In 1982 Keith Ward, who is Professor of the History and Philosophy of Religion at King's College, London, took issue with the ideas of Don Cupitt in his (Keith Ward's) book  *Holding Fast to God*, Don Cupitt (though remaining an ordained Anglican) having publicly adopted a virtually atheistic position. In the present book Professor Ward argues the case for theism at 'a more popular level'. He explains that he was brought up in a rather doctrineless (but attractive) religious atmosphere, but lost his faith in his teenage years and was then re-converted by a 'fundamentalist prayer group' through a very real experience which, however, never touched him intellectually. Unable to reconcile head and heart he became, almost predictably it seems, an academic – a lecturer in Logic. As a result he had time and opportunity to think through the intellectual problems facing an orthodox faith, and he found himself travelling in a direction diametrically opposite to that of Cupitt, to become finally a convinced Christian theist – accepting both the Empty Tomb and the Virgin Birth. The chapter headings of this impressive little book indicate its wide coverage: What is God?; The Universe; God's Purpose; The Law of Love; Creation and Sin; Suffering; Prayer; Revelation; Jesus; Salvation; The Trinity. He concludes with a list of about thirty books for further reading.

Professor Ward writes as a conservative Anglican of the catholic tradition. His argument makes little direct reference to the Bible, though of course his categories are largely Biblical. At one or two points I felt it left a good deal to be desired. In the chapter on suffering, for instance, he insists that 'The purpose and creative self-expression of God must be seen in the totality of the cosmic process', and 'The natural tragedies within it are not made specifically to test us or to punish us. They are the necessary and inevitable frustrations upon the lives of particular creatures . . . flowing from the chosen structure of the whole' (pp.66, 67), and are not sent specifically with individuals in mind. This is hardly the Biblical picture of the God who numbers the very hairs of our heads and without Whom not even the odd little sparrow falls to the ground. His chapter on Revelation too I found disappointing. The gift of language, the ability to convey meaning through words, is one of the things that distinguishes man most profoundly from the lower animals, in fact it is one of his supreme endowments. Can man communicate more richly to his fellow-man than he can through words? Hardly; that is why the deaf are more cut-off and lonely than even the blind. Yet the view of Revelation that Professor Ward sketches seems to deny to God this medium; at least, that is the impression I gained. 'Revelation lies in the occurrence of experiences . . . it is a combination of experience, reflection, prayerful attention and inspired teaching or writing' (p.95) –

presumably gained by inspired teachers and writers who reflected on their own experiences. But did God Himself never communicate in *words*? He who formed the tongue, does He not speak? Is revelation never *propositional*? I think Professor Ward would probably have doubts. I am not quite happy with his doctrine of the Trinity either.

The Son is not a different being from God; it is the same being, the same substance. It is a different aspect of that being, – not his self-existence but his self-expression in the world of objective events and persons. I think it is quite idle to speculate whether there would have been a Trinity without the existence of a world (p.129).

This is the careful language of the trained theologian; but does it quite do justice to 'the Father loves the Son' (John 3.35; 5.20) which Archbishop Temple called 'the foundation truth of the Universe'; or to 'the glory which I had with Thee before the world was' (John 17.5)? Does it even fully allow for 'God is love'? For does not love ultimately require for its fulfilment an equal, one on the same level? I think at this point I prefer Augustine.

Much of this apologetic owes more to the principles of the Enlightenment than to the Bible. Nevertheless this book may prove valuable for intelligent enquirers who start with little knowledge of Scripture and few religious convictions. We can thank God for Professor Ward's robust defence of much that conservatives hold dear, and which many in the Church today have surrendered.

Ivy Cottage, Grove, Wantage, Oxon.

DOUGLAS SPANNER

### **ALTERNATIVE SAINTS Richard Symonds**

Macmillan, Basingstoke 1989 263pp. £33hb. £11.95pb. ISBN 0 333 46143 6

The matter of what to do about 'the saints' will not go away. In the Prayer Book we have rather an odd collection and they finish with the Reformation. The *Alternative Service Book* has some interesting changes and additions and it is with this list that the present book is concerned. The volume consists of two essays and then biographies of all the British people who were introduced into the Calendar in 1970.

What becomes very plain as one reads these stories of 'saints' is the fact that it is really very odd that some of them are there at all. For example, it seems amazing that Charles the First, of all monarchs, receives the accolade of sainthood! And one is bound to ask whether Nicholas Ferrar would be there were it not for the fact that, as a result of the 'Four Quarters' of T.S. Eliot, the Little Gidding community was briefly well known in the 1950s and 1960s. I am not suggesting that Nicholas was less than a splendid Christian but it is questionable whether he is sufficiently outstanding to be universally remembered throughout the nation.

Richard Symonds has made a very good and quite objective business of describing these worthies, although he describes people like Andrewes, Herbert and Charles as representing 'the middle way' whereas they were in fact campaigners for the gradual undermining of the Reformation.

Evangelicals need to be informed about all this because there is no doubt

that there will be many more moves in days to come to insert other names into the Church of England Calendar. Symonds's last chapter assesses a number of those possible names and he rightly points out how strange it is that Baxter never found his way into the list. But he is also keen to include F.D. Maurice, Westcott and Gore. There would be many who would strongly resist the inclusion of at least two of those names. But who would we wish to put in their place? Would Hudson Taylor be a suitable candidate?

There remains the great question as to whether it is in any case really appropriate to commemorate outstanding Christians at all. All of them had feet of clay as do we and there is always the danger that un instructed readers may think that there really are two classes of believer.

This is a most interesting and important book which needed to be written; it is also one which should be studied with a view to action.

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JOHN PEARCE

### **THE EUCHARISTIC THEOLOGY OF JEREMY TAYLOR TODAY**

**H.R. McAdoo**

Canterbury Press, Norwich, 1989 212pp. £9.95

ISBN 1 85311 004 3

It is much to the credit of the Canterbury Press, in these days of greater economic restraint in the field of publishing, that it is prepared to put out a book of this kind at such a reasonable price. Jeremy Taylor is a specialized interest as far as most people are concerned; his eucharistic theology even more so! Yet as the former Archbishop of Dublin, and Co-Chairman of A.R.C.I.C. I demonstrates, his concerns and interests are far from being dead, and bear a remarkable resemblance to many of the issues tackled by the A.R.C.I.C. representatives.

In this book, Jeremy Taylor appears as a High Churchman of the Laudian school, though with an independent mind and increasing exposure to the kind of critical attitude represented by Chillingworth. According to McAdoo, this enabled him to make full use of the Scriptures and the Fathers of the Church without falling into an unscholarly fundamentalism. In this, Taylor appears to have been well ahead of his time, and to belong more to our age than to his own. His churchmanship is not easily definable, though the Evangelical reader will quickly perceive that it has little affinity with his!

Fortunately for the non-specialist, McAdoo ranges broadly through the writings of Jeremy Taylor, giving us an insight into them which goes well behind his specifically eucharistic concerns. In particular he reminds us that Taylor had a weak view of original sin, regarding it as a contagion which affects the human race with mortality and concupiscence, rather than being a guilt for which we must seek repentance and forgiveness. This alone will serve to distance him from the Evangelical position, though it is hard to disagree with the author when he claims that it reflects much of the spirit of contemporary Anglicanism!

As for Taylor's doctrine of the eucharist, we read that he understood it as 'proclaiming the Gospel and as being the channel of the new life, Christ's life transforming ours' (p.41), an assertion which will warm Evangelical hearts, so long as this is not tied too closely with the consecrated elements. This

indeed, seems to have been the main problem which Taylor faced. He rejected transubstantiation, but could not find another doctrine which would give the same weight to the bread and wine. The weak (and modern) assertion that the elements change in the perception of the participants is hardly an adequate substitute – in fact, it is little more than sophisticated wishful thinking! More attractive is the personalist approach which McAdoe outlines in the last chapter. There he stresses that participation in Christ is a personal relationship established by faith, to which the eucharist is a contributing but essentially secondary factor. We may warmly agree, and recognize that at the end of the day, Taylor was closer to Protestant Anglicanism than most of his defenders are willing to allow. For all that, he is a hard man to pin down, and those interested in seventeenth-century theological problems will find this book as fascinating as it is readable.

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GERALD BRAY

**SCIENCE AND HERMENEUTICS Vern Sheridan Poythress**

Apollos, Leicester 1988 184pp. £7.95

ISBN 0 85111 503 9

This volume comes under the new Apollos imprint of Inter Varsity Press and is the sixth in a series on the Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation. Its object is to investigate any implications for Biblical hermeneutics which arise from the way in which scientists investigate the order of nature and interpret their findings. The general editor, Professor Moisés Silva of Westminster Theological Seminary, writes how many years ago he was forcibly struck on reading (what to students of the philosophy of science has become a very famous and controversial book) Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962). What impressed him was the fact that Kuhn had sparked-off the realization that scientific advance does not follow the plain, straightforward, uncomplicated pattern it had hitherto been thought to follow, but that in seeking to understand the Book of Nature (I am choosing my own metaphor here) it ran into the same sorts of problems that theologians encountered in seeking to understand the Bible. This raised the possibility that perhaps the controversies raging within the scientific community might throw some light on the controversies within the community struggling with Biblical hermeneutics. This book is the result.

Professor Poythress currently holds the chair of New Testament Interpretation at Westminster. His first doctorate was in mathematics from Harvard; later he turned his attention to linguistics and theology (especially Pauline). He has written a book easy to read, scholarly, informative and illuminating, one to appeal not only to the expert in hermeneutics but also to the minister anxious faithfully to expound the word of God. For those who have never read Thomas Kuhn he gives a good exposition of his main points before he proceeds to compare the situation in science with that in Biblical hermeneutics. The author does not seek to resolve any particular problems in interpretation, such as the right understanding of Genesis 1. Rather, he attempts to give us a perspective on the subject so that in our interpretative task we shall realize just what we are doing and thus be set free to correct or modify the steps we take in doing it. He illustrates all this very helpfully with

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reference to the understanding of Romans 7.14–25. Is the ‘I’ of this passage a believer or an unbeliever, or is there some other possibility? he asks; and he goes on to outline the sort of influences which lead us to make up our minds in answer to questions such as this.

I do not think that Professor Poythress has given us the definitive book on the relation between science and hermeneutics; but he has given us a very useful introduction. I wish it a very wide circulation.

Ivy Cottage, Grove, Wantage, Oxon.

DOUGLAS SPANNER

### **THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN CRISIS John Booty**

Cowley Publications, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1988 175pp. \$8.95

ISBN 0 936384 57 3

The recent controversy surrounding the ordination of women, and the prominence of American bishops at the Lambeth Conference, where they are represented out of all proportion to the (rapidly declining) numbers in their flock, have brought the Episcopal Church into the limelight in a way which it has not been before in this country. This book is an attempt to explain that church from a sympathetic, generally conservative standpoint. John Booty is an authority on Anglicanism too little known in England, and it is a pleasure to be able to read what he has to say.

What becomes obvious immediately as one reads this book is that the Anglican Communion is still indelibly Anglocentric, even though conscious awareness of what makes an Anglican different from other types of Christian is much greater outside England than it is here. For most members of the Church of England, Anglicanism is just normal Christianity, which in practice may mean anything from pre-Vatican II Catholicism to post-N.E.A.C. 3 revivalism. In the U.S.A. where Episcopalians are a small minority, such indifference to a common identity is a luxury which the church cannot afford. Hence the courses in ‘Anglican Studies’ in their seminaries, and books like this one, which seek to chart a recognizable identity in the midst of the controversies of the past twenty years.

John Booty refers to English controversies, such as the one which erupted over John Robinson’s *Honest to God*, in terms which make it clear that for him, they were American issues as well – a sign of the kind of connexion with this country which is perceived on the other side of the Atlantic. By contrast, it must be said that no American issue has ever ruffled many feathers here; even the ordination of women to the priesthood, and now to the episcopate, is generally seen as having little to do with us. As some commentators have pointed out, English Anglicans continue to discuss these questions as if the Americans did not exist, and it is no secret that many people here would be quite relieved if the Episcopal Church were now to take itself out of the Anglican Communion altogether!

It is therefore all the more important to read an intelligent defence of that church from the pen of someone who is by no means an extremist radical. Of course, it is unlikely that many people in England will be persuaded to become more sympathetic to their American co-religionists, especially if they already disagree with them on the issues raised in this book. But at least it

will help us to see that there is more to the Episcopal Church than many people here imagine, and that it may be premature to write it off completely. As the author says with reference to the 1979 *Prayer Book*:

It did not satisfy everyone, and it could not do so, given the wide diversity within the unity we have. But it provided for the needs of a wide spectrum of Episcopalians. Nor is there any sense of having arrived at the end of the process. The 1979 *Prayer Book* is incomplete, pointing toward the need for further revision, encouraging a continuing discussion within the church as to the nature of its unity in one Lord, one faith, one baptism.

Is anyone in England listening?

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GERALD BRAY

### **SERMON GUIDES FOR PREACHING IN EASTER ASCENSION AND PENTECOST**

**Edd. C.W. Burger, B.A. Müller and D.J. Smit**

Eerdmans Grand Rapids, 1988 284pp. £9.50

ISBN 0 8028 0283 4

In the preface, the compilers of this book state that their basic aim is to help preachers write sermons of their own that are theologically sound and exegetically 'true'. However, anyone looking for a series of ready-made sermons will be disappointed. The various outlines given are described as 'periscopes' and are in three parts; exegetical, hermeneutical and homiletical. In addition a select bibliography is provided with each 'periscope'. The sermons are related to the period from Easter through to Pentecost. The compilers clearly believe in the value of observing the main events of the Christian Year and the use of a lectionary.

The three editors of this volume are all ordained ministers from South Africa and they represent a high degree of scholarship. They claim not to advance the tenets of a specific school of thought or a particular theology. They are right in suggesting the book 'Breathes an air of ecumenicity'. The amount of background material made available is considerable and will be of particular value to those ministers serving congregations with a good percentage of academics. The busy minister will be spared a great deal of research as well as supplied with some very fruitful ideas by reading this book but he must not look for ready-made messages or sermon outlines, as popularly conceived.

The bibliographies which accompany the various chapters illustrate the breadth of reading of those responsible for these sermon guides. Whilst understandably a number of South African commentators are quoted, others include John Calvin, Karl Barth, F.F. Bruce, C.K. Barrett, W. Hendriksen, G.C. Berkouwer and C.H. Dodd.

The range of texts considered is wide and by no means strictly confined to the Biblical narratives associated with the seasons of Easter, Ascension and Pentecost. Thus for the third Sunday after Easter, the chosen texts are Psalm 16, 8 and Ecclesiastes 9, 7-10. Altogether there is an enormous amount of potential sermon material in this book but it does demand close study and application to life. In all there are twenty four sermon guidelines, each cycle

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of eight themes is covered three times over; once with texts drawn from the Synoptic gospels, once with texts from the Old Testament and the Pauline epistles and once with texts from the writings of the Apostles John and Peter.

One can but hope that this book will enable preachers to produce sermons of real substance which will be essentially expository in character rather than 'cheap and cheerful' sermonettes!

One is bound to comment on the fact that the compilers of these sermon guides are all domiciled in South Africa where one presumes the spiritual climate is somewhat different from that in the United Kingdom and where congregations look for weighty discourses which generally speaking would find limited appreciation in the average British church. For those who do a good deal of research in preparing their sermons and who consult as many commentaries as possible, this book will be a great boon but the 'popular preacher' may find it somewhat hard going.

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GILBERT KIRBY

### **THE CALLINGS: THE GOSPEL IN THE WORLD Paul Helm**

Banner of Truth, Edinburgh 1987 152pp. £2.45

ISBN 0 85151 512 6

This is a marvellous book on a much neglected subject. Many Christians today fail to appreciate that the effective call of God in bringing them to know Christ is not an end but a beginning. The worldliness of many Western Christians may probably be attributed to confusion and ignorance of God's purpose for their lives once they have responded to the call of God in the gospel. Here we have a clearly argued and well-written account of the Biblical teaching for which we must be very grateful.

Paul Helm starts by reminding us that: 'the effective call of God, while it secures the equality and unity of those who are called, does not eliminate human diversity but transforms it'. He warns against the dualistic thinking which seeks to cut the Christian off from the created world in which he lives. He reminds the believer that the particular circumstances in which he finds himself are ordained by God, and that he is called to a life of structured freedom and faithful discipleship within those circumstances. Chapter five contains an excellent account of the Biblical attitude to work, while chapter six has the best discussion of compromise and 'things indifferent' that I have ever read. The final chapter encourages us to see an abiding significance in our present calling for the heavenly life that we are to enjoy in the future.

It is hard to express the value of this book in a short review. Every page is packed with sound exposition of Biblical material which throws light on innumerable aspects of the Christian life. It is a work to which I will refer again and again, and I believe it should be in the library of every Christian who exercises any pastoral care for others and who takes those responsibilities seriously.

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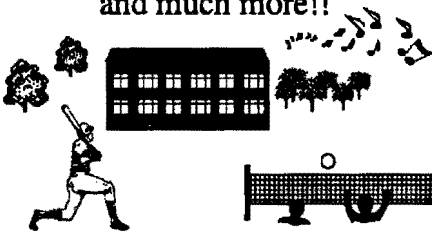
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## Other Books Received

- A. & C. Black** Compiled by the Benedictine Monks of St. Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate, **The Book of Saints 1989, £19.95**
- The Book Guild** R.E. Sibthorp, *The Memoirs of a Minor Canon*, 1990, **£10.50**
- T. & T. Clark** Ed. C. Rood, *The Pastor's Opportunities*, 1989, **£9.95**
- Collins** Compiled by C. Rojas, *Scripture Promises*, 1990 **£3.50**
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- Hodder & Stoughton** M. Harper, *These Wonderful Gifts* 1989 **£2.25**; Ed. C. Saunders, *St. Christopher's in Celebration: Twenty-one Years at Britain's First Modern Hospice*, 1990, **£2.25**
- MARC** P. Beasley-Murray, *Dynamic Leadership*, 1990, **£8.99**
- Slavic Gospel Association** G. Bounds, *Behind Enemy Lines*, 1989, **£2.50** +40p. p. & p.,
- S.P.C.K.** Compiled by S. Parenti, *Praying with the Orthodox Tradition*. 1989 **£2.75**