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Editorial: Theology with a mission

Think of a doctrine. Double it with variant interpretations. Divide by denominational distinctives. Add some technical jargon. Subtract any practical relevance. Finally take away the doctrine you first thought of, and what are you left with? Probably the sum of the average theological student's awareness of the relation between his theological study and the mission of the church. He is hardly to be blamed for this, since western theology at least has been carried on for centuries with little or no direct relation to it.

It was not always thus. In the early centuries of the church the cutting edge of theology was defined by the church's mission. How was the gospel to be lived and witnessed to in hostile and religiously plural environments? How was the nature and work of Jesus to be defined and defended in changing social and intellectual contexts? The controversies and definitions that emerged from this were not the academic and irrelevant theology of popular misconception but the intellectual cutting edge of the church's struggle for identity, survival and growth – i.e. its mission.

The New Testament itself is essentially a theology of mission. Why else are its first four volumes called 'Gospels'? It emerged as the community of Jesus staked their claim, and were compelled to defend it, that he was the Messiah, and therefore the fulfilment of God's mission in and through Israel. Was such a claim, and the mission that it had launched, compatible with the Scriptures? It was the success of the Gentile mission, with the theological problem of whether and on what terms Gentiles could be fitted into the hitherto Jewish people of God, which generated some of the most profound theological controversy and argumentation in the church itself and the documents of the New Testament. The missiological debate touched the doctrine of God and his purpose for Israel and the nations, Christology, the meaning of salvation and justification, the status for Christians of the Mosaic covenant and its law, eschatology and the significance of the present age.

In medieval Christianized Europe theology turned in upon itself, while in the period of the Reformation and after, it was devoted largely to reflecting and encoding the convictions that emerged in the convulsions of the church. With some notable exceptions, such as the Moravians, no theology of mission was needed because no mission was happening in the Protestant world – a fact commented upon by the Counter Reformation (whose missionary endeavours preceded Protestant missions by two centuries) as a reason why the Protestant churches could not be counted as part of the true church: they had no mission.

Now that Protestant missions have been going for a couple of centuries, is our theology any better? The lack of integration between the two is still disturbing. Recalling my own student days, it was certainly not the case that those who studied theology were the ones who were most interested in mission, personally let alone academically. 'Missiology' was not even a word I remember hearing until long after my undergraduate theological studies. A recent report by the British *Religious and Theological Studies Fellowship* indicates that, in a questionnaire concerning where students thought RTSF should be developing its resources, only 5% ticked 'Missionary Awareness'. So little is mission on the agenda of theological students or teachers, that at a recent gathering of scholars, historians, and practitioners of mission convened to establish a *British Association of Mission Studies* it was argued, not wholly in jest, that the aims of such a group should be the subversion of traditional theology by a healthy injection of missiology. Is there any discipline within the broad field of theological study which is *not* missiological in either its roots, or its implications? Like ethics, missiology has a remarkable fertilizing and integrating dynamic when it is allowed to influence the agenda and the perspective of any theological issue.

Many North American seminaries have more prominent courses, professorships and 'schools' in missiology. But the question is sometimes raised in other parts of the world among recipients of the fruit of all this whether more attention is paid to the pragmatic than to the theological, to strategies of mission rather than the perplexing issues that mission raises for us in today's world, to 'getting the job done' than reflecting on what it is we are doing and why. There were two great consultations on mission in 1989: the Lausanne II conference in Manila, and the World Council of Churches conference in San Antonio. The evangelical Lausanne took as its theme 'Proclaim Christ Until He Comes', while the ecumenical San Antonio considered, 'Your Will Be Done – Mission in Christ's Way'. It could be said that the latter title raises a more profound *theological* agenda, whereas Lausanne was more absorbed with *methodology*. For in spite of its subtitle ('The Whole Church taking the Whole Gospel to the Whole World'), Lausanne did not grapple seriously, for example, with ecclesiology – i.e. what doctrine of the *whole* church do evangelicals have in relation to mission?

Yet Lausanne II was itself the proof of the factor which makes the integration of missiology and theology imperative – the global nature of the church. It is a welcome sign, therefore, that last year the Association of Theological Schools in North America adopted 'globalization' as a major emphasis for the 1990s – meaning the desire to set the study of theology firmly in the context of the global church and its mission; the hope that 'missiology can break loose from the straitjacket of being just one *discipline* competing for students and recognition alongside so many others. Instead it can become the *field* which provides that interdisciplinary focus that the new global theological education requires'.[1] Such was the hope also of the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910! How long before it is a reality?

[1] N. E. Thomas, 'From Missions to Globalization: Teaching Missiology in North American Seminars', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 13.3 (July 1989), 103-107. This is an excellent short account of the history of missiology as a theological discipline since 1910.

New Testament genre criticism for the 1990s

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The twentieth century has given birth to many new critical tools for biblical scholarship. Informed students of the Scriptures must now come to grips with form and redaction criticism, canon criticism, social-scientific analysis, lexical semantics, and a variety of other seemingly daunting methods. One of the newer and more important of these disciplines is genre criticism. A selective sampling of the past ten years' most significant studies of NT genres may elucidate the 'state of the art' and prepare readers for wrestling in the decade ahead with still unsolved questions.

From one point of view, genre criticism is nothing new. Throughout the history of Christianity, most readers have recognized that the NT contains four distinct literary types which cannot be treated identically: the gospels, the Acts, the epistles, and Revelation. But few NT introductions or surveys, hermeneutics texts, or commentaries on individual books self-consciously reflected in any detail on precisely what each of these four types of literature involved. In recent years this has begun to change. Commentaries like those of R. Guelich, R. Fung or J. R. Michaels have included sections on 'genre' alongside more conventional topics like authorship, date, or destination.[1] Introductory works by H. Conzelmann and A. Lindemann, S. Brown, and S. Harris have added discrete treatments of the NT's diverse kinds of literature.[2] Hermeneutics manuals like those of G. Fee and D. Stuart or L. Ryken's several works organize their entire discussions by treating the different scriptural genres in sequence.[3] And in perhaps the two most important and thorough surveys of NT genre criticism, D. Aune places the gospels, Acts, epistles and Revelation squarely within their Jewish and Greco-Roman environment, discussing in detail the extra-biblical writings of the centuries immediately surrounding the rise of Christianity which most closely resemble their canonical counterparts.[4]

The term 'genre' itself is used in a wide variety of ways. For the purposes of this survey, Aune's definition strikes a good balance between uses which are so narrow as to make almost every piece of literature a unique genre and those which are so broad as to include under the same heading drastically divergent works: 'a *literary genre* may be defined as a group of texts that exhibit a coherent and recurring configuration of literary features involving form (including structure and style), content, and function'.[5] Thus this survey is not interested in analysing constituent elements or literary 'forms' within a larger work (*e.g.* parables, proverbs, hymns, farewell addresses, *etc.*) nor in assessing all the various proposals for the outline of a given book, nor even in discussing most of the rhetorical devices and figures of speech which a given author may use, though all of these issues do overlap from time to time with genre analysis. Instead, this study highlights attempts to categorize entire NT books with labels that group them with other extant works from the ancient Mediterranean world.

Genre criticism combines the potential of profound insight with the peril of distorting reductionism. To know that a particular writing conforms to certain literary conventions enables the interpreter to avoid exegetical gaffes and more closely to discern the original intentions of an author.[6] But labels always risk blinding the reader to that writing's distinctives — where an author consciously or unconsciously deviates from the expected. In the case of the NT, each of the four major categories of books sufficiently resembles recognizable genres so as to be labelled in ways which aid the would-be exegete, but each also displays unique features which set the biblical works off from anything found outside the canon.

Gospels

Traditionally, most Christians have probably identified the gospels as biographies of Jesus of Nazareth. But even a casual reading makes it clear how poorly the gospels measure up to modern biographical standards (and to many ancient ones). For example, only two say anything about the first thirty years of Jesus' life, and then they note just a few details about his birth and one incident at age twelve. On the other hand all four devote a disproportionately large amount of attention to his last few weeks and days. And a comparison among parallel accounts of the same events seems to reveal more divergences than one would expect if the evangelists were simply trying to tell things as they really happened. As a result, the vast majority of modern scholars has concluded that the gospels are theological and not biographical. A few have tried to link them with categories more commonly associated with fiction, most notably aretalogy, comedy and tragedy,[7] but most have baulked at identifying them too closely with any known genre. W. Kümmel's standard introduction well summarizes the consensus which prevailed as recently as the mid-1970s:

> Viewed as a literary form, the Gospels are a new creation. They are in no way lives after the manner of Hellenistic biographies, since they lack the sense of internal and external history (as in lives of heroes), of character formation, of temporal sequence, and of the contemporary setting. Neither do the Gospels belong to the genre, memoirs, in which the collected stories and sayings from the lives of great men are simply strung together. Nor do they belong to the genus, miracle stories, in which the great deeds of ancient wonder-workers are glorified in a more or less stylized manner.[8]

At the end of the 'seventies two important works challenged this consensus. C. H. Talbert argued for viewing the gospels as Greco-Roman biographies. Talbert was not trying to rehabilitate the case for their historical reliability but to point out parallels with three key elements which he believed the two sets of works shared: a mythical structure, an origin in the

legends of the 'cult' or ritual of a religious community devoted to the traditions of its founder, and an optimistic 'world-affirming' perspective reacting against the many pessimistic philosophies of the day.[9] Aune, however, has convincingly demonstrated that Talbert lumped too many disparate texts together and misrepresented the dominant characteristics of both the gospels and Greco-Roman biographies.[10] M. Hengel agreed with Talbert that the gospels could be compared favourably with ancient biography but preferred to link them with that form which supplied a 'relatively trustworthy historical report'.[11] But Hengel's study lacked the detailed discussion of comparative literature necessary if his claims were to be corroborated.

Another major work on the gospels as biographies appeared in the early 'eighties with P. Shuler's attempt to identify Matthew as encomium or laudatory biography.[12] Yet this gospel, like the other three, seems not to centre primarily around praise for Christ but to narrate God's saving acts in history which he accomplished through the person of Jesus. Thus two recent reviewers of the literature on the genre of the gospels have again concluded that despite these protestations the evangelists' works must continue not to be equated with any single, fixed extra-biblical literary category.[13] R. Guelich's definition of a gospel thus clearly eliminates the possibility of any ancient works besides Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John being included: '*Formally,* a gospel is a narrative account concerning the public life and teaching of a significant person that is composed of discreet *[sic]* traditional units placed in the context of the Scriptures.... *Materially*, the genre consists of the message that God was at work in Jesus' life, death and resurrection, effecting his promises found in the Scriptures.'[14]

Two quite different proposals have broken fresh ground in the 'eighties. R. Gundry took the evangelical world by storm with his commentary on Matthew in which he identified the first gospel with Jewish 'midrash'. On the one hand he wished to continue to affirm distinctively North American forms of the doctrine of biblical inerrancy; on the other hand he argued that Matthew regularly narrated episodes which did not actually occur as described but which were legendary embellishments of Matthew's sources, Mark and Q. Matthew, Gundry believed, was rewriting his authoritative traditions just as Jewish intertestamental and rabbinic literature often expanded and contemporized OT narratives.[15] Reaction against Gundry among conservatives was quite severe, often for the wrong reasons, most notably the belief that his view was incompatible with inerrancy. But for his case to stand, all of the following dubious propositions would have to hold: Matthew's community would have known the story as Mark and Q told it well enough to distinguish fact from fiction; both of these sources would have had to have developed quasi-canonical status; and first-century Jews would have had to feel as free to embellish contemporary history as they did ancient history.[16]

W. Kelber ignited equally vigorous debate in less conservative circles with his analysis of gospel as parable. He believed that Mark broke drastically with tradition when he produced the first written gospel. For Kelber, textuality and orality are largely antithetical, and Mark's severe portrait of the disciples reflects his rejection of their authority in the era which he writes. 'For a language that asserts itself by distanciation from the received mode of communication, parable is the ultimate metaphor.'[17] Thus Mark intends all of the gospel to be interpreted parabolically as both revealing and concealing meaning. Now to be sure the gospels, and especially Mark, contain more metaphor and ambiguity than many readers have recognized. But it is not clear that the entire genre can be labelled parabolic. J. Williams and E. Malbon have shown that it is better to speak of the gospels as hybrid forms of which parabolic narrative (a broader category than parables, *per se*) is one constituent element.[18] More seriously, Kelber has greatly overestimated the disjunction between oral and written texts by basing his hypothesis on an increasingly outmoded theory of the development of literacy.[19]

Luke 1:1-4 probably provides the most important clues to the gospel genre. In this preface, Luke uses language which is most closely paralleled in the prefaces of other Greco-Roman histories (as distinct from biographies or other types of prose) and he compares his work with certain predecessors who have apparently employed approximately the same type of 'narrative'. T. Callan finds the closest parallels in the histories of Herodotus, Tacitus, Arrian, Dio Cassius, Sallust, and Josephus.[20] In a very broad sense, it remains appropriate to speak of the gospels as biographies as well, once it is recognized that the ancients did not draw a distinct line between history and biography, and so long as one does not try to define the kind of biography too narrowly. But the important observation to be drawn from either of these generic identifications is that the evangelists wrote with historical intentions.[21] It will not do to try to excuse the gospel writers' allegedly poor efforts at recording events as they happened by assuming that they were composing an altogether different genre of literature. There are no other histories quite like Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; Kümmel's consensus reflected sober insights. But the distinctives are not so great as to force us to invent an entirely unique genre just for the gospels.

At the same time, ancient historical standards of precision in narration and selection and arrangement of material were much less rigid and more fluid than modern ones. Almost no histories were compiled as mere chronicles; most had clearly discernible ideological purposes. Thus, when compared against their contemporaries, the four evangelists acquit themselves well. Apparent contradictions between parallel accounts or with extra-biblical history all have plausible resolutions. Despite widespread protests to the contrary, one may legitimately speak of the 'historical reliability of the gospels',[22] but in so doing one is not denying that theological motives were equally if not more important in the narration of those teachings and events of Jesus' life which have been preserved.

Numerous implications for interpreters follow. Once allowance is made for paraphrase, abbreviation, explanation, omission, rearrangement and a variety of similar editorial techniques, one may remain confident that the gospels give trustworthy accounts of who Jesus was and what he did. The burden of proof rests securely in the lap of the scholar who would deny authenticity at any point.[23] On the other hand they did, and it is that aspect of the text on which readers should concentrate. One may not assume that successive passages reflect any kind of chronological order unless indications of time are explicitly mentioned. Luke's central

section, for example (Lk. 9:51 - 18:34), is probably not a 'travel narrative' of Jesus' journeying through Perea as has often been assumed, but a topically organized collection of Jesus' teachings 'under the shadow of the cross'.[24] Similarly, while apparent contradictions between gospels can successfully be harmonized, it is the unique presentation of each individual gospel which remains canonical.[25] Most students of the gospels probably need to spend more time discerning the distinctive message of each evangelist and less time constructing a harmony of the four. The average reader probably knows that the parables of the prodigal son and the good Samaritan, like the stories of Mary and Martha and the ten lepers, all occur in the gospels, but few remember that all are found only in Luke. Even less do they realize that all fit into one of Luke's most cherished and distinctive emphases – Jesus' compassion for the outcasts of society.

The gospels may thus be identified as theological histories of selected events surrounding the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth. Though each of the four has its distinctives, and John is more noticeably different from the synoptics, each is more like the other three than unlike them.[26] And the four canonical gospels are certainly more like each other than like any other histories or so-called gospels. This is particularly significant in light of the increasing respect which the apocryphal and Gnostic gospels are receiving in certain circles as purportedly genuine repositories of some of the earliest traditions about Jesus. Most of the extra-canonical 'gospels' do not employ much connected narrative; those that do tend to focus primarily on certain 'gaps' in the canonical record. Overall they must be viewed as secondary developments of the gospel tradition, although from time to time items within a given work may be very old and perhaps, occasionally, authentic.[27]

Acts

Not nearly as much research has attempted to analyse the genre of Acts as has been expended on the gospels. The opening verses of Acts make it clear that the book is a sequel to Luke and that the preface in Luke 1:1-4 applies to both volumes. Numerous structural parallels demonstrate the unity of the two-volume work. The gospel follows a geographical outline which portrays Jesus moving from a setting in the context of the entire Roman empire (the known world of that day) to Galilee to Samaria to Jerusalem, whereas Acts inverts this sequence with the programme of expansion of the gospel traced in Acts 1:8.[28] Major episodes in the lives of key characters in Acts closely parallel stories from the life of Jesus.[29] If Luke's gospel is a theological history, then one should expect Acts to be classified similarly. The overall contents of the book – descriptions of key events in the life of the early church, especially in the careers of Peter and Paul – also make Acts an obvious candidate for some kind of historical genre.

On this much most scholars have agreed. Going into the 'eighties, a fair consensus would have identified Acts as a 'historical monograph'. But agreement on this label did not prevent polarization on the question of historical reliability. One group of commentators, primarily British, compared Acts favourably with such historians as Herodotus and Thucydides, and argued for a substantial measure of historicity. Sir W. Ramsay blazed the trail for this group of scholars.[30] A second group appeals to E. Haenchen's work as foundational. These scholars, primarily German, agreed that Luke had historical intentions but believed that he botched the job rather badly. Fortunately, Luke also wrote as a theologian, so that the theology of Acts remains instructive even where the historical details of his narrative cannot be trusted.[31]

In the 'eighties, a third, primarily American, approach has emerged. Pioneered by R. Pervo, this attempt to label the genre of Acts classifies the book as a historical novel.[32] In other words, Luke had more in common with other Greco-Roman writers of fiction than he did with authors of history or biography. Pervo points out how Acts brims over with adventure and entertainment. He points to numerous portions of the text which seem implausible and far-fetched. He stresses that it is not these apparent errors or contradictions which make him assess Acts as a largely fictitious genre but rather the formal features which Acts shares with other novels. Yet not one of these features is unique to fiction; in the final analysis it is the 'implausibility factor' with which Pervo's case stands or falls. And here Pervo takes virtually no account of the various explanations and harmonizations which more conservative scholars have proposed.[33] Among these, C. Hemer's posthumously published work goes a long way toward establishing the historical credibility of those portions of the Acts which can be tested against their Hellenistic background.[34]

Two somewhat distinctive features of Acts have often led commentators to argue for or against a historical genre. One is Luke's use of speeches (primarily on the lips of Peter and Paul); the other involves the so-called 'we-sections' (in which the narrator suddenly begins to write in the first person plural). It is commonly known that ancient historians often composed speeches that they believed were appropriate for particular occasions even when they had no firsthand knowledge of the contents of a particular address.[35] It is also evident that narrators frequently wrote in the first person as a literary device even when they themselves did not witness the action they describe.[36] Yet the breadth of ancient literature which employed either or both of these devices ranges so widely from relatively reliable history to sheer fiction that their presence in Acts does not very much aid in assessing its genre.[37] If, on other grounds, as seems likely, one ought to speak of Acts as a theological history, implying both historical trustworthiness and theological motives, then neither the speeches nor the we-sections need undermine this assessment.

When one turns to the apocryphal acts, one discovers a variety of parallels in form, content and function. There is also a number of non-Christian Greek works entitled 'praxeis'. But this Greek word is 'a nontechnical, descriptive term for narratives of the accomplishments of noteworthy individuals or cities (whether mythical, historical, or fictional)'.[38] Probably not as many generic distinctives separate canonical and non-canonical Acts as distinguish canonical and non-canonical gospels, but in terms of reliance on trustworthy tradition the gap may actually be greater. As with the gospels, the Acts may be compared with a known genre of Hellenistic literature while at the same time retaining features which make it *sui generis*. Theological history may be the best label for the combination.[39]

Once again, interpreters do well to be sensitive to this balance between theology and history. Acts contains much more chronology than do any of the gospels, yet even in his second volume, Luke occasionally organizes material thematically. Acts 11:27-30 probably occurred after 12:1-24 (at least according to Josephus' dates for the Judean famine and Herod's death),[40] but Luke places it earlier so that he may keep together several strands of tradition about Antioch (*cf.* 11:19-26). So too, once the reader recognizes the theological outline which governs the book, he can learn to emphasize what Luke wanted to stress rather than that on which contemporary Christians usually concentrate. Acts 1:8 indicates more than geographical expansion. Luke's second volume traces the miraculous, thirty-year-long transformation of an exclusively Jewish sect found only in Jerusalem into an empire-wide, predominantly Gentile religion solidly rooted even in Rome. Thus Luke's foremost concern in the two episodes involving Philip in Acts 8 is that the gospel came even to Samaritans and eunuchs (two categories of outcasts according to orthodox Jewish perspective). Questions which divide exegetes today concerning the order of and intervals between repentance, baptism, and the filling of the Holy Spirit were probably not even in Luke's mind.

Epistles

Only recently have scholars shown much interest in the genre criticism of the epistles, but in the 'eighties this discipline has flourished. Good overviews of the various kinds of letters which were common in the Hellenistic world appear in the works of J. L. White, S. Stowers, and A. Malherbe.[41] To be sure, it has long been recognized that the framework of many of the NT letters resembled that of other Hellenistic letters from the first century. Many began with an epistolary prescript, identifying the sender and the recipient and conveying greetings. Many continued with an inquiry about or wish for the health of the recipient, along with a prayer for his well-being or a word of thanksgiving. At the end of the typical letter appeared a postscript with additional greetings and a farewell formula. Often this was preceded by a hortatory or parenetic section. Paul gave several of these components of the letter a distinctive stamp (*e.g.* combining Greek and Jewish salutations — 'grace and peace' — and expanding parenetic material) but otherwise largely followed Hellenistic convention. But the body of the letter, which comprised the substantial majority of any given epistle, was seldom seen as following any well-established literary patterns.[42]

A significant step in specifying epistolary genres was taken by Adolf Deissmann nearly a century ago. On the basis of his study of Egyptian papyri, he subdivided the letter genre into 'real' and 'non-real' letters. Real letters, like the papyri, were private, non-literary, informal and artless, addressing specific circumstances. Non-real letters, like the classical writings, were public, deliberately literary and designed to address a general audience without regard to occasion. For Deissman, Paul's letters were therefore real, private, non-literary, and artless.[43] But these distinctions were too neat. Deissmann's dichotomy was based exclusively on materials from one Egyptian province and did not take into account the literary nature of Paul's letters nor even of the papyri, all of which followed various literary conventions. At the same time, general letters often tended 'to avoid or even suppress typically *epistolary* forms and styles for other types of discourse'.[44]

Further progress has been made in recent years. Several writers have stressed the role of letter-writing as a substitute for an apostolic presence.[45] Genre criticism of the epistles has tended to follow two paths. One classifies the letter functionally; one analyses them rhetorically. Paradigms for functional classifications come from the *progymnasmata*, scholastic exercises in letter-writing which have been preserved from Greco-Roman antiquity, as well as from ancient epistolary theory and genuine letters. Instruction about rhetoric comes from the works of the masters such as Aristotle and Quintillian, who use a tripartite categorization: rhetoric may be judicial (apologetic, forensic), symbouleutic (deliberative, hortatory) or epideictic (demonstrative, laudatory).

Several of Paul's letters may be helpfully analysed when viewed as a specific functional genre of epistle. For example, 1 Thessalonians is probably best described as a parenetic letter — a conscious exhortation to or dissuasion from a specific action or attitude, often incorporating antithesis and personal example as part of the persuasive argument. The sustained praise and autobiographical commentary which dominate 1 Thessalonians 1 - 3 may thus be seen as quite deliberate. Paul has established his friendship with the Thessalonians and emphasizes that, for the most part, they do not need his instruction. Still, he has important but delicate corrections to make to the Thessalonians' ethics and eschatology, on which chapters 4 and 5 focus, and he is carefully preparing the way for this teaching in the opening chapters.[46] The pastoral epistles, especially 1 and 2 Timothy, are often similarly classified; Paul's personal remarks contained therein serve to exhort Timothy to emulate his example, set in contrast to the actions of the false teachers.[47] Other epistles, most notably 1 Peter, are steeped in exhortation without formally corresponding to the parenetic letter genre.[48]

A second example of functional genre is the letter of recommendation (also called an introductory or intercessory letter). These letters were common among the papyri, introducing the bearer of the letter to its recipient and then requesting a favour on behalf of the bearer, often on the basis of the friendly or familial relationship existing between the two. Frequently the sender obligated himself to the recipient for reciprocal favours. Paul's letter to Philemon on behalf of Onesimus fits this pattern well.[49] Paul relies on his relationship with Philemon as a vital part of his request, reminding him of his debt to Paul and charging Onesimus' debt to his account. Philemon could have been expected to recognize the form of the letter and realize his obligation to comply with the requests. To a certain extent, 3 John also appears to be a letter of recommendation — on behalf of the travelling Christian missionaries whom John encourages Gaius to welcome.[50]

More common among recent genre criticism of the epistles has been rhetorical analysis. Judicial rhetoric sought to convince a judge or jury of the rightness or wrongness of a past action. Deliberative rhetoric tried to persuade or dissuade an assembly concerning the expediency of a future action. Epideictic rhetoric used praise and blame to urge an audience to affirm a point of view or set of values in the

present. A full-blown rhetorical speech would contain all of the following features:

exordium (proemium) – stated the cause and gained the hearer's attention and sympathy
narratio – related the background and facts of the case
propositio (divisio, partitio) – stated what was agreed upon and what was contested
probatio (confirmatio) – contained the proofs, based on the credibility of the speaker, appeals to the hearer's feelings, and/or logical argument
refutatio (confutatio) – refuted opponents' arguments
peroratio (conclusio) – summarized argument and sought to arouse hearers' emotions[51]

In many instances, however, one or more of these elements might be missing.

Probably the most well-known example of the implications of rhetorical genre is H.-D. Betz's analysis of Galatians as an 'apologetic' letter, the written analogue of judicial rhetoric.[52] Betz's approach removes attention somewhat from the classic Lutheran emphasis on 'justification by faith' and places it squarely on Paul's own self-defence as he justifies his past actions and demands a decision in his favour. And as B. Brinsmead elaborates, the apologetic speech genre suggests that Galatians is thoroughly dialogical – both with the opponents who are intruders and with those Galatians who have accepted their theology.[53]

Betz's thesis, however, has been convincingly challenged. While the *narratio* of 1:12 - 2:14 certainly reads like a self-defence, another look shows that Paul uses it to establish the heavenly origin of his gospel. This functions more as a proof based on personal credibility, properly part of the *probatio*. G. Kennedy suggests that these verses are in fact part of an extended series of proofs which run through to 5:1. Further, Betz's *exhortatio* of 5:1 - 6:10 seems inappropriate in a letter focused on the past actions of the writer. *Exhortatio* in fact is notably absent from ancient rhetorical theory. Kennedy therefore prefers the deliberative genre. The parenetic section fits nicely into a letter which seeks as its goal the Galatians' decision to reject, in the future, circumcision and the adherence to the Jewish Law which it entails.[54] Several recent studies have further endorsed and refined an analysis of Galatians as deliberative rhetoric.[55] 2 Thessalonians may offer a second Pauline example of this category of rhetorical genre.[56]

The letter to the Romans has been helpfully analysed in terms of epideictic rhetoric. Older studies often spoke of it as a 'letter-essay' – a 'real' letter sent to specific recipients dealing with specific topics but intended for a broader audience as well. But the substantial tensions between the personal nature of the introduction and conclusion and the literary or treatise-like nature of the body, and between the theology of chapters 1 - 11 and the parenesis of 12 - 15 had never been entirely satisfactorily resolved.[57] Epideictic rhetoric, on the other hand, provides a structure which incorporates all the disparate parts of Romans into a cohesive whole.[58] The features of a personal letter at beginning and end establish Paul's credibility and a relationship with the Romans. In between appear the *propositio* (1:16-17) and *confirmatio* (1:18 - 15:13).[59] R. Jewett is even more specific: Romans represents one particular kind of epideictic rhetoric, an ambassadorial letter. Among other things, this identification makes chapter 16 an integral part of the epistle rather than a fragment of personal greetings originally addressed to some other community.[60] Of course, room must be preserved for Paul's unique style and for the flexibility ancient authors had in deviating from convention. But until recently almost all of Paul's letters were seen as almost entirely distinctive, so a healthy emphasis on generic features shared with other letter-writers is still needed for some time.

The diatribe has been considered by some to be a functional genre and by others a rhetorical style. Either way, additional insights into Galatians and Romans (primarily chapters 1 - 11) emerge when one recognizes that writers of this type of conversational discourse, employed by teachers in various philosophical schools, regularly postulated and refuted the objections of hypothetical opponents, whether or not any were actually present among the audiences addressed. Paul's responses, therefore (most notably his impassioned use of *me genoito* ('may it never be!'), while they may represent actual debates Paul encountered in his ministry, function primarily as transitions to new stages in his argument. One may not conclude that actual opponents were present in the communities to which Paul was writing merely on the basis of these features.[61] Sections of 1 Corinthians (especially 4:6-15; 9:1-18; 15:29-49) also seem to fit well with the ancient form of diatribe.[62]

Functional and rhetorical genre criticism also shed light on the unity of various epistles. Philippians and 2 Corinthians are the two NT letters whose integrity has been most doubted. Both are regularly seen as a composite of three or four (or more) separate fragments, yet several fresh proposals have demonstrated that each fits fairly well into an identifiable genre in its entirety. D. F. Watson builds on several recent studies that have found inclusions and repetition linking otherwise disparate parts of Philippians and argues that the structure of the letter as it stands closely corresponds to the outline of a typical deliberative letter (although he has to see 2:19-30 as an epideictic digression).[63] L. Belleville has suggested that 2 Corinthians 1 - 7 follows the paradigm for an apologetic self-commendatory letter, with the body opening in 1:8 and the transition to the request section in 6:1.[64] I have elsewhere suggested that most of chapters 1 - 7 may also be seen as a tightly structured chiasmus.[65] In each instance the case is enhanced for the literary integrity of material frequently parcelled out into different source documents.

Rhetorical analysis of the Corinthian epistles is also significant in that it corrects misinterpretations of texts like 1 Corinthians 2:1-5. Despite his apparently sweeping disclaimer, Paul does not eschew rhetoric nor reject subtle literary devices aimed to persuade. 2 Corinthians 10 - 13 is laden with intricate and sophisticated approaches to winning over a hostile audience, most notably with Paul's 'boasting in humility', a strategy ancient rhetoricians believed was the most praiseworthy form of boasting. Rather Paul disavows that kind of human 'wisdom' which rejects Christianity and which divorces form from substance. But when he is convinced he has a word from the Lord, Paul will use every weapon in his rhetorical arsenal to try to communicate it to others in a convincing fashion.[66]

Genre criticism of the so-called catholic or general epistles has been laden with pitfalls. Various features of Hebrews, James, Jude and the letters of Peter and John make scholars question whether or not they even reflect genuine epistolary form. Hebrews lacks the conventional prescript. James lacks the postscript. 1 John has neither. 2 Peter and Jude substitute a doxology for a postscript. Nevertheless, these letters too are receiving increasing scrutiny, and significant proposals have been put forward to help one understand their structure and form.

The author of Hebrews describes his work as a 'word of encouragement/exhortation' (Heb. 13:22). This phrase reappears only once in the NT, referring to a preached sermon (Acts 13:15). W. L. Lane notes several additional features which Hebrews shares with homiletical or sermonic material: alternating exposition and application/exhortation, alliteration, oratorical imperatives, euphony, and unusual word order.[67] Probably Hebrews was never intended to be a letter in the typical sense, but was prepared as a sermon to be preached and then later given an epistolary closing. Among other things, this casts light on the use of Hebrews' key warning passages (*e.g.* 6:4-6; 10:26-39). Theologians may debate whether these texts best fit a Calvinist or Arminian perspective, but Christians must preach them because professing believers do apostatize and must be warned about the consequences.

Commentators traditionally viewed James in the same way form critics analysed the gospels — as loosely related units of material strung together with no overarching pattern or clearly discernible outline.[68] But the pendulum has definitely swung in the opposite direction today, in favour of redaction criticism, so that James is now viewed as a theologian in his own right, carefully constructing his 'epistle' according to a predetermined outline. The most significant proposal concerning genre has been to identify James as a complex chiasmus. Of several important proposals, the most notable has been that of P. Davids, who sees James as highlighting three major themes: trials and temptations, wisdom and speech, and wealth and poverty. James 1 introduces each of these three themes twice; chapters 2 - 5 unpack them in greater detail in inverse sequence.[69] Even if Davids' outline imposes a little more structure than is actually present, his theory is helpful in deflecting attention away from 'faith vs. works' as the major concern of James. 2:18-26 is a crucial segment of the letter but it is actually a subordinate illustration of the larger theme of the right use of one's material resources (see 2:14-17). A. Vanhoye has put forward an important thesis viewing Hebrews as another elaborate chiasmus,[70] but many of his correspondences are vague or overly subtle. He has certainly demonstrated detailed literary artistry in the epistle, but as a proposal for the overall genre of the letter he fails to convince.[71]

Raymond Brown has described 1 John as the 'least letter-like format' among the NT epistles.[72] This uniqueness has spawned a bewildering array of suggestions as to its genre. Brown refers to it as a commentary on John's gospel, intended to correct misinterpretations of the earlier work.[73] He notes similarities to the prologue and ending statement of purpose in the gospel and suggests this is deliberate imitation. K. Grayston and P. Perkins call it an enchiridion or instructional tract.[74] S. Smalley terms it a paper: 'a consideration, for purposes of teaching and further discussion, of the christological and ethical issues which were causing debate and even division within the Johannine church'.[75] Aune perhaps comes closest to the mark by terming the book a 'deliberative homily'.[76]

R. Bauckham has broken fresh ground with his detailed analysis of 2 Peter as a testament. Drawing deeply on the Jewish tradition of farewell speeches, the author of 2 Peter portrays the apostle like the fathers of Israel, knowing his end is near and making plans for his message to be preserved after his death (2 Pet. 1:14-15). Because most Jewish testaments were pseudepigraphical (*e.g.* the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*), Bauckham believes 2 Peter is too. Readers would have recognized the genre and not have been deceived or put off by the attribution of authorship.[77] This may or may not follow, but Bauckham's work offers one of the few defences of pseudepigraphy in the NT which has included the type of genre analysis necessary to make pseudonymity both a potentially convincing and a morally acceptable hypothesis.[78] In sharp contrast, Donelson's recent defence of a well-established pseudepigraphic genre which the author of the pastorals allegedly followed regularly assumes what he is trying to prove, while the monograph of M. Kiley on Colossians as pseudepigraphy avoids the issue of genre altogether.[79] On the other hand, G. Cannon has used rhetorical analysis to show that Colossians carefully follows genuine Pauline patterns in ways not easily imitated, thus strengthening the case for that letter's authenticity.[80]

In an entirely different vein, Bauckham presents a fresh case for the priority of Jude over 2 Peter based on Jude's tightly knit argument and 'midrashic' structure. With a series of threefold illustrations Jude likens the false teachers threatening his community to those who were judged in OT times, to key characters in intertestamental works, and to unpleasant, atypical events in the world of nature. Although 2 Peter 2 reuses much of this imagery, the symmetry and parallelism is not preserved.[81] As D. Watson has pointed out, the redaction of 2 Peter has thoroughly reworked its source material in a way which affirms its own literary integrity.[82]

Revelation

Readers of Revelation have puzzled over its contents for centuries. Here if ever the need for genre criticism becomes apparent. Formally, Revelation shares feature with three distinct genres: prophecy, apocalyptic, and epistle. Traditionally, most commentators understood the book primarily in terms of prophecy. Widely divergent schools of interpretation developed along temporal (preterist, historicist, idealist and futurist) and millennial (premillennial, postmillennial, amillennial) lines. But most agreed that John wrote above all as a prophet, combining proclamation and prediction to encourage the Christians in Asia Minor at the end of the first century that God was in control of history and on the verge of creating a better world for his people. This prophetic model has frequently given rise to attempts to read Revelation in light of the current events of a given epoch of history, often based on the belief that an identifiable generation would witness Christ's return. The best-selling American book of non-fiction in the 1970s, Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth,* reflected just such a perspective.[83] The problems with this approach, however, are numerous. Many generations of Christians have believed they could see the fulfilment of

Revelation in their lifetime, precisely because its imagery is sufficiently archetypal[84] so as to fit well with world events of many eras. An exclusively prophetic interpretation usually also insists on an impossibly literal hermeneutic which is therefore inevitably applied inconsistently.[85]

The vast majority of modern scholars of all theological perspectives has therefore focused on Revelation as apocalyptic. The term comes from the Greek title of the book, *Apokalypsis*, and associates John's work with numerous other Jewish and Hellenistic works of similar form and content. Nevertheless as recently as the early 'seventies, K. Koch could describe the general state of confusion among scholars both as to what works merited the title 'apocalyptic' and as to what features they had in common.[86] As a result, the Society of Biblical Literature formed a study group on the Apocalypse, which published the findings of several years of research in *Semeia* 14 (1979). Surveying a significant array of ancient works of Jewish, Greco-Roman, Christian, Gnostic and Persian provenance, this team of researchers identified twenty-eight elements which characterized numerous apocalyptic writings and then assessed how many of the elements each of the works in question exhibited. The resulting definition which they adopted read as follows:

> 'Apocalypse' is a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another, supernatural world.[87]

Some of the works which best exemplified this genre included *4 Ezra, 2 Baruch,* the *Apocalypse of John the Theologian,* the *Apocalypse of Peter,* and the *Book of Revelation.*[88]

The proceedings of a subsequent, international colloquium in Uppsala in 1979 were published four years later. This volume reflected a more amorphous group of studies, but there were several contributors who agreed that a definition of apocalyptic should include aspects of function as well as form and content.[89] Much discussion focused on Revelation's social function; recent studies continue to debate whether or not Revelation was written in response to a definable social crisis.[90] More work by another SBL seminar generated *Semeia* 36 (1986), entitled *Early Christian Apocalypticism: Genre and Social Setting.* This symposium elaborated, challenged, and endorsed various of the proposals which the Uppsala gathering had put forward.

Very little evangelical scholarship, however, influenced any of these gatherings, so that the upshot of all of them has been largely to affirm that apocalyptic is an outmoded world-view. Revelation may have value for the modern reader, but only after it is demythologized. As A. Collins sums up, 'A hermeneutic which takes historical criticism seriously (by which she means understanding Revelation as apocalyptic) can no longer work with an interventionist notion of God.' Instead, one must 'view Revelation as expressing God's intentions for the world. The Book of Revelation expresses what is real and what is good from the point of view of a believer in the God of Israel and the God of Christ'.[91] Moreover, most proponents of apocalyptic have not sufficiently stressed the ways in which Revelation differs from typical apocalypses. L. Morris, for example, lists the following distinctives: (a) frequent reference to the book as prophecy; (b) typically prophetic warnings and calls for repentance; (c) lack of pseudonymity; (d) an optimistic world-view; (e) no retracing of past history in the guise of prophecy; (f) realized eschatology; (g) little angelic interpretation; and (h) the affirmation that the Messiah has already come and made atonement.[92]

The third genre which Revelation resembles is that of an epistle. No other known apocalypse employs the epistolary conventions which frame John's book. M. Karrer has argued at length that Revelation does not represent an apocalyptic genre at all but a genuine letter. He demonstrates parallels in rhetorical style and communication theory between John's and Paul's writings and takes seriously the text's claim to be addressed to seven historical churches in first-century Asia Minor.[93] Other writers have highlighted Revelation's dramatic devices, suggesting that it was meant to be read (and perhaps even acted out) orally as was customary with ancient letters addressed to large assemblies.[94] Still others have postulated liturgical origins for the work,[95] drawing further lines of comparison with parts of NT epistles.

Presumably a balanced assessment of Revelation requires a blending of all three genres. Over three decades ago, G. E. Ladd penned an important but often neglected study, 'Why Not Prophetic-Apocalyptic?'[96] Today more and more scholars have come to recognize that some kind of combination of the two is essential.[97] And the presence of epistolary trappings offers a salutary reminder that Revelation is as 'occasional' in nature as any of the apostolic letters, though Karrer has undoubtedly overstated his thesis.

Interpreters of Revelation do indeed face an imposing hermeneutical minefield. But basic rules of thumb may go a long way to aid them in crossing it.[98] To the extent that Revelation is prophetic, one should expect some information about future, historical events. An interventionist hermeneutic is obsolete only if antisupernaturalism is unjustifiably presupposed. God is going to bring history to a climax with the visible, public return of Christ, who will judge the nations and rule the universe. Beyond this, confessions of faith should proceed cautiously. The details of the tribulation and millennium probably combine elements of past, present and future horrors and triumphs, just as OT prophecy mixed together preaching for the present with predictions about the future which themselves were susceptible to multiple fulfilment.[99] As an apocalypticist, the writer resembles a political cartoonist.[100] The meanings of his symbols were presumably intelligible to his original audience but contemporary reconstructions of those meanings must often remain tentative. Many, however, may be deduced from his own explanations, from parallels elsewhere in Scripture, and from extra-canonical sources. Like a parable, apocalyptic often both conceals and reveals, and it regularly includes imagery that simply reinforces the central theme of a passage rather than adding independent information to be deciphered.[101] And like an epistle, Revelation includes information that had to have been intelligible to its original addressees. Any interpretation that allows for no point of contact with what first-century Asians could have grasped must be rejected.[102]

Conclusion

Genre criticism continues to flourish as the final decade of the twentieth century unfolds. Scholars have clearly

abandoned the older positions which viewed the NT writings as largely *sui generis*, too distinctive from other ancient works to be helpfully classified with them. One must exercise care to avoid the opposite extreme; the canonical writings do exhibit unique features and combinations of features which fit no known generic moulds. But most readers will gain much insight if they understand the genres to which the biblical materials most closely approximate, and they will be more likely to interpret them in ways appropriate for their literary forms.[103]

[1] R. A. Guelich, *Mark 1 - 8:26* (Dallas: Word, 1989), pp. xix-xxii; R. Y. K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), pp. 28-32; J. R. Michaels, *1 Peter* (Waco: Word, 1988), pp. xlvi-xlix.

[2] H. Conzelmann and A. Lindemann, *Interpreting the New Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), pp. 26-32; S. Brown, *The Origins of Christianity* (Oxford: University Press, 1984), pp. 29-30; S. L. Harris, *The New Testament: A Student's Introduction* (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield, 1988), pp. 5-6.

[3] G. D. Fee and D. Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982); L. Ryken, *How to Read the Bible as Literature* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984); *idem, Words of Delight: A Literary Introduction to the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987); *idem, Words of Life: A Literary Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987).

[4] D. E. Aune, *The New Testament in its Literary Environment* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987); *idem* (ed.), *Greco-Roman Literature and the New Testament* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1988).

[5] Aune, *New Testament*, p. 13. A balanced review and assessment of the debate over the meaning of genre appears in G. R. Osborne, 'Genre Criticism — Sensus Literalis', *TrinJ* n.s. 4 (1983), pp. 1-27.

[6] See esp. E. D. Hirsch, Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967); *idem, The Aims of Interpretation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976).

[7] See *e.g.* M. Smith, 'Prolegomena to a Discussion of Aretalogies, Divine Men, the Gospels and Jesus', *JBL* 90 (1971), pp. 174-199; D. O Via, Jr., *Kerygma and Comedy in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975); and G. Bilezikian, *The Liberated Gospel: A Comparison of the Gospel of Mark and Greek Tragedy* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977), respectively.

[8] W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1975), p. 37. More recently, *cf.* A. Dihle, 'Die Evangelien und die griechische Biographie', in *Das Evangelium und die Evangelien*, ed. P. Stuhlmacher (Tübingen: Mohr, 1983), pp. 383-411.

[9] C. H. Talbert, *What Is A Gospel?* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977).

[10] D. E. Aune, 'The Problem of the Genre of the Gospels: A Critique of C. H. Talbert's *What Is A Gospel?*', in R. T. France and D. Wenham (eds.), *Gospel Perspectives 2* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1981), pp. 9-60.

[11] M. Hengel, *Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity* (London: SCM, 1979), p. 16.

[12] P. L. Shuler, *A Genre for the Gospels: The Biographical Character of Matthew* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982).

[13] R. Guelich, 'The Gospel Genre', in *Das Evangelium und die Evangelien*, pp. 183-219; W. S. Vorster, 'Der Ort der Gattung Evangelium in der Literaturgeschichte', *VF* 29 (1984), pp. 2-25.

[14] Guelich, 'Gospel Genre', p. 217.

[15] R. H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982). *Cf.* his defence and clarification of his views in his four short articles in *JETS* 26 (1983), pp. 41-56, 71-86, 95-100, 109-115.

[16] For a more detailed and incisive critique of Gundry, see esp. P. B. Payne, 'Midrash and History in the Gospels with Special Reference to R. H. Gundry's *Matthew*', in R. T. France and D. Wenham (eds.), *Gospel Perspectives 3* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1983), pp. 177-215.

[17] W. Kelber, *The Oral and the Written Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), p. 131.

[18] J. G. Williams, *Gospel Against Parable* (Sheffield: Almond, 1985); E. S. Malbon, 'Mark: Myth and Parable', *BTB* 16 (1986), pp. 8-17.

[19] Kelber relies heavily on the 'autonomous' theory of literacy advocated by such people as W. J. Ong and E. Havelock. But this school has been successfully challenged by the 'ideological' theories of such researchers as S. Scribner and M. Cole and of B. Street. In other words, as a culture (or subculture) becomes increasingly literate it does not develop dramatically new cognitive and psychological perspectives; rather it simply chooses to use oral or written forms in different social settings for different purposes and functions.

[20] T. Callan, 'The Preface of Luke - Acts and Historiography', *NTS* 31 (1985), pp. 576-581. L. Alexander's attempt ('Luke's Preface in the Context of Greek Preface-Writing', *NovT* 28 [1986], pp. 48-74) to link Luke - Acts with scientific monographs does not succeed in pointing out as many distinctive parallels.

[21] Aune, *New Testament*, pp. 64-65.

[22] I have defended this claim at length in my book, *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels* (Leicester: IVP, 1987), which is heavily indebted to the six-volume series *Gospel Perspectives*, ed. R. T. France, D. Wenham, and C. L. Blomberg (Sheffield: JSOT, 1980-86).

[23] See my article, co-authored with S. C. Goetz, 'The Burden of Proof', *JSNT* 11 (1981), pp. 39-63.

[24] See my 'Midrash, Chiasmus and the Outline of Luke's Central Section', in *Gospel Perspectives 3*, pp. 217-261.

[25] In fact, it is often precisely when the theological (or redactional) motives are discerned for one evangelist's distinctive presentation of a particular pericope that a plausible harmonization with that passage's parallel becomes more apparent. See my article, 'The Legitimacy and Limits of Harmonization', D. A. Carson and J. D. Woodbridge (eds.), in *Hermeneutics, Authority, and Canon* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), pp. 139-174.

[26] Many will protest that even if a historical intention can be maintained for the synoptics, such is not the case with John. But see J. A. T. Robinson, *The Priority of John* (London: SCM, 1985); and my article, 'To What Extent is John Historically Reliable?' in the H. Flanders *Festschrift* (Macon: Mercer, forthcoming).

[27] See esp. C. M. Tuckett, *Nag Hammadi and the Gospel Tradition* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986); *idem*, 'Thomas and the Synoptics', *NovT* 30 (1988), pp. 132-151.

[28] K. R. Wolfe, 'The Chiastic Structure of Luke - Acts and Some Implications for Worship', *SWJT* 22 (1980), pp. 60-71.

[29] G. Muhlack, *Die Parallelen von Lukas-Evangelium und Apostelgeschichte* (Frankfurt a. M.: P. Lang, 1979).

[30] See esp. W. Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveller and Roman Citizen* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1895). More recently *cf.* esp. I. H. Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Leicester: IVP; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980); F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, [2]1988).

[31] E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971). *Cf.* esp. E. Plümacher, *Lukas als hellenistischer Schriftsteller* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972); H. Conzelmann, *Acts* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988).

[32] R. I. Pervo, *Profit with Delight: The Literary Genre of the Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987). *Cf.* esp. S. M. Praeder, 'Luke - Acts and the Ancient Novel', in *SBL Seminar Papers 1981* (Chico: Scholars, 1981), pp. 269-292.

[33] For other criticisms, see Aune, *New Testament*, p. 80. *Cf.* my review of Pervo in *Criswell Theological Review* 4.2 (1990) forthcoming.

[34] C. J. Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1989).

[35] But *cf.* the important study by W. C. van Unnik, 'Luke's Second Book and the Rules of Hellenistic Historiography', in J. Kremer (ed.), *Les Actes des Apôtres: Traditions, rédaction, théologie* (Gembloux: Duculot, 1979), pp. 37-60, in which Luke compares favourably with those historians who were most careful in basing their speeches on relatively trustworthy information.

[36] Interestingly, often in the context of sea-voyage narratives, not unlike that of Acts 27. But C. Hemer, 'First Person Narrative in Acts 27 - 28', *TynB* 36 (1985), pp. 79-109, has pointed out important dissimilarities as well.

[37] S. M. Praeder, 'The Problem of First Person Narration in Acts', *NovT* 29 (1987), pp. 193-218; C. H. Gempf, 'Historical and Literary Appropriateness in the Mission Speeches of Paul in Acts' (Ph.D. Thesis: Aberdeen, 1988).

[38] Aune, *New Testament*, p. 78.

[39] *Cf.* I. H. Marshall, 'Luke and His "Gospel" ', in *Das Evangelium und die Evangelien,* pp. 289-308.

[40] Jos, *Ant.* xx, ii. 5; xix, viii. 2.

[41] J. L. White, *Light from Ancient Letters* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986); S. K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986);. A. J. Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1988).

[42] See *e.g.* the summary of research as recent as the early 1970s in W. G. Doty, *Letters in Primitive Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1973). The most thorough study of introductory and concluding forms along with stylized formula used throughout a NT letter's body is F. Schnider and W. Stenger, *Studien zum neutestamentlichen Briefformular* (Leiden: Brill, 1987). The most important discussion of Paul's prayers and thanksgiving sections is P. T. O'Brien, *Introductory Thanksgivings in the Letters of Paul* (Leiden: Brill, 1977).

[43] See esp. A. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East* (London: Harper & Bros., [4]1922), pp. 146-251.

[44] Aune, *New Testament,* p. 218. *Cf.* Stowers, *Letter Writing,* pp. 18-19.

[45] See esp. R. W. Funk, *Parables and Presence* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), pp. 81-110; J. L. White, 'Saint Paul and the Apostolic Letter Tradition', *CBQ* 45 (1983), pp. 433-444.

[46] See esp. A. J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians: The Philosophic Tradition of Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), pp. 68-78. *Cf.* Aune, *New Testament,* p. 206. R. Jewett, *The Thessalonian Correspondence: Pauline Rhetoric and Millenarian Piety* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), pp. 63-87, prefers to utilize a rhetorical analysis, identifying 1 Thes. with epideictic form. B. C. Johanson, *To All the Brethren: A Text - Linguistic and Rhetorical Approach to 1 Thessalonians* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1987), combines functional and rhetorical analysis with communication theory and labels 1 Thes. a parenetic and deliberative letter combining consolation and dissuasion.

[47] See esp. B. Fiore, *Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles* (Rome: BIP, 1986). *Cf.* Stowers, *Letter Writing,* p. 97.

[48] Thus Aune, *New Testament,* pp. 221-222, labels it a 'paraenetic encyclical'. Michaels, *1 Peter,* p. xlvi, prefers a genre label based more on content than form: 'an apocalyptic diaspora letter to "Israel" '.

[49] Aune, *New Testament,* pp. 211-212; Stowers, *Letter Writing,* p. 155. F. F. Church, 'Rhetorical Structure and Design in Paul's Letter to Philemon', *HTR* 17 (1978), pp. 17-33, offers a detailed outline in terms of deliberative rhetoric.

[50] Stowers, *Letter Writing,* p. 156.

[51] *Cf.* G. A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), p. 24.

[52] H.-D. Betz, *Galatians* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), p. 14 *et passim.*

[53] B. H. Brinsmead, *Galatians — Dialogical Response to Opponents* (Chico: Scholars, 1982).

[54] Kennedy, *Rhetorical Criticism,* pp. 144-152.

[55] See esp. R. G. Hall, 'The Rhetorical Outline for Galatians: A Reconsideration', *JBL* 106 (1987), pp. 277-287; F. Vouga, 'Zur rhetorischen Gattung des Galaterbriefes', *ZNW* 79 (1988), pp. 291-292; J. Smit, 'The Letter of Paul to the Galatians: A Deliberative Speech', *NTS* 35 (1989), pp. 1-26.

[56] Jewett, *Thessalonian Correspondence,* pp. 81-87. *Cf.* G. S. Holland, *The Tradition that You Received from Us: 2 Thessalonians in the Pauline Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1988), p. 6.

[57] For a summary of the state of the debate at the end of the 1970s, see K. P. Donfried (ed.), *The Romans Debate* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977).

[58] Kennedy, *Rhetorical Criticism,* pp. 152-156.

[59] W. Wuellner, 'Paul's Rhetoric of Argumentation in Romans: An Alternative to the Donfried - Karris Debate over Romans', in *The Romans Debate,* p. 168.

[60] R. Jewett, 'Romans as an Ambassadorial Letter', *Int* 36 (1982), pp. 5-20.

[61] See esp. S. K. Stowers, *The Diatribe and Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Chico: Scholars, 1981).

[62] T. Schmeller, *Paulus und die 'Diatribe'* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1987). On additional rhetorical features which dominate major sections of 1 Cor., see M. Bünker, *Briefformular und rhetorische Disposition im 1. Korintherbrief* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983).

[63] D. F. Watson, 'A Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians and Its Implications for the Unity Question', *NovT* 30 (1988), pp. 57-88. *Cf.* D. E. Garland, 'The Composition and Unity of Philippians', *NovT* 27 (1985), pp. 141-173; B. Mengel, *Studien zum Philipperbrief* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1982).

[64] L. L. Belleville, 'A Letter of Apologetic Self-Commendation: 2 Cor. 1:8 - 7:16', forthcoming in *NovT.*

[65] C. L. Blomberg, 'The Structure of 2 Corinthians 1 - 7', *Criswell Theological Review* 4.1 (1989) forthcoming.

[66] See esp. C. Forbes, 'Comparison, Self-Praise and Irony: Paul's Boasting and the Conventions of Hellenistic Rhetoric', *NTS* 32 (1986), pp. 1-30.

[67] W. L. Lane, 'Hebrews: A Sermon in Search of a Setting', *SWJT* 28 (1985), p. 14. Lane's forthcoming volume of Hebrews in the Word Biblical Commentary series promises to offer a fresh, detailed analysis of the letter from this perspective.

[68] As classically in M. Dibelius, *James* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976). Vestiges of this approach remain in recent studies on James as parenesis: *e.g.* L. G. Perdue, 'Paraenesis and the Epistle of James', *ZNW* 72 (1981), pp. 241-256; E. Baasland, 'Der Jakobusbrief als neutestamentliche Weisheitschrift', *ST* 36 (1982), pp. 119-139.

[69] P. H. Davids, *The Epistle of James* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1982). *Cf.* J. M. Reese, 'The Exegete as Sage: Hearing the Message of James', *BTB* 12 (1982), pp. 82-85.

[70] A. Vanhoye, *La structure littéraire de l'epître aux Hébreux* (Paris: Desclée, 1963).

[71] Thus, respectively, D. G. Black, 'The Problem of the Literary Structure of Hebrews: An Evaluation and a Proposal', *GTJ* 7 (1986), pp. 163-177; and D. J. MacLeod, 'The Literary Structure of the Book of Hebrews', *BSac* 146 (1989), pp. 185-197.

[72] R. E. Brown, *The Epistles of John* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1982), p. 87.

[73] In fact, Brown has devoted an entire work to the unpacking of this thesis: *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (New York: Paulist, 1979).

[74] K. Grayston, *The Johannine Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), p. 4; P. Perkins, *The Johannine Epistles* (Wilmington: Glazier, 1979), pp. xvi-xvii.

[75] S. S. Smalley, *1, 2, 3 John* (Waco: Word, 1984), p. xxxiii.

[76] Aune, *New Testament,* p. 218.

[77] R. J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter* (Waco: Word, 1983), pp. 131-163.

[78] *Cf.* esp. *idem,* 'Pseudo-Apostolic Letters', *JBL* 107 (1988), pp. 469-494.

[79] L. R. Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy and Ethical Argument in the Pastoral Epistles* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1986); M. Kiley, *Colossians and Pseudepigraphy* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1986).

[80] G. E. Cannon, *The Use of Traditional Materials in Colossians* (Macon: Mercer, 1983), pp. 136-166.

[81] Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter,* pp. 3-17.

[82] D. F. Watson, *Invention, Arrangement and Style: Rhetorical Criticism of Jude and 2 Peter* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1988).

[83] (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970.)

[84] On archetype in Revelation, see esp. N. Frye, *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature* (San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1983), pp. 135-138.

[85] As typically among classic dispensationalist interpretations. But recent dispensationalists have shifted substantially toward the mainstreams of Christian theology, as nicely surveyed by C. A. Blaising, 'Developing Dispensationalism', *BSac* 145 (1955), pp. 133-140; 254-280.

[86] K. Koch, *The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic* (London: SCM; Naperville: Allenson, 1972), pp. 18-35.

[87] J. J. Collins, 'Introduction: Morphology of a Genre', *Semeia* 14 (1979), p. 9.

[88] *Cf.* the similar approach of J. Carmignac, 'Qu'est-ce que l'Apocalyptique? Son emploi à Qumran', *RQ* 10 (1979), pp. 3-33.

[89] D. Hellholm (ed.), *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1983).

[90] *Cf.* esp. A. Y. Collins, *Crisis and Catharsis: The Power of the Apocalypse* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984), who denies such a context, with E. S. Fiorenza, *The Book of Revelation: Justice and Judgment* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), who reconstructs one in some detail.

[91] A. Y. Collins, 'Reading the Book of Revelation in the Twentieth Century', *Int* 40 (1986), p. 242.

[92] L. Morris, *The Book of Revelation* (Leicester: IVP; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, ²1987), pp. 25-27.

[93] M. Karrer, *Die Johannesoffenbarung als Brief* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986).

[94] *E.g.* D. L. Barr, 'The Apocalypse of John as Oral Enactment', *Int* 40 (1986), pp. 243-256; J. Blevins, *Revelation as Drama* (Nashville: Broadman, 1984).

[95] *E.g.* M. D. Goulder, 'The Apocalypse as an Annual Cycle of Prophecies', *NTS* 27 (1981), pp. 342-367.

[96] *JBL* 76 (1957), pp. 192-200.

[97] *E.g.* D. Hill, *New Testament Prophecy* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1979), pp. 70-93; Fiorenza, *Revelation,* pp. 133-156; K. Berger, *Formgeschichte des Neuen Testaments* (Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1984), pp. 295-305.

[98] One of the best, recent, reliable and most readable guides to interpreting Revelation is A. B. Mickelsen, *Daniel and Revelation: Riddles or Realities* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984). More briefly, *cf.* Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible,* pp. 205-217; Ryken, *Words of Life,* pp. 135-163.

[99] The reader who consults the commentaries of R. H. Mounce (*The Book of Revelation* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977]), J. P. M. Sweet (*Revelation* [London: SCM, 1979]), and G. Quispel (*The Secret Book of Revelation* [New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979]) will have a good up-to-date cross-section of scholarly interpretation from several perspectives on any given passage in Rev.

[100] See esp. G. R. Beasley-Murray, *The Book of Revelation* (London: Oliphants, ²1978).

[101] See esp. C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), whose work overall remains one of the most important of recent times on apocalyptic in Judaism and early Christianity.

[102] For excellent, recent, evangelical summaries of the message and application of Rev., see D. Guthrie, *The Relevance of John's Apocalypse* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1987); and G. Goldsworthy, *The Gospel of Revelation* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1984).

[103] I would like to thank my research students Steven A. Johnson and David L. Mathewson for their MA in NT projects on the genre of the epistles and the genre of Revelation respectively. Several sections of this paper are heavily indebted to their surveys.

Moving on with God:

Key motifs in Exodus 13 – 20

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Dr Sheriffs is a South African scholar currently teaching Old Testament at London Bible College. He offers us a fresh reading of familiar stories whose deeper layers of meaning can easily get lost under critical fragmentation. This article, a model of a controlled typological approach to the text, was first read as a paper on Old Testament Spirituality at the Tyndale Fellowship OT Study Group, July 1989.

Introduction: scope and method

I might have entitled these reflections 'the route to Canaan revisited', for my early years were lived in the Baptist and evangelical sub-culture where the language of Canaan was spoken. The use of 'promise boxes', the describing of spiritual life in terms of being on the victory side, coming out from among them and being separate, following God's guidance, feasting on the daily portion (read 'manna'), undergoing a testing experience, not hankering after the fleshpots of Egypt, passing through a wilderness experience, having a mountain top experience, not tarrying too long on this mountain – these idioms contributed to a model of spirituality subliminally and sermonically imprinted on me. I return to these ideas now not to lampoon, but because I would like to re-appropriate the stories this piety was derived from, stories which catch my imagination and offer me symbols of life.

The Afrikaans community of South Africa, meanwhile, was appropriating the book of Exodus anew through cultic re-enactment of the Great Trek on its centenary in 1938. Through the rhetoric of the chosen people, and of the annual commemoration of the victory of Blood River against the Zulus, known as the Day of the Covenant, or more accurately, Day of the Vow, the Exodus-covenant language was being appropriated in their own way to interpret divine vocation.[1] Again, I do not want to turn away from the political implications of covenant, its liberation theology and socio-economic re-readings of Exodus, but this time I would return to the text politically conscientized towards colonial and racial oppression, and aware there may be future variations on this theme.

I can offer here no typology-free re-reading of Exodus 13 - 20, but whether mine classifies as Neo-Canaanite, New Hermeneutic or New Age, I will leave to you to judge. As regards method, I would like to take a number of motifs which seem relevant to spirituality from the Exodus narrative in the block of material in Exodus 13 - 20. I start with the redactor's theological emphasis, then glance at the canonical trajectory, and finally ask how we may appropriate the text and internalize it in a way that touches our spirituality.

I: The journey motif

Exodus tells the story of a cultic journey. 'We must go three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to Yhwh our God' (8:27). The beginning of the journey is marked by a cultic meal eaten with 'loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand' (12:11). In this way, moving out of Egypt and moving on with God to an encounter symbolized by the covenant meal at Sinai associates a relationship with God with two simple human activities, eating and walking. Both the eating and the journeying take on symbolic significance. In the fullness of time, eating the New Covenant meal will reinforce the symbolism of communing in a rite

which connects Passover and Sinai. The journeying component then has to be transposed to metaphor only because no literal walking to a geographical promised land accompanies the NT inheritance.

Leaving to receive
To appreciate the exodus story as symbolic journey, we need to see the exodus typologically. Precedent for this is set by the Pentateuch itself. The exodus is one of several journeys which form a pattern linked by the text itself. Genesis blazes the trail by presenting the story of Abraham as an exodus from Ur to the Promised Land. In particular, the phrasing of Genesis 15:7 resonates with the typological foreshadowing of the nation's exodus to Canaan: 'I am Yhwh who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans'. In a chapter which foresees the Egyptian oppression and records God's promissory oath of land, this connection of two journeys to the inheritance invites us to see moving on with God as a pattern of obedience.[2] In both cases, there is a leaving in order to receive what is promised.

A trail of corpses
Another prefigurement of leaving to inherit the promise is the exodus of Jacob's funeral cortège (Gn. 50:4-14 in the light of Gn. 49:29; 48:21) for his body to be laid alongside those of Sarah and Abraham, Isaac and Rebekah, and that of Leah in the plot of ground near Hebron. Finally, the narrative sequel of Exodus is explicitly bound together with the promises of Genesis by the figure of Joseph himself, who binds his sons by oath to carry him up to Canaan for burial when the exodus happens (Gn. 50:25). The exodus-burial oath to Joseph is cited in Exodus 14:19 when it records that Joseph's embalmed bones joined the trek from Egypt to the Red Sea and beyond. Joshua 24:32 completes this series of journeys to the inheritance, the promise embodied, by recording the burial of Joseph's bones in Shechem, the area of his tribal allotment. Joseph's is the last and the longest-delayed journey to the land of promise. Faith in the promise is indeed a Pentateuchal and biblical motif which motivates inward orientation, social involvement and sense of identity.[3]

Down-to-earth spirituality
In parenthesis, while thinking of patriarchal burials, we may recall the Ancient Near Eastern ideal of filial piety. From Mari and Ugarit we know this involved an ancestor cult, giving proper burial and maintaining offerings and libations. While proper burial and gathering to the fathers is valued in these Pentateuchal stories, there is no mention of a continuing on-site cultic activity. In this way, land promise has displaced ancestor cult, and inheritance of the land is God's gift, dependent on God's oath, rather than being dependent on son's oath to patriarch about burial.[4] Perhaps this contributes to the this-worldly orientation of OT spirituality, and its relative lack of other-worldly hope. Certainly, the down-to-earthness of OT spirituality has much to offer our generation.

Whether walking or carried in procession, the patriarchs enshrine a spirituality of faith in which their core identity is defined by belonging to the chosen people rather than by the culture in which they are born, live or die. It is, of course, this roving pursuit of the promise which impresses the writer to the Hebrews, and leads him to emphasize the transitoriness and disconnection between the Christian's racial/cultural identity and his ultimate belonging which is to the people of God, gathered around a new Zion, in continuity with, yet alternative to, the gathering at Mount Sinai (Heb. 12).

Canonical method
Numbers extends and nuances the journey motif because of its explicit and implicit typological parallels between the journey stages of Egypt–Sinai, Sinai–Kadesh, Kadesh–Moab, and the clustering of motifs, such as the murmuring motif, within these narrative blocks.[5] Grasping these links between journeyings in the Pentateuchal stories confirms a method of appropriation. Typological re-reading is demonstrably canonical, and evident both within the OT canon itself and in the NT's use of the OT.[6] It points a way for our own re-readings, and emphasizing of recurrent motifs.

Journey, road and walk metaphors
The journey metaphor, the motif of a walk with God along a route chosen by him through unknown terrain and hazards to an ultimate destination, has embedded itself in Christian tradition and consciousness as a core metaphor of life.[7] In the process, this travelling by foot with divine guidance has accumulated associations in a manner characteristic of tensive symbols, and many journey, path, guidance, light, and destination metaphors will owe nothing directly to the patriarchal cycle or the exodus story. For instance, there is a metaphor of walking by faith or walking with God.[8] This has become as fundamental an image of spirituality as the journey or pilgrimage metaphor. Enoch sets a typological precedent: 'Enoch walked with God' (Gn. 5:22,24) in a life of intimate fellowship, culminating in the ultimate transformation. This seems separate from exodus journey motifs, yet treaty and grant use the 'walk' imagery, as does Deuteronomy in connection with covenant, so that obliquely the 'walking' metaphor of Genesis spiritually links with Israel's covenant spirituality.[9]

It is hard to tell, for instance, if the summary statement of spirituality found in Micah 6 alludes to the exodus journey, despite explicit exodus references in the context. Does the phrase 'and walk carefully with your God' image the trek with Moses, Aaron and Miriam which is referred to explicitly in verse 4, or not?[10]

Yet some echoes of the exodus walk are direct, such as those which focus on the guidance spoken of by Exodus 14. The frame of chosen route to a destination and the divine accompaniment along it with pillar of cloud and fire, which mark the exodus as more than a departure, are appropriated by prophets addressing exiles. There will be an unhasty exodus 'for Yhwh will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard' (Is. 52:12);[11] 'in paths they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light' (42:16). The hazards of the desert crossing will be overcome by the supply of pools of water and luxuriant vegetation (Is. 41:17ff.; 48:21; 49:8ff.).

Guidance on the journey
As part of the journey pattern, the guidance motif is certainly written large into the exodus story and liturgical reflections on it. Both prose and hymnic sections of Exodus emphasized God's guidance, using the Hebrew root *nhh*:[12]

> God did not *lead* them by way of the land of the Philistines . . . Yhwh went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to *lead* them along the way (13:17,21).
>
> Thou hast *lead* in thy steadfast love the people whom thou hast redeemed, thou hast guided them by thy strength to thy holy abode (15:13).

The way exodus guidance appears in the poetry of Psalms 77 and 78 illustrates extension of metaphor, for of the four occurrences of *nḥh,* one retains the pillar of cloud, but in three (77:20 and 78:53,72) this visual symbol is displaced by Shepherd–flock imagery. This process of elaboration by associating images is so natural that it can pass unnoticed. Indeed, poets may associate images consciously and unconsciously, just as we mix metaphors in everyday speech consciously or unconsciously.[13] Other changes when older traditions are re-utilized are perhaps due not so much to the magnetic field of different imagery (Shepherd–flock rather than Cloud–light) as due to a new theological slant being placed on the tradition. Perhaps the retelling of the exodus in Isaiah 63 with the *ruaḥ Yhwh* as guiding presence illustrates a theological nuancing (63:11,14).[14]

What concerns us here is how the journey-presence-guidance pattern becomes an extended metaphor and model of spirituality, or perhaps, taking into account Israel's failure to progress, we should say a map of spiritual hazard.

II: Testing

Experience and growth

Germane to the entire concept of spirituality is growth in the knowledge of God. The wilderness journey is presented as a test of faith, and a learning experience. Today there are signs that point to theological education's coming to terms with the role of experience and so being more appreciative of God's teaching methods and Israel's trial and error pattern of learning, which is displayed for us so clearly in the exodus-wilderness story. The signs of a greater openness are diverse. I would include liberation theology's insistence on starting from context and praxis, and its attempts at re-readings of the exodus narrative; the charismatic renewal movement's emphasis on experience of the Spirit and on worship; a pastoral appreciation for the role of group dynamics in the process of learning and change in varied contexts, from mid-week home groups to marriage enrichment to rehabilitation; the work of academic specialists, who subsequent to particular life-experiences in groups, have written books like W. Wink's *The Bible in Human Transformation: toward a new paradigm for Biblical study* (Philadelphia: Fortress, [4]1980), or Conrad L'Heureux, *Life Journey and the Old Testament: an experiential approach to the Bible and Personal Transformation* (New York: Paulist, 1986); the footnotes of W. Brueggemann which model an end to specialist isolationism and an ability to engage the issues of social and personal change in a way which brings overlooked features of the biblical text to life in our contemporary cultures.[15]

Deuteronomy 8 as lens

We may begin our re-reading of Exodus as learning experience from a vantage point of reflection outside the Exodus narrative itself but canonically a close re-reading of the exodus story. Deuteronomy looks back on the whole wilderness period as a training exercise, and we may use the lens of Deuteronomy 8 to view the experience of the exodus journey to Sinai.

> And you shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know; that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but that man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD. . . . Know then in your heart, that as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you. So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, by walking in his ways and by fearing him (Dt. 8:2-3, 5-6).

In passing, we notice the geographical and metaphorical use of *derek* – the 'way' through the wilderness and the 'ways of' Yhwh, the focus on the inner orientation (the heart) needing to match outward compliance, the connection between obedience and life, and the motif of fear of the Lord, all characteristic of Deuteronomy's covenant theology. The Father-son metaphor not only emphasizes the relationship bond,[16] but implies the whole learning process as well. Yet the context balances the discipline and training dimension with the provider aspect of the Father role. God feeds and clothes as well as acting as discipliner.

Father-son relationship

The sonship of Israel is a key motif in the liberation struggle with Pharaoh, and is enunciated early on: 'Israel is my first-born son, and I say to you, "Let my son go that he may serve me"; and if you refuse to let him go, behold I will slay your first-born son (Ex. 4:23). Besides this rootedness in the exodus story, the concept of testing appears with equivalent prominence in the manna episode which Deuteronomy alludes to. God did subject Israel to the ordeals of desert travel, including thirst and hunger, which form a background to the murmuring motif. Yet the 'test' in the text of Exodus itself, as connected with the verb *nsh* – 'to prove' (RSV), is actually linked to God's fatherly provision, seen in 15:25f. in his role as paediatrician, and in 16:4 as bread-giver. It is Israel's obedience to instructions rather than their will to survive which is to be put to proof. This said, Deuteronomy does explicitly link the ordeal element ('he humbled you and let you hunger') and the obedience element ('whether you would keep his commandments or not').

Transforming ordeal

In a re-reading more recent than Deuteronomy's, Cohn attempts to relate Israel's wilderness experience to the dynamics of change involved in transitional periods such as tribal rites of passage, millenarian movements and religious pilgrimages. In a stimulating article entitled 'Liminality in the Wilderness',[17] Cohn draws on the work of the anthropologist Victor Turner who has studied these social and symbolic experiences in terms of separation, marginality and re-incorporation with the development of community and an identity formation. Whether these models end up emphasizing the common bonds of social processes, or more the unique features of Israel's transition experience, I think we must recognize the truth of ordeal and the truth of ambiguity which characterize Israel's betwixt and betweenness in the wilderness.

Already/not yet
NT theology has found that Already/Not Yet transition model fruitful for interpreting Pauline spirituality,[18] as expressed, for instance, in the sonship and freedom of the Spirit to cry 'Abba, Father!' and yet also to groan inwardly. Hebrews too has its sonship and trial and pilgrimage motifs, with a distinct note of ambiguity of outcome as regards those who had started out on their spiritual journey. Finally, as regards canonical trajectory and the usefulness of the sonship–Father training model, we need to make the connection explicit between the covenant narrative of Exodus, the sermonic reflection of Deuteronomy, the identical enunciation of Father–son discipline as spiritual principle in Wisdom education (Pr. 3:11f.), and its re-use in Hebrews as an authoritative quotation from OT Scripture. Beyond this we must note the 'Testing of God's Son' which is embodied as typological pattern in the gospel stories of Jesus' ordeal in the wilderness. This completes the loop back to Deuteronomy 8.[19] Prior to exodus testing, and in many ways the epitome of testing in the OT, is the testing of Abraham in Genesis 22 which confirms the patterning linking forefather and exodus generation.

Trial and error learning
Returning to Exodus, we note that the other echoes of *nasah* are ironical, for they concern Israel inappropriately reversing the roles and attempting to put Yhwh to the test. This role reversal signals their failure to learn, and it left its mark in the resonance of the names Massah and Meribah from Exodus 17:7 in Israel's liturgy (Pss. 81:7; 95:8; 106:32) and NT exhortation alike (Heb. 3, 4).

The desert trek to Sinai is the prime trial and error learning period. After Sinai, the failure to learn is punished in equivalent episodes found in Numbers, and indeed the 40 years' wandering in the wilderness is a punishment, which the journey to Sinai and the southern border of Canaan was not.[20] Nevertheless, the wilderness period is no 'wilderness period' as the 'language of Canaan' would have it, for it is the locus of daily miracle and divine presence. Brueggemann brings this out well in his chapter headed 'You Lacked Nothing'.[21] Reviewing the entire wilderness period, as Deuteronomy 8 does, we see that the Father did not abandon the son who failed the tests, did not withdraw his presence or provision, even during the protracted phase of enforced discipline. This perspective emerging from a view of the wilderness period as testing and failing, trial and error non-learning, is surely a perspective on spiritual experience to be received thankfully as much as tremblingly.

III: The fear of the LORD
The motif of the 'fear of the LORD' is certainly strategically placed in the exodus narrative, for it links the experiences of the Reed Sea rescue with the Sinai covenant relationship. Both are awesome experiences of the God of the Hebrews, his presence and activity dramatized through visual effects. There is also a conceptual paradox attached to each episode which makes them memorable, and strengthens this connection.

Seeing is believing
In Exodus 14:10, the Israelites are pictured as lifting up their eyes to see the oncoming Egyptian attack: 'and they were in great fear'. This sparks the anguished cry that slavery would have been preferable to death in the wilderness – an accusation and despair contributing recurrent irony to the story line. Moses then delivers a salvation oracle with the characteristic opening 'Fear not!', and a picking up of the 'seeing' motif: '*see* the salvation of the LORD . . . for the Egyptians whom you *see* today you will never *see* again' (14:13).[22]

With repetition and alliteration the point is made that God will give proof-of-Presence, responding to the 'seeing is believing' mind-set. The learning experience is summarized in the statement: 'and Israel *saw* the Egyptians, and the people *feared* the LORD' (14:30f.). Seeing was believing, for the verse ends: 'and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses'.[23]

This is a conversion experience from one object of fear to another. It is, of course, part of a much larger transference, a shift from one suzerain to Another, from one land to another, and as such it proves to be incomplete and as much a process as was the journeying itself. The story line of Exodus gels with the spirituality of the Psalter, for the orientation/disorientation/reorientation perspective which emerges from the liturgical collection coheres with the alternation of lament and exultant thanksgiving of Exodus 14 and 15, and the ongoing cycle of despair and complaint induced by thirst, hunger and enemy attack which is altered by God's action in later episodes and way stages.[24]

The paradox of fear
Here the conversion paradox is that though they are told 'Do not fear!' it is, in fact, essential that they do fear. In this context, the 'fear of the LORD' is charged with emotion. It is as profoundly experiential and emotional as seeing the Egyptians first alive, then dead. In fact, the fear of Yhwh grips the routed Egyptians first. Their flight into the water counterpoints the Israelites' flight in the opposite direction onto dry ground, and spiritually juxtaposes the fear unto death with the fear unto life. The *Song of the Sea* highlights the two-sides metaphor of military conflict ('Yahweh is a man of war', 15:3) and the fight with Amalek in Exodus 17, with the decree of perpetual hostility, underlines it. This two-sides, conflictual model is fundamental to a NT perception of transference from kingdom of darkness to kingdom of light, and the whole understanding of spiritual warfare, epitomized by the extended metaphor of Ephesians 6. The *Song of the Sea* also develops the 'fear unto death' motif in 15:14-16 where divinely inspired terror overwhelms Israel's enemies to effect their displacements.[25]

The paradoxical quality of this 'fear of the LORD' is presented again in Exodus 20:20, where in the one breath Moses says: 'Do *not* fear, for God has come to prove you, and that the *fear of him* may be before your eyes, that you may not sin'. The people's fear, described in verse 18, is no quiet reverence but as emotional, indeed physiological, as was the Reed Sea experience. In both contexts, the original experience is overwhelming in its sensory effects. In 20:18, the thunderings, lightnings, trumpet sound and smoking of the mountain, described in the story sequence of chapter 19, are summarized as the cause of this strong reaction along with the hearing of God's audible voice, whether the narrator intended his readers to identify it with the thunder, as the

wording of 19:19 might suggest, or distinguish it as the announcement of the Ten Words in God's direct speech.

The semantics of fear

The 'fear' is the experience of feeling terrified, and wishing to keep a safe distance between themselves and this holy God. Yet 'the fear of him . . . before your eyes', which Moses' words characterize as an enduring orientation, must have a different nuance from terror, just as Israel's mundane experience differed from the Sinai experience even for the wilderness generation itself. On the other hand, because these primal theophanies were so formative for Israel's faith, the semantic field encompassed by the phrase 'the fear of the LORD' can never really detach itself from Reed Sea and Sinai, to drift away into something solely attitudinal rather than emòtional, ethical rather than worshipful, propositional principle rather than transforming effect. There are other nuances to the 'fear of the LORD' than feeling terrified, it is true, and in the Wisdom literature there are seminal statements about the 'fear of the LORD' associated with humility, knowledge, wisdom and moral decision, which have the tone of a day-to-day orientation in contrast to the unique events of Reed Sea and Sinai. These contexts have been sensitively explored in Blocher's 1977 Tyndale lecture 'The Fear of the LORD as the "Principle" of Wisdom', and are certainly germane to an OT spirituality which encompasses everyday behaviour as much as extraordinary encounters with God.[26]

We would want to affirm that the 'fear of the LORD' theology of Exodus coheres with the 'fear of the LORD' theology of Deuteronomy and of the Wisdom literature, and of the Psalms. One basis for affirming this lies in the semantic field evidenced by the exodus story itself.[27] The Reed Sea experience is not the first occurrence of the 'fear of the LORD' motif in the exodus narrative. At the beginning of the story and associated with the fulfilment of the promise of multiplication, we find that the midwives are presented as rôle models of faith in their civil disobedience. Their refusal to implement the genocide policy is motivated by their choice to fear Yhwh rather than fear Pharaoh: 'but the midwives *feared God,* and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them' (1:17) . . . 'and because the midwives *feared God* he gave them families'(1:21). In a political and ethical context, that is an obedience-blessing theology like Deuteronomy's. The midwives preceded the rest of Israel in their fear of Yhwh displacing their fear of Pharaoh. The close association is made in this civil disobedience exemplar between 'fear of God' and ethical decision, and between trust in God and the contrasting choice of political expediency. Likewise, Exodus 14:31 closely associates 'fear of Yhwh' with trust in God and his appointed leader, Moses.

In Exodus 14, then, emotional fear of Yhwh is extended into the faith, trust, and obedience way of living. Brain physiology offers an interesting analogy to, or possibly basis for, the interconnection between the experience of fear in the bio-chemical reaction via the autonomic nervous system, the conceptual interpretative framework mainly sited in the cerebrel cortex, and the sensory impressions reaching the brain. Learning the 'fear of the LORD' involves the whole brain and the whole person, and seeing the phrase the 'fear of the LORD' as signal of a whole association cluster preserves us from more than a semantic fallacy.[28]

New covenant fear

Finally, there is a trajectory of paradox from Exodus to the sayings of Jesus. In a context describing persecution by the authorities, Jesus tells his followers not to fear the authorities but rather to fear God, and not to fear and yet to fear. 'Do not *fear* those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul; rather *fear* him who can destroy both body and soul in hell . . . *fear not,* therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows' (Mt. 10:28, 31). This extends into the new covenant the spirituality of the 'fear of the LORD' in Exodus, including the political and covenant axis of the Exodus material.[29] The new covenant community is never exhorted to fear or to love the emperor; Peter urges a life of freedom lived in the fear of the Lord (1 Pet. 2:16f.).

IV: Covenant nucleus – Exodus 19:4-6

I have been assuming that 'spirituality' includes a focus on separation from the world, commitment to God, union with God, communing with God, the sense of the presence of God, growth in the knowledge of God, and all the mechanisms, such as community and worship and the testing of trust, which facilitate this transformation. I cannot stop to argue these points but would refer to Paul's use of the exodus traditions in describing the transformation of the believer 'beholding the glory of the Lord', and 'being changed into his likeness' (2 Cor. 3:18).

> You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

These words of God, embracing time past and time future, holding out promise and asking for commitment, spoken between leaving Egypt and arriving in Canaan, are nuclear, radiating an exodus spirituality.

Theology versus OT studies

Sadly, traditional OT studies seem untuned to the wavelengths of vibrant spirituality emanating from this text. What is a jewel of OT theology has functioned more as a prism which demarcates the wavebands of traditional OT studies. The wavebands of source-critical analysis, of form-critical taxonomy, of historical-critical assessment, of collection of Near Eastern idiomatic parallels, of concept developmental hypotheses, and of canonical trajectories are well represented by lines on the pages of the commentaries, monographs and journal articles. Little more is said in these places about the ability of the text to scintillate and transform the reader, and few attempts are made at re-readings which are generated by turning the text with sensitive fingertips and catching glimpses of multihued light off its many facets.

Perhaps exegetes are modest and would conceal their moonlighting as weekend preachers, but we can be glad that the trends of hermeneutics which allow us to speak of levels of meaning, re-readings, and contextualization now make spirituality a respectable concern to bring to the study of this textual gem.

I would like to examine facets of this jewel: the concept of Yhwh as destination and centre, paradox, the use of imagery and symbolization, and the centrality of covenant in connection with identity and vocation.

'I brought you to myself' — journey to the centre

The whole exodus story is about leaving and arriving and what happens in between. The narrative discourse of Exodus 19:1-2 orientates the reader for time and place by rehearsing the departure point of Egypt, the elapse of time reckoned by the cycle of the moon which is at once calendrical and cultic, and goes on to refer to stages of the journey, mentioning encampment at Rephidim and approach to Sinai.

In this narrative setting, the utterance of God expresses the most profound theological interpretation of this departure and journeying. There is the physical trek and there is the geographical arrival to be sure. The account minimizes neither, the divine utterance discloses the meaning of both. The physical journey is the outward visible form of a profound spiritual movement which God wishes to bring about. Spirituality for Israelites leaving Egypt meant to travel trustingly towards this encounter at Sinai.

Encounter with God at Sinai was indeed the announced goal of the exodus. 'When you have brought forth the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God upon this mountain' (Ex. 3:12).[31] This goal is built into the call of Moses in two ways. Firstly, it was what Moses himself experienced at the burning bush. This awesome, life-transforming encounter was to be the experience of the whole community. They were all destined to stand on holy ground, confronted by supernatural fire and sound, as awed as their barefooted leader had been himself, and they were all destined to hear the God of their fathers address them in audible Hebrew.

Secondly, worship at Sinai was to constitute the publicly and prophetically proclaimed purpose of God announced to Pharaoh: 'Yhwh, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now, we pray you, let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to Yhwh our God' (Ex. 3:18). The narrative picks up this motif of cultic encounter in 7:16, 20, 27 and 10:9, 25 as the tension mounts. The destination is always in view, and especially because one obstacle after another threatens to abort this journey before it has begun. Meanwhile, the reader is alerted to the impossibility of serving Pharaoh and serving Yhwh. The two become irreconcilable. The claims of one suzerain deity must be displaced by the claim of the real God and King. The *Song of the Sea* celebrates the overthrow of the one and the kingdom of the other.

But the narrative tension of whether Israel would reach their mountain destination once the Reed Sea has closed behind them on Egypt is kept alive by further threats to their physical and spiritual survival posed by thirst, hunger and enemy onslaught, and more than this, there are threats to Israel's vocation arising within the camp. The mutterings of Pharaoh against this destiny are replaced by the murmurings of Israel against Moses between chapters 16 and 19.

The destination is a spatial and a symbolic reality. It is certainly presented as a real mountain in a specific place on a particular day, but geographical discussion will not elucidate the narrative. The mountain is the site where heaven and earth meet. It functions as a colossal outdoor temple because it becomes sacred space, holy ground, and because it dramatizes and participates in the symbolism of cosmic transcendence.[32] 'Moses went up to God' (19:3a) — a deceptively simple statement matched by 'Yhwh called him out of the mountain' (v. 3b). The physical mountain, the energetic ascent, the physiological effort, and the divine invitation all serve to emphasize the person-to-person encounter. The mountain, together with its special effects — the smoke, fire, quaking, thunder and trumpet sound — dramatizes the encounter. Once the words 'and brought you to myself' have been uttered, the mountain and special effects enhance rather than obscure what happens.

In terms of spirituality, the story and geographical setting have immense value. Bushes and mountains: very mundane, unremarkable. Then the scandal of particularity, this particular bush and this particular mountain on this particular day. Go there on another day and there is nothing to see. For all its delight in the dramatic and visual, the narrative has alerted us to this difference between symbolic setting and personal encounter. The mountain is not the destination of the Exodus. The journey is to God himself. There will come the day at that sacred place when God announces that 'you have stayed long enough at this mountain; turn and take your journey and go to the hill country of the Amorites . . .' (Dt. 1:6; *cf.* 2:2). The exact location of the mountain has indeed been forgotten.

Imagery, symbolization and re-readings

At this point it is helpful to recall that all re-readings are typological, and hence rely on symbol, metaphor and spiritualization of the original text. There is perhaps some value, though a limited one, in making a pilgrimage back to the site of Jebel Musa. But we could not count on an experience like Elijah's, who made this journey and was met at Horeb in a person-to-person encounter. We cannot enter into the meaning of the narrative by revisiting the original setting, either literally, or, metaphorically, in historical-critical studies. We must enter into its meaning by a different route. This begins with visual imagination as we enter the story. It continues with interaction with the symbolism. We must interiorize the mountain, the smoke, the lightning, the thunder, the quaking until we hear the living voice of God speaking again and we sense that he has brought us to himself. We cannot walk to him now.

The poets who composed a liberation theology for the exiles left us prototypes of imaginative re-readings of the exodus story. They had first entered imaginatively into the exodus narrative and seen the overthrow of Pharaoh, the escape through the waters, the journey through the desert, the pillar of cloud and fire.[33] These motifs from the original physical journey which captured imagination, now stir the exiles to a new consciousness of God's purpose. There is a shift from exodus narrative to lyrical poetry, from record to eschatological vision. The past journey has become a symbol, both sign and promise, of a new journey.

The destination is new as well. Interestingly, there is no mention to be found in the fifteen chapters of Isaiah 40 - 55, replete with exodus allusions, of any Sinai event, possibly because the prophet wished to emphasize unconditional grace and promise. Zion is the new mountain. But there is an exact parallel to the original exodus story in that Zion is no more the destination of the journey from exile than was Sinai from Egypt. In each, the physical journey involved expresses the reality of the inner orientation towards God himself and participation in his kingdom.

In Isaiah 40 - 55, the return journey is fundamentally a return to Yhwh. To return is to repent (*šûb* lends itself to this

double journey metaphor), and if the text calls for a literal departure from Babylon (48:20; 52:11), and it does, then equally it calls for a radical departure in terms of behaviour and attitude ('let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him *return* to Yhwh', 55:7). This same destination, a return to Yhwh, to covenant relationship, is expressed in the commission of the servant to 'bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him' (49:5).

We might say that the exodus story is Sinai-centred and the prophecy Zion-centred, but we can affirm that both are explicitly Yhwh- and covenant-centred. This has implications relevant to the 'centre' debate in OT theology.

Paradox and symbol of presence

Next we need to stop to examine another paradox in the exodus story, indeed paradox built into the very phrase 'I brought you to myself'. The phrase begins and ends with God. The One who is encountered at the destination has initiated and shared the journey all along.

This is no general truth about the omnipresence of God, such as a heading in a work of systematic theology, but rather a point which the text makes in its own style. There are theophanies prior to Sinai. For instance, in 16:10 there is a public theophany: 'they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of Yhwh appeared in the cloud'. This theophany is explained beforehand as a confirmation of God's grace in the exodus in the face of complaints against him: 'at evening you shall know that it was Yhwh who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and in the morning you shall see the glory of Yhwh' (v. 7). As theophany answers Job's rage, and is confirmed in material blessings, so here theophany answers Israelite complaint and heralds the blessing of quail and manna. Israel receives what she does not deserve.

We should link the theophanies of chapters 19 and 16 with the visual effects of chapter 14:[34] 'So it was, when daylight came, that Yhwh looked down towards the Egyptian force from a pillar of fire and cloud, and he threw the Egyptian force into complete disarray' (14:24). Durham affirms that much of the exodus narrative concerns 'proof of Presence': 'The book of Exodus may be seen as a series of interlocking concentric circles spreading outwards from the narratives of the coming of Yahweh.'[35]

Gutierrez has linked these features of the narrative with the paradox of encounter and presence as expressed by Augustine: 'You would not seek me if you had not already found me'. He points to God's instructions about the announcement to Pharaoh (Ex. 3:18) in which encounter with Yhwh is motive for an exit to worship. The Hebrews must leave to draw near to their God who has drawn near (*niqrah ʿaleynû*). 'The search for union with the Lord governs the entire process of liberation and constitutes the very heart of this spiritual experience of an entire people.'[36] This 'union with the Lord' resulting from 'I brought you to myself' is not, Gutierrez is at pains to point out, a mystical and individualistic interior experience in this setting.

Brother Lawrence's reflections, *The Practice of the Presence of God,* remind us of this Presence dimension of spirituality. The exodus narrative and the gospels and Acts with their stories of a birth, a transfiguration, a resurrection meal, a disappearance, and a rush of wings or wind or tongues of fire remind us that the interface between human consciousness and God himself is extremely complex, varied and subtle. A biblical spirituality should keep us open to experiencing differing modes and confirmations of the presence of God. Its paradoxical quality signals its mystery. The exodus narrative encourages us to experiences of Presence because it discloses that the initiative and impulse come from God himself, even when he seems to need the cry of lament or complaint to provoke him into appearing on the scene.[37]

Paradox of perspective

The second paradox is embedded in the phrase 'I carried you on eagles' wings'. This is a paradox of perspective because the reader hears this divine perspective enunciated on arrival, still dusty from the trek through the wilderness with the footsore Israelites. The reader has identified with the first desert experience of tired and thirsty walkers arriving at a pool of bitter water. The narrator introduces the hazards of the desert with this story: 'They went into the wilderness of Shur; they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter' (15:22f.). Likewise in chapter 17, they trek on only to outspan at Rephidim where 'there was no water for the people to drink' (17:1).

The human experience is one of hardship and threat to survival, all too keenly felt; the divine experience is one of carrying Israel all the way. Here we touch a paradox that remains a key to biblical spirituality from conversion onwards. On the one hand it is all of grace, all of God; on the other, it is response, endurance and 'he who perseveres to the end will be saved' (Mk. 13:13). However tempting it is for reasons of logic, or systematization, to resolve this paradox of human effort and enabling grace, an exodus spirituality reminds us to leave it a paradox. Likewise with the covenant relationship of exodus. Its full reality cannot be measured by collapsing the wave function into law, obligation, stipulation, obedience; nor alternatively can it be collapsed into gift, blessing, promise, guarantee.[38] Both would constitute quantum leaps away from the narrator's presentation.

Metaphor and image: eagle's wings and royal treasure

One might say that OT imagery refreshes the parts that propositional theology cannot reach.

Embedded in the divine utterance of Exodus 19:4ff. are several metaphors. Their presence reminds us that the language of the OT is picture language. Just as story invites us to imaginative participation, so metaphor opens doors of perception. The popularity of Psalm 23 is no coincidence – it switches on our sensory imagination with its pictures of Shepherd, sheep, green pastures, still water, protective staff and club, dark ravine, *etc.* Isaiah 40 is likewise full of visual imagery to portray the majesty of God. So too, visual imagery is the life of apocalyptic. In Israel, to approach God in worship, entering the tabernacle precincts or the temple, was to step into a world of visual symbolism.

In Exodus 19:4b, God invites Israelites to visualize a pair of outspread wings. We know from the remark of Proverbs 30:18 that the sight of an eagle in flight captured the imagination of

the Israelite poet, filling him with a sense of wonder and awe. Starting from the natural world, the familiar sight, the image of an eagle here opens eyes on spiritual reality. The poet of Deuteronomy (32:11) and the dramatist of creation in Genesis 1:2b played on this image of soaring flight.[39]

We know that wings and deities were associated from the 3rd millenium onwards in Near Eastern iconography, whether the Sumerian Thunderbird ᵈImdugud,[40] or the vulture emblem flying above the Pharaoh's battle chariot, or a feathery ᵈAššur hovering over Assyrian kings at war. The eagle symbolism of Exodus 19 fits most aptly into this scenario of intervention in battle seen in Egyptian and Assyrian iconography, and with the opening phrase 'you have seen what I did to the Egyptians', it is possible that the superior ability of Yhwh to protect and triumph, proved in plague and at the Reed Sea, is implicit in the eagle's wings metaphor, though the image could be a naturalistic one rather than iconographically polemic.

The second metaphor is *sᵉgullah,* the 'treasured possession', and we know that it was already in metaphorical use in the 2nd millenium, used to describe a king as the 'possession' of a god, or a vassal-king as the 'possession' of his suzerain.[41] It is improbable that Near Eastern texts will parallel a whole community of liberated slaves being addressed in such honoured terms by the Creator-god. That *sᵉgullah* here nuances positive value, rather than claim and demand only, is evident from the associated phrases connoting selection and the status of 'priesthood' and holiness.[42] Creation theology and covenant theology are held in dynamic tension: 'all the earth is mine' runs in parallel with 'you shall be mine'.

Vocation and nationhood

Exodus 19:4 opens with a flashback: 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians'. The concluding promise – 'kingdom of priests and holy nation' – extends the distinction Hebrews/ Egyptians to Israel/all peoples, in the same way as 'all the earth' is a geographical extension from the land of Egypt. The effect is to heighten the value God places on the covenant bond. Racial and national identity is certainly a category of perception here, as in the entire story – witness the phrase 'God of the Hebrews', yet covenant with God and covenant brotherhood exert such a radical ideological critique of Egypt and Canaan that 'holy people' cannot possibly be equated with a nationhood as such. The theology does demythologize and delegitimize Pharaonic Egypt, but cannot be read to legitimize Israel ethnically or nationally *toute simple.* The separation from Egyptians and other *goy* unto God and into covenant relationship is associated with priestly functioning (*mamleket kohᵃnim*), which certainly denotes access to God's presence, but probably also implies that the nation (*goy qadosh*) has, as it were, a priestly ministry towards other peoples. The nation of Israel as a whole occupies the role of the priesthood in a typological model priests:people/ Israel:nations.[43]

Weinfeld points out that the remnant community after national judgment is addressed in its renewed constitution as the 'priests of Yahweh' in Isaiah 61:6, and we may follow the trajectory from Exodus 19 to Isaiah 61 and on into the NT where this renewed community is identified with Jesus (Lk. 4) and his disciples (1 Pet. 2:9). When people groups, such as British colonialists or Afrikaner Calvinists or Mass Democratic liberationists, identify themselves with Israel and read their historical destiny in terms drawn from the exodus story, they are simply misconstruing both the offer of covenant relationship expressed in nuclear form in Exodus 19:4-6 and its new covenant re-readings.[44] Entering covenant was a matter of individual wholeheartedness as well as of public oath and rite. It was both interior and confessional. As Brueggemann asserts, covenanting 'transposes all identity questions into vocational questions'.[45] Moreover, national identity and covenant community never were equated – witness the excision of Israelites from cultic communion from Korah onwards.

This said, Exodus 19:4-6 is a political statement, and to come in worship to Yhwh at Sinai was a political act, just as much as the singing of *The Song of the Sea* was, and the dancing of Miriam. An exodus spirituality is not individualistic, other-worldly pietistic, apolitical and socio-economically naive. Pharaoh perceived the journey into the wilderness to sacrifice to Yhwh as a political act. He was right, and his response ensured that Israel's worship and Israel's covenant with Yhwh were socio-political events. The political background to so much of biblical covenant language, including the whole core metaphor of kingdom and of vassal loyalty, is a sure sign of ideological critique and the displacement of alternative socio-political systems by covenant brotherhood, or in our text's terms, by holy nationhood, priestly kingdomhood under Yhwh.[46] As corollary of covenant's confrontation with the economic and socio-political domain, an exodus spirituality is concerned with freedom and dignity, communal righteousness and justice, without which there is no 'holy nation'.[47]

Conclusion

We started from the patterning of the narratives, and found that motifs such as promise, departure, journey, guidance, presence, testing, fear of the Lord, theophany, covenant commitment and cultic worship characterized Israel's spiritual experience. They typify Israel's faith not because other generations had identical experiences to the Exodus generation, which is plainly not so, but because they were paradigmatic for later generations in interpreting their own experience and expectations of God.[48] It is this paradigmatic quality and the typological re-readings within the canon which we wish to draw on formatively for our spirituality. Paradigm, symbol, typological re-reading we may utilize, but if we wish to pay close attention to the story, and see our life as in some way mirroring Israel's experience of God, then we shall work with these motifs and their imagery without recourse to allegorizations of the tree at Marah, the seventy palms of Elim, or the manna.[49]

Stages of faith for individual and community

By examining the dynamic of human experience as link factor between us and ancient Israel, we open our eyes to personal, social and political dimensions of the exodus story. Brueggemann has offered a critique of the stages of human development as discussed by James Fowler in his books *Stages of Faith* and *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian.* No understanding of biblical spirituality as a learning experience and growth process can operate without an understanding of personhood and the mechanisms of maturing, and although Brueggemann's catchphrases such as 'critique of ideology', 'embrace of pain' and 'social imagination' can seem a little

too complimentary to the Israelites in the wilderness, and sound conceptually abstruse compared with the story line, his pinpointing of growth by 'wrenching transitions' and 'changes that are wrought through discontinuity, displacement and disjunction' do justice to how difficult Israel found it to move on with God and 'embrace covenantal modes of life'.[50] To look for biblical concepts of learning, change and the processing of experience within the text of Exodus seems right, indeed Pauline, and discloses some of the dynamics of biblical spirituality.

On the social and political side of human experience and biblical faith, the contributors to the *Concilium* volume, *Exodus — a lasting paradigm,* have presented stimulating re-readings of sections of the exodus narrative which connect our world with that one by the bridge of human consciousness, conscientization or social and ideological context, while those writing from within a Latin American liberation theology and the liberation struggle in South Africa challenge us repeatedly to respond to the communal and ideological dimensions of faith, and incorporate these into our spirituality.[51]

The imprinting process

Exactly why and how the exodus narrative has so deeply imprinted itself on subsequent generations and their hopes is a little more difficult to answer, granted the thoroughly supernatural, miraculous and interventionist quality of God's participation. Isaiah 40 - 55 resonates with exodus imagery, but the exiles who made the return journey from Babylon to Palestine saw no pillar of cloud and fire, drank no water from rock, and woke to no manna or quails. On return they were under the Persian empire, not free of its permission to renew worship. As Nehemiah's prayer so poignantly expresses it: 'Behold, we are slaves this day; in the land that thou gavest to our fathers to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts, behold, we are slaves' (Ne. 9:36).[52] The disparity between the paradigmatic exodus and the exilic exodus should have created a shattering dissonance, leading to a rejection of this symbolization process. Yet it did not, much to R. P. Carroll's perplexity.[53] The exodus imagery was not that easily dislodged.

After reviewing re-uses of the exodus traditions within the OT, Fishbane remarks: 'The simultaneous capacity of the exodus paradigm to elicit memory and expectation, recollection and anticipation discloses once again its deep embeddedness as a fundamental structure of the biblical historical imagination',[54] but he makes no attempt at describing how that imagination worked. One explanation must be that stories act on human imagination to ingrain their images. The original stories have all the 'what-happens-next' appeal of good stories and are full of strong visual components which produce vivid images in the mind. The images linger on after the reader knows what happens next; each time the story is heard again the image is reinforced. So a poet contemplating a long journey from Babylon to Palestine can see it in his mind's eye as led by God through a landscape with pools of water and oases of trees. This process is not simply the operation of propositional theology — belief that God guides and provides — but the ability to visualize the route. Added to that is the dramatizing or symbolizing process whereby the exilic long walk symbolically recapitulates the original exodus salvation. The poet 'sees' it visually and symbolically, and so sees himself as participant who relates to God as the Israelites experienced God in the wilderness.

The imagination and spiritual resonance

Using a different metaphor, we could put it this way. Spiritual perception involves vibrating to the resonance set up by the original notes. The tune once learned is resident in memory, and conscious or unconscious stimuli trigger the melody with the effect that the tune plays again in the mind. The *Song of the Sea* was a song sung in a unique historical situation, but once sung it has a life of its own, and is replayed in quite different situations but retaining the resonance of worship. The *Song of the Sea,* the description of passover, and the covenant formulary of Exodus 19:4-6, are all likely to have been brought to life in Israel's worship and their phrases and imagery imprinted on heart and mind in group experience.

Entering the exodus story and tapping into its spirituality may not, for us, be by the route of liturgy and communal worship but might involve using the imagination in a way that allows the spirit to resonate in response to the stories. This could make use of imaginative exercises using creative writing, or sketching, or visualization techniques of various kinds. Meditation starting from a striking image, such as 'eagles' wings', with its powerful visual and emotional qualities, and flowing into associated clusters of images along a canonical trajectory, is a responsive technique open to us and may emulate the creative imagination of biblical poets prior to composing their poetry.

These stories and their motifs have captured the imagination of generations seeking to interpret their situation, their faith and their longing to move on with God. I would hope that our academic training in OT might enhance and not hinder our ability to respond to the God of the exodus with imagination, heart and spirit in our generation.

[1] This hermeneutical re-reading of the OT and the process of symbolic meaning-making by which Afrikaner political struggles against the domination of the British Empire were interpreted by the key equation *Afrikaner volk=Israel* has been thoroughly documented and discussed by T. Dunbar Moodie, *The Rise of Afrikanerdom:power, Apartheid and Afrikaner civil religion* (Berkeley: Univ. California Press, 1975); D. J. Bosch, 'The Roots and Fruits of Afrikaner Civil Religion', in J. W. Hofmeyr and W. S. Vorster (eds.), *New Faces of Africa* (Pretoria: UNISA, 1984), pp. 14-35; T. L. Thompson, *The Political Mythology of Apartheid* (London: Yale, 1975).

[2] Although commentators tend to be more preoccupied with literary-critical or historical-critical matters at this point, the typological connection is made, for instance by J. van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (London: Yale, 1975), pp. 263ff.; G. Wenham, 'The Religion of the Patriarchs', in D. J. Wiseman and A. R. Millard (eds.), *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives* (Leicester: IVP, 1980), p. 182, and *Genesis 1 - 15* (Waco: Word, 1987), p. 331; C. Westermann, *Genesis 12 - 36* (London: SPCK, 1986), p. 224. 'The life of Abraham foreshadows the history of Israel' — G. Wenham, *Genesis 1 - 15,* pp. 335f.

[3] W. C. Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), selected 'promise' as centre for OT theology with some success, but also incurred the problems of omission and underplay of alternative valid emphases.

[4] Danel lacks a son to give him proper burial (Aqht, CTA 17) – see the debates about the Marzeah banquet, Rephaim texts and the ancestor cult reflected in M. Pope, 'The Cult of the Dead at Ugarit', in G. D. Young (ed.), *Ugarit in Retrospect* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1981), pp. 159-179; for Mesopotamia, see A. Skaist's discussion of inheritance: 'The Ancestor Cult and Succession in Mesopotamia', in B. Alster (ed.), *Death in Mesopotamia* (Copenhagen: Akademisk, 1980), pp. 123-128.

[5] See G. J. Wenham, *Numbers* (Leicester: IVP, 1981), pp. 15f. and 51f., and Mann, *Divine Presence and Guidance in Israelite Traditions: the typology of exaltation* (London: Johns Hopkins, 1977), ch. 8 'The Departure from Sinai', pp. 164ff.

[6] The typological connection and method is discussed by D. L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible* (Leicester: IVP, 1976), with which compare M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), Part Three, 12.C, 'Typologies', especially pp. 350ff. 'The Bible contains, in general, not propositions but stories, and these can only be relevant in the sense of being typical. . . . What significance would Abraham and Moses have if they were not typical? . . . their *experiences* are directly relevant to the Church', Baker, p. 256 (italics mine).

[7] Books as diverse as Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and M. Scott Peck's *The Road less Travelled: a new psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1978), exploit the concept of a spiritual pilgrimage or life journey, as do many other spiritual autobiographies.

[8] Because the metaphor of walking a path through life is so simply based in mundane experience, it crosses cultural boundaries and is magnetic in attracting associations. Much of the spirituality of Ps. 119, in which Yhwh's torah is 'lamp to the feet and light to the path', depends on *derek* and walking metaphors. The Hebrew noun *derek*, used literally in Ex. 13:17ff. of the coastal and desert routes, had a dynamic idiomatic life of its own in Israelite spirituality. Proverbs, like Ps. 119, contrasts the wrong way which leads downwards, to darkness, to death, with the path of life, the way of wisdom. The right 'way' is straight, not devious, crooked and causing stumbling – note the frequency of 'way' idioms in Pr. 2 - 4, and its association with moral choices. The NT too speaks in terms of 'walking in the Spirit' (Rom. and Gal.), 'walking in the light' (1 Jn. 7, 'walking as children of light' (Eph.), 'walking by faith' (2 Cor.), *etc.*

[9] Weinfeld has documented the phrases used to express covenant loyalty which use this metaphor of walking: 'walking with', 'walking before', 'walking after', 'walking in the ways of', 'walking in the laws of'. 'Walking after' is a political metaphor for allegiance is a metaphor for covenant spirituality. See M. Weinfeld, 'The Covenant of Grant in Old Testament and Ancient Near East', *JAOS* 90.2 (1970), pp. 184-203, 185f., and *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), Appendix A, pp. 332ff. *Cf.* the metaphors with root *sûr* – 'to turn aside', listed on p. 339.

[10] On this passage, see L. C. Allen, *Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), pp. 362ff., who links Micah's phrase with the exhortation to walk carefully in Eph. 5.

[11] T. W. Mann, *op. cit.*, pp. 130ff. and 253ff. has discussed the 'vanguard motif' in connection with God's 'going before' *(hlk lpny)* Israel in the exodus-wilderness march, as reflected in Ex., Nu., Dt. and Is.

[12] Mann, *op. cit.*, pp. 130f. and 255, notes that the motif and the key word *nhh* connect what are customarily regarded as separate sources (J, E and *Song of the Sea* part B).

[13] This leaves ample scope for disagreement about the reality of allusions. Does the spirituality of Ps. 23 really and consciously depend on the exodus? See M. L. Barré and J. S. Kselman, 'New Exodus, Covenant and Restoration in Psalm 23', in C. L. Meyers and M. O'Connor (eds.), *The Word of the Lord shall go forth* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1983), pp. 97-127, which starts from D. N. Freedman, 'The Twenty-Third Psalm', in *Pottery, Poetry and Prophecy: studies in early Hebrew poetry* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1980), pp. 275-302.

[14] 'An odd and unique tradition about the Exodus', according to C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40 - 66* (London: SCM, 1969), p. 389!

[15] Note, for example, his references to the sociological analyses of Peter Berger, and the work on developmental and personal psychology by writers such as Erikson, Tournier, Fowler, Kegan, Kübler-Ross.

[16] Near Eastern family terminology, including marriage, adoption and sonship language, moves into the political domain and into Israel's covenant language – see already F. C. Fensham, 'Father and Son as Terminology for Treaty and Covenant', in H. Goedicke (ed.), *Near Eastern Studies in honor of W. F. Albright* (London: Johns Hopkins, 1971), pp. 121-135, and more recently P. Kalluveettil, *Declaration and Covenant* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1982), ch. 4, along with the cited work of Moran, McCarthy and Weinfeld in particular.

[17] R. L. Cohn, *The Shape of Sacred Space* (Chico: Scholars, 1981), ch. 2, pp. 7-23. We are familiar with the Outward Bound concept of training in which individuals discover their limits in unfamiliar terrain, and develop group bonding to overcome the difficulties. The shared ordeal is intended as a positive learning experience. The root *lûn* – 'to complain, grumble', links several episodes of the trek story; see Ex. 15:24; 16:2,7,8,9,12; 17:3. Commentators note the difference in divine response to Israel's distrust before and after Sinai and this discloses the training perspective on the pre-Sinai section of the journey. After Sinai, Yhwh punishes because he has given ample proof of his care in experiential learning contexts.

[18] Studies from the 1960s such as Oscar Cullmann, *Christ and Time* (London: SCM, [rev.ed.] 1962), and *Salvation in History* (London: SCM, 1967), probably influenced several decades of theological students.

[19] The root itself, *nsh* – 'to prove, try, test', appears in Dt. 4:34; 6:16; 8:2, 16; 13:4; 33:8, and in Ex. 15:25; 16:4; 17:2, 7; 20:20 (disputed – see Durham, *op. cit.*, p. 303). For discussion of the trajectory into the gospels, see B. Gerhardsson, *The Testing of God's Son* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1966), and U. W. Mauser, *Christ in the Wilderness* (London: SCM, 1963). These were products of the biblical theology era, coming to terms with typology. An updated bibliography is given by W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, *Matthew*, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), p. 407. These NT studies also typify the dichotomizing ideology of the scholastic genre whereby text and life are radically divorced.

[20] Comparison of Moses and Gilgamesh as epic heroes is interesting because of the journey motif. Both epic journeys end in failure, Moses to enter the land of promise though he pleads to do so and can see it from afar, Gilgamesh though he reaches Utnapishtim only to discover he does not qualify for eternal life and then watches the plant of youth disappear with the snake and his last hopes. Both must come to terms with divine limitations set and be content with the legacy they leave. Both take on symbolic roles in the afterlife.

[21] W. Brueggemann, *The Land* (London: SPCK, 1977), ch. 3, pp. 28-44. His approach could be termed neo-typological because he places Gn. 1 chaos alongside wilderness formlessness, patriarchal infertility alongside wilderness barrenness, and finds in manna a typology of divine presence: 'like manna, his wilderness presence is always enough on which to survive, but not too much. Like manna, he can be graciously received but not stored or presumed upon. Like manna, it is given out of fidelity but never fully seen and controlled' (p. 43).

[22] The 'Fear not!' form of salvation oracle spoken in the context of war is well documented from 2nd millenium Mari texts to Neo-Assyrian. See J.-G. Heintz, 'Oracles prophétiques et "Guerre Sainte" selon les Archives de Mari et de l'Ancien Testament', *Vetus Testamentum Supp. 17* (1969), pp. 112-138. It is no coincidence that Is. 40 - 55, which appropriates Exodus typologically, is also marked by 'Fear not!' salvation oracles; see E. W. Conrad, 'The "Fear Not" Oracles in Second Isaiah', *Vetus Testamentum* 34 (1984), pp. 129-152.

[23] Both Ex. 14 and Ex. 19 - 20 strongly affirm the leadership role of Moses as a corollary of the 'fear of the LORD', a point which Mann's study on divine exaltation brings into clear focus.

[24] See W. Brueggemann's study, 'Psalms and the Life of Faith: suggested typology of function', *JSOT* 17 (1980), pp. 3-32, with J. Goldingay's response, 'The Dynamic Cycle of Praise and Prayer in the Psalms', *JSOT* 20 (1981), pp. 85-90.

[25] Since G. von Rad's study of the holy war concept, a number of important studies have focused on the technicalities of the divine warrior motif and its Near Eastern background – see P. D. Miller, *The Divine Warrior in Early Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1973), and M. Weinfeld, 'Divine Intervention in War in Ancient Israel and in the Ancient Near East', in H. Tadmor and M. Weinfeld (eds.), *History, Historiography and Interpretation* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1984), pp. 121-147. With more focus on the covenant and treaty framework,

see D. C. T. Sheriffs, *Empire and the Gods: Mesopotamian Treaty Theology and the Sword in the First Millenium BC* (unpublished D.Litt thesis; Univ. Stellenbosch, 1976).

[26] H. Blocher, *Tyndale Bulletin* 28 (1977), pp. 3-28. He seems to have passed over the exodus passages prior to Ex. 20:20.

[27] The image of a magnetic force field which is empirically demonstrated by the pattern of iron filings on paper seems better suited to expressing the coherence and individual lines of canonical theology than other approaches which disconnect these lines. The concepts of contextuality and polarity are used most helpfully towards this goal by J. Goldingay, *Theological Diversity and the Authority of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987). Studies of the 'fear of the LORD' by M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), Part Three: 'Deuteronomic Literature and Wisdom Literature', section 3, pp. 274-281, is an earlier attempt to follow a conceptual thread through different genres of OT literature.

[28] While we find it helpful to compartmentalize our categories, sorting emotions from ethical values from theological concepts, studies of the brain show that the cerebral cortex is involved in processing and interpreting pain stimuli. If the autonomic nervous system which regulates the fight/flight response functioned entirely separately from the cerebral cortex there would be a physiological basis for separating the semantic field of 'fear of the LORD'. On the physiology, see for instance 'Emotions: the Highs and Lows of the Brain', ch. 4 in F. E. Bloom, A. Lazerson and L. Hofstadter, *Brain, Mind and Behaviour* (New York: W. H. Freeman, 1985), ch. 4, pp. 143-175.

[29] Of course, there are exodus-like stories in the gospels such as the stilling of the storm, the transfiguration and the appearance in the upper room where theophany, fear and trust are linked together. These stories encapsulate experiential learning essential for theological understanding of who Jesus is.

[30] See D. Bosch, 'The Church and the Liberation of Peoples?', *Missionalia* 5.2 (1977), pp. 8-39, 23.

[31] In the conclusion of his extended discussion of Ex. 3:12, Childs affirms the typological prefiguring of Israel's experience in that of Moses: 'a typological relation between the burning bush on the holy mountain and the devouring fire at Sinai was recognized. The sign to Moses was seen as a prefigurement of Israel's experience' (Childs, p. 60). Compare, more recently, J. I. Durham, *Exodus* (Waco: Word, 1987), p. 30: 'the experience of Moses in Ex. 3:1-12 is an exact foreshadowing of the experience of Israel, first in Egypt, then in the deprivation in the wilderness, and finally at Sinai. In each of these narratives, the Presence-response pattern is fundamental.'

[32] See R. J. Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1972).

[33] See the studies of exodus motif by B. W. Anderson, 'Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah', in B. W. Anderson and W. Harrelson (eds.), *Israel's Prophetic Heritage* (New York: Harper, 1962), pp. 177-195; 'Exodus and Covenant in Second Isaiah and Prophetic Tradition', in F. M. Cross and W. Lemke (eds.), *Magnalia Dei [Festschrift G. E. Wright]* (New York: Doubleday, 1976), pp. 339-360; J. Blenkinsopp, 'Scope and Depth of Exodus Tradition in Deutero-Isaiah 40:55', *The Dynamism of Biblical Tradition=Concilium* 20 (1967), pp. 41-50; D. A. Patrick, 'Epiphanic Imagery in Second Isaiah's Portrayal of a New Exodus', *Hebrew Annual Review* 8 (1984), pp. 125-141.

[34] Note the comment on the pillar of cloud by S. Reid: 'The cultic symbols of the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire (Ex. 13:21-22) ought not to be overlooked. Many a scholar has neglected the way these symbols refer to the religious dimension of this very political act' — comment on p. 163, 'The Book of Exodus: a laboratory for hermeneutics', in M. L. Branson and C. R. Padilla, *Conflict and Context* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), pp. 155-164.

[35] See J. I. Durham, *Exodus* (Waco: Word, 1987), p. 194, and *ibid.*, pp. xxiff.

[36] G. Gutierrez, *We Drink from Our Own Wells: the spiritual journey of a people* (London: SCM, 1987), p. 77.

[37] There is no obligation to resolve the paradox that the exodus is planned in advance by Yhwh, as Gn. 15 teaches, and comes 'from above', yet is motivated from below by Israel's cries for help which 'came up to God' (see the summary statement of 2:23-25). It is the genius of story to narrate from different perspectives and allow the dramatic characters to articulate these.

[38] This seems to be the problem with W. C. Kaiser's *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978). He has extracted one of the covenant formulary, namely promise, as a centre for theology. For the background to the quantum metaphor, see *New Scientist*, 27 May 1989, p. 39, and the lucid discussion of the two-slit quantum phenomenon in J. Barrow, *The World within the World* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), pp. 131ff.

[39] It appealed to Canaanite poets too: ʿAnat soars (but malevolently) over Aqht prior to releasing Ytpn to strike him dead: 'over him vultures soar *(nsrm trhph)*, a flock of swift fliers coasts. Among the vultures soars ʿAnat' — *ANET*, 152 Aqht B, iv:31-33 = CTA 17. See N. Wyatt, 'The Stela of the Seated God from Ugarit', *UF* 15 (1983), pp. 271-277, for discussion of cross-cultural influence from Egyptian and Mesopotamian winged solar discs, together with the conveniently collected portrayals in R. Mayer-Opificius, 'Die geflügelte Sonne: Himmels- und Regendarstellungen im Alten Vorderasien', *UF* 16 (1984), pp. 189-236.

[40] On ᵈImdugud the Thunderbird deity, see Th. Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness* (London: Yale, 1976), pp. 128f., and *The Harps that once . . .* (London: Yale, 1987), 'Lugalbanda and the Thunderbird', pp. 320-344. The bronze from the ʿal Ubaid temple gate now in the British Museum (A. Parrot, *Sumer*, No. 187, p. 158), and the diorite plaque of priest Dudu associate lions and eagles (S. N. Kramer, *History Begins at Sumer*, plates 38, 39) to convey the majestic qualities of the storm deity, and the Roman eagle and the contemporary American eagle show how widespread is the appeal of the king of birds as political symbol. The 3rd millenium poem 'The Exaltation of Inanna' by Sargon's daughter Enheduanna portrays ᵈInanna's attack with storm and bird-form (W. W. Hallo and J. J. A. van Dijk, *The Exaltation of Inanna* (London: Yale, 1968), pp. 16ff., stanzas (iii) & (iv): 'Devastatrix of the land, you are lent wings by the storm . . .in the van of battle everything is struck down by you. O my lady [propelled] on your own wings you peck away [at the land]'.

[41] See M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), p. 328 No. 9 for references with p. 226 and footnote 2.

[42] Accusation and demand are the semantic setting of the Ugaritic letter RS 18.38 from the Hittite suzerain: 'Now you belong to the Sun, your master; a servant indeed, his possession are you (ʿb[d]m.*sglth*.'at.). Now, as for you, the Sun your master, you have not recognized at all. To me, the Sun, your master, for one year, two years why do you not come?' (lines 11-16) — text and translation by D. Pardee, 'A further Note on PRU V, No. 60', *UF* 13 (1981), pp. 151-156. *Cf.* Durham's comment: 'expanded . . . to suggest the "crown jewel" of a large collection, the masterwork, the one-of-a-kind piece', *op. cit.*, p. 262.

[43] Such symbolizing lies behind the typology of sacrificial, clean and unclean animals corresponding to the categories priest, Israelite, Gentile. Durham summarizes exegetical work to date on these three phrases 'special treasure', 'kingdom of priests', 'holy nation' which he sees, surely correctly, as associated ideas rather than synomyms. 'Israel as "kingdom of priests" is Israel committed to the extension throughout the world of the ministry of Yahweh's Presence', p. 263.

[44] Whether Dt. 14:2 and Ex. 19:4 carry an intra-Israelite polemic against priestly class pretensions (so Weinfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 227 note 2) is another matter. The NT certainly does, but marks an even more radical break in its conception of the overlap between people-group and covenant community. There is a tendency, implicit more than explicit, in the Kairos Document to associate the oppressed Black community, referred to as 'the people', with Israel: 'God will bring about change through the oppressed as he did through the oppressed Hebrew slaves in Egypt' and 'more than ever before the people of the townships can identify fully with these descriptions of suffering, oppression and tyranny', *The Kairos Document: Challenge to the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, ²1986), pp. 12 & 20.

[45] W. Brueggemann, 'Covenanting as Human Vocation', *Interpretation* XXXIII.2 (1979), pp. 115-129, 125.

[46] J. S. Croatto, in 'The Socio-historical and Hermeneutical Relevance of the Exodus' in B. van Israel and A. Weiler (eds.), *The Exodus: a lasting paradigm* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark)=*Concilium* 189 (1987), pp. 125-133, not commenting on the Ancient Near Eastern treaty background, but on the language of Ex., remarks: 'So deep does OT language of liberation run that the NT, despite its spiritualizing overtones . . . has kept the liberation vocabulary stemming from the

Exodus theme. Its application of it to interior, juridical or existential realities (sin, the law, death) is a deepening but not a replacement of the socio-political reference of the OT' (p. 127).

[47] We note the words of the *Kairos Document: Challenge to the Church: a theological commentary on the Political Crisis in South Africa* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, [2]1986).

[48] The dating of the *Song of the Sea* is, of course, disputed, but my point stands because the poem's composition or amplification at any date illustrates the resonance effect, and a liturgical re-use of Ex. 15, as postulated by many scholars, only underlines the point, though it is one form only of its life; another, for example, manifests itself in the composition of Rev. 15.

[49] In my judgment, B. P. Robinson represents a return to an unacceptable allegorization in his proffered re-reading in Rabbinic and Church Father manner – 'Symbolism in Exod. 15:22-27 (Marah and Elim)', *Revue Biblique* 94.3 (1987), pp. 376-388.

[50] W. Brueggemann, 'The Exodus Narrative as Israel's Articulation of Faith Development', in *Hope within History* (Atlanta: John Know, 1987), pp. 7-26. His engagement is primarily with J. W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), and *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), who built on the psychology of Erik Erikson.

[51] Note the evaluation of S. Reid: 'From the beginning of the introduction of liberation theology, Third World theology has been rooted in the spirituality of the community of faith', in 'The Book of Exodus: a laboratory for hermenuetics', in M. L. Branson and C. R. Padilla (eds.), *Conflict and Context: hermeneutics in the Americas* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), p. 163. Compare the criticism from the *Kairos Document* that: 'spirituality has tended to be an other-worldly affair that has very little, if anything at all, to do with the affairs of this world. . . . Moreover, spirituality has also been understood to be purely private and individualistic' (*op. cit.*, p. 16).

[52] Note the way this text is appropriated by Kairos theologians with the comment: 'for the people of South Africa this situation is all too familiar' (*op. cit.*, p. 19).

[53] R. P. Carroll, 'Second Isaiah and the Failure of Prophecy', *Studia Theologica* 32 (1978), pp. 119-131.

[54] M. Fishbane, *Text and Texture: close readings of selected biblical texts* (New York: Schocken, 1979), ch. 10, pp. 121-140, 'The "Exodus" Motif/The Paradigm of Historical Renewal', p. 140.

AIDS, judgment and blessing

John White

Dr John White, well known as a psychiatrist and author of many books on practical and personal Christian living, makes a penetrating analysis of a delicate and controversial issue.

Summary

The question of AIDS and divine judgment leads us to a consideration of the nature and the principles of both. AIDS is not judgment primarily against the gay community, but to the community as a whole. Judgment comes to those who refuse to acknowledge God as what and who he is. It may take many forms. In its early stages there is a loss of understanding, with abandonment to the folly of idolatry, and exposure to sexual promiscuity (and the physical effects of promiscuity). But God intends his judgments on his people to be a prelude to blessing, as his people repent.

Many Christians feel that AIDS represents God's judgment on the homosexual community. How do I as a self-confessed conservative view the question: Is God especially mad at gays?

We still have only limited knowledge about the disease and its origins. At first we thought AIDS originated in a gay and drug-using community in Haiti, and that it was a disease of gays. Further research makes it seem more likely that the disease began in one of the countries in tropical Africa, where it exists among simians. Some authorities believe that it could have spread to humans by a species of anopheles mosquito. In several African countries, where the disease is widespread and deadly, heterosexual promiscuity spreads it. If AIDS represents divine judgment, it is unlikely to be primarily judgment against homosexuals.

Let us turn, then, to the examples of God's judgment in the Bible. What can we learn from them that will help us to have a balanced view of AIDS and homosexuality?

God's judgments in the OT

In OT times God executed judgment by sending plague, natural catastrophes, war, captivity and death. He took no delight in doing so, showing himself to be patient, long-suffering, plenteous in mercy. The horrific nature of the judgments reflected the gravity of sin. Always God's aim was to purge and to purify the people through whom he planned to carry out his saving purposes.

We might begin by considering the famous incident described in Numbers 16 – the rebellion of the sons of Korah. Backed by a dissatisfied group of leading Levites, Korah (Nu. 16:1-10), along with a couple of non-Levites, Dathan and Abihu, protested against the leadership of Aaron and Moses. They aimed at supplanting the Aaronic priestly succession (16:10-11).

To understand the incident we must also grasp that the real leadership was divine. God led the people either by the pillar of fire and cloud, or else by communicating his wishes via Moses. Thus the rebellion against Moses and Aaron was really rebellion against God. The people's real sin was that of failure to honour God's leadership and person.

In the face of the rebellion Moses proposes that the rebels offer incense to God (a priestly function). This will test whether their ambition to be priests meets with divine approval (16:4-7). Stung by the insulting refusal of Dathan and Abiram to appear before him, Moses also cries out to

God, and receives special instructions as to what he should do (16:23-30). There follows a horrendous incident, and one that sickens and appalls us. Not grasping that earthly existence is of less importance than life to come, or that the sanctity of the nation is at stake, we experience dismay as we read on (16:31-35). But there is more to follow.

The people have grasped neither the significance nor the seriousness of what has happened. They presume that the tragedy represents a display of wizardry by Moses rather than divine displeasure. So they rise up against him, and by a further stroke of God's judgment nearly 15,000 people lose their lives. Only the desperate intercession of Moses and Aaron stays God's hand.

The first thought that strikes us concerns the extreme severity of the sentence. Can this be the God we worship? Would he do similar things today? Certainly, there are other similar incidents in the OT. They begin with the account of the flood, continue with God's instructions to Joshua about the devoted nations occupying Canaan (Jos. 6 and 7), and go on to such instances as his judgment upon Israel following David's conceited head count of his people. Whatever we say about the severity, we must notice two points. God judges all nations, including his special people. Also, throughout Scripture, a longsuffering God waits a long time before imposing judgment.

But we must ask what principles arise from the Korah incident. I would suggest there are:

1. Principles that never change. The Korah episode exemplifies principles seen in previous judgments, and these reappear in the NT.

2. The basic cause of judgment is the failure to recognize God and to respond with trustful thanksgiving.

3. God's judgment comes against individuals, families or nations.

4. The rebellion by a group of leaders may reflect widespread attitudes in the whole people.

5. Judgment against an individual or a small group may have the purpose of teaching an important lesson to and thus warning a much larger group.

Let me go over each point.

God is the judge of all mankind. He judges more severely those that have more light. His judgments on Israel were correspondingly painful and severe. The church will not be immune (1 Cor. 11:27-32; Rev. 2:16, 20-23; 3:19).

The principles by which judgment comes to us do not change. It is true that under the new covenant we escape final judgment. However, we do so only because Christ took that judgment on our behalf. We are still liable to earthly judgments of plague and premature death. Ananias and Sapphira met death as their sentence for deceit. Paul warns the sinning Christians in Corinth that God is already visiting them with sickness and 'sleep'.

The second principle (that the real offence is to fail to recognize and honour God) is consistent throughout Scripture. God's judgment of Moses when he struck (instead of speaking to) the rock is an example of this. God judged Moses 'because [he] did not trust in me enough to honour me as holy in the sight of the Israelites . . .' (Nu. 20:11-12). Similarly, judgment in Romans 1 came on people who knew about God, yet 'neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him' (Rom. 1:21). In each case failure to honour and glorify God himself brings the judgment. In Moses' case, he alone suffered. In other cases families and nations suffer.

The third and fourth principles are linked together. The rebellion of the 250 reflected very widespread failure to recognize who God was, and what his real significance to Israel was.

The fifth principle is clear both in the OT and the NT. Terror fills people when judgment falls. The result of God's judgment on Ananias and Sapphira was that 'great fear seized the whole church' (Acts 5:1-11). Sometimes it takes terror to bring true repentance, though God prefers to do it by revealing his kindness (Rom. 2:4).

NT teaching about judgment

The most enlightening teaching about judgment brings us directly to the question of AIDS. Paul in Romans 1 explains how and why judgment comes upon us all. Up to now we have thought of judgment in the form of earthquake, war, famine, plague, *etc.* Paul's explanation of the phenomenon digs a little deeper. He shows that judgment may start long before the final strokes appear. Let me try to express the gist of Romans 1:18-32.

In our pride we human beings refused to respond to our innate capacity to know God (to see him in creation). Because of this sin, judgment came upon us. It came as what some theologians refer to as judicial blindness. You cannot think properly unless the one true God is central to your thinking. You cannot think straight unless the one true God has mastered you. Therefore our thinking became futile. We grew stupid, obtuse. Brilliant in academic performance perhaps, we were quite unable to see what was right under our noses. This is how God's judgment begins.

A second stage of the judgment followed. We lost what discernment we had (Rom. 1:21-23) and became idolaters. A third stage followed rapidly. We were (to use the NIV translation) 'given over' – given over to sexual impurity (1:24), to shameful lusts (1:26), and to a depraved mind (1:28). Notice that vulnerability to sexual sin is here *part of the judgment.* God *gave us over,* gave us over to 'sexual impurity for the degrading of [our] bodies'! To put it another way, God removed his protection against sexual perversion. He removed it because we refused to acknowledge him as God. He allowed us in our pride to stumble blindly along an idolatrous road of sin until we lost ourselves in a maze of sexual allurements.

AIDS is not a judgment of God against homosexuals. It is a judgment of God against society – a society God has allowed to reap a whirlwind. The result is the sexual insanity into which our pride has led us. And it is the sexual insanity that is the real judgment. AIDS is merely the result, the final working-out of the judgment.

Sexual depravity in the church

I use the pronouns 'we' and 'us' advisedly. It is plain that the church is in this case part of society. I believe that Christians

by our materialistic outlook on life have become intellectual theists but behavioural humanists and materialists. We profess Christian theism, but rely on everything the world relies on. The judgment has also fallen upon us. One Christian leader after another falls into sexual sin which also sweeps the rank and file of the church. As a psychiatrist who sees many Christians, I know that the extent of sexual hanky-panky in the church is now comparable with what goes on in the world.

The research department of *Christianity Today* recently conducted two surveys among their readers. One concerned pastors' sexual habits and the other, the sexual failures of lay readers of the magazine. The research department mailed out nearly two thousand questionnaires, divided equally between the two groups. The results confirm what some of us already knew.

12% of the pastors responding to the Christianity Today *survey admitted sexual intercourse in the course of their pastoral work.* 18% admitted to passionate kissing, fondling, mutual masturbation, *etc.* Such pastors regret and are troubled to make their admissions, but commonly have nowhere to turn for help and counsel.

The *Christianity Today* statistics indicate that sexual failure in the pew is yet more troubling than that in the pulpit. The report continues, 'Incidences of immorality [among the laity] were nearly double: 45% indicated having done something sexually inappropriate, 23% said they had had extramarital intercourse, and 28% said they had engaged in other forms of extramarital sexual conduct.'[1]

Frangipane, a US charismatic leader, comments, 'There are respectable men who love God and seek to serve him, yet secretly in their hearts they are prisoners of Jezebel. Even now they are deeply ashamed of their bondage to pornography; and they can barely control their desires for women. Ask them to pray and their spirits are awash with guilt and shame. Their prayers are but the whimpers of Jezebel's eunuchs.'[2]

It now grows clearer that 'hard core porn' is the major factor in recent increases in rape, sexual cruelty and murder. Unhappily, we begin to see the terrible end-products of depravity, as Paul lists them in Romans 1, both in contemporary society and in church members.

Unhappily, Christian sexual failures do not confine themselves to heterosexual activity. Homosexual practices (overt and in secret, to say nothing of the struggle against homosexual impulses) are widespread.

Statistics in countries other than the US may differ, but I question whether they differ much. Pastors all over the world report grave concern about the extent of promiscuity among Christians. But please note: the current weakness of Christians in the face of the world's impurity *is itself an expression of God's judgment.* God has 'given us over' to sexual vulnerability. Far from excusing our sexual lapses, this should only draw our attention to our deeper sin, the sin of not honouring him as God in the way we conduct our lives.

Judgment in the form of plague

Last week I met a sweet Christian woman whose husband (also a Christian) died recently from AIDS. He had abandoned the gay lifestyle as soon as he was converted. His widow may now be a carrier of the disease. In this we see yet another biblical principle of divine judgment: that God's people may share in the judgment that comes on the guilty, even though they themselves may be innocent. Even when we do not participate in the church's sins, we may share in their consequences. Joshua and Caleb had to suffer forty years of wilderness journeys in spite of their personal righteousness.

Such a case is puzzling. Up to the time when he discovered he had the disease, the husband's story had been one of triumph. Deeply repentant for his past, he had sought God's mercy, had experienced forgiveness and even an unusual degree of deliverance from his homosexual orientation. Fellow Christians hailed their marriage as a triumph of grace. Even after the dismay of the diagnosis, the young couple had continued to serve God with joy, making no complaint against him. Perhaps we can understand why his past should catch up with the husband, but why the threat to the wife's life? Tragically, our past as well as our present can bring catastrophe to others. God nowhere promises his followers immunity from 'unjust' suffering.

AIDS is a physical sickness, one that some authorities predict will eventually compare with the bubonic plague of the fourteenth century. How should we view sickness of any kind? Clearly it does not always represent God's judgment on the sick person, or even on the society of which the sufferer forms a part. Or does it? How does Scripture see it?

Scripture does not mention sickness before the fall. Presumably sickness reflects something similar to the thorns and thistles God cursed the ground with at the fall. Several physical and emotional ills can, even in the account, be seen as a result both of the fall, and of the divine curse that accompanied it. Mortality itself arose from it (Gn. 2:17), as did the shame and fear of nakedness. The pain of childbearing was specifically mentioned as the way the curse would affect women (Gn. 3:16), while for men physical stress and toil were to characterize their work (Gn. 3:17-19). There can be little doubt that all sickness, physical or mental, came with the fall.

It came because Satan became the ruler of this world. Having believed his lie, human lives came under the power both of the lie itself, and of the lie's father. John records three occasions when Jesus referred to Satan as 'the prince [ruler] of this world' (Jn. 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). Satan thus becomes the agent of divine judgment, a fact that is not always easy to come to terms with. We are vulnerable to sickness because of his rule. Sometimes Satan is mentioned as the source of a problem. It is by no means clear what the nature of Paul's 'thorn in the flesh' was, but whatever it was it constituted 'a messenger of Satan'. It was a messenger of Satan sent to do God's work in Paul. So do we accept Satan's messengers or oppose them?

When we grasp that Satan is an instrument of God's judgment it becomes a little easier to understand why we should always oppose sickness, whether with medicine, or with prayer, or with both. To accept judgment meekly is not necessarily a sign of godliness. Faced with a plague for sin, at Moses' bidding Aaron ran with his censer into the midst of his plague-inflicted compatriots to 'make atonement' for

them. 'He stood between the living and the dead, and the plague stopped' (Nu. 16:47-48). When Phineas took violent action against a sinning Israelite, another plague was stopped (Nu. 25:7-13). Judgments, even when they are already in progress, are open to appeal. God takes no pleasure in executing them. When David built an altar on Araunah's threshing floor, 'the Lord answered prayer in behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was stopped' (2 Sa. 24:25).

We must never be passive in the face of divine judgment. Jesus came to 'destroy the devil's work' (1 Jn. 3:8). By his incarnation, death and resurrection, he manifested his kingdom and rule on earth, his authority to advance against the ruler who has been the pawn of the Father's judgment. By healing the sick and casting out demons, he showed both the nature of the kingdom and his own authority in it.

Blessing: the reverse side of judgment

I believe that God's judgment on the church throughout the world is only just beginning. There will be many more exposures of Christian wrongdoing, along with many false accusations. We will be mocked and ridiculed, not by way of sharing Christ's sufferings, but because we have not honoured God as God. Our trials in this case will represent his judgment.

When God judges his people, he does so because without a thoroughgoing repentance he is unable to bless them. Blessing is always his final goal. However, repentance is more than a lighthearted decision to adopt another viewpoint. It does indeed involve a change of viewpoint, but as the Hebrew word *nacham* reminds us, there is ideally a profound change of mood. Frustration over my struggle with sin gives place to something more profound. I need contrition in true repentance. I experience grief, grief that is not merely dismay over my plight. I weep as I become aware how much I have grieved my Lord. It may lie within my power to change my opinion about something, but to weep with a tender heart over my Lord's wounds is a gift only the Holy Spirit can give me.

Therefore when God judges his people, he does so because he sees it as the only way to restored blessing. The only church that can be blessed is a purged and repentant church. Only a purged and repentant church will be an instrument for a worldwide awakening.

AIDS is one of the end-results of the evolution of God's judgment upon society, as well as upon God's people. Yet far from losing heart about it, we do well to lift up our heads. God is not abandoning either his people or a lost society. Rather he is moving in judgment, that he might teach us repentance, and then that he might bless us.

Let us then recognize the situation for what it is. Let us cry out to God for contrite hearts. Let us deal with those areas in our lives that God is trying to reach. It may be that as we do so God will move everywhere with the greatest awakening that this world has ever seen.

[1] 'How Common is Pastoral Indiscretion?', *Leadership,* Volume IX, Number 1, p. 12.

[2] Francis Frangipane, *The Three Battlegrounds* (Marion Iowa: Frangipane, 1989), p. 100.

A survey of church history articles 1986-9

Martin Davie

Echoing the words of Ecclesiastes 12:12, it can safely be said that 'of the making of articles on church history there is no end', and to survey them all would cause great weariness of the flesh both to the surveyor and his readers! This review is therefore not intended to be an exhaustive survey of all articles on church history produced from 1986 to 1989; rather, the articles mentioned are those I personally found interesting, and ones which I think may interest others.

If I have omitted your favourite article or the one you have written, my apologies to you.

The articles are arranged under three headings. These are: 'Patristic and Mediaeval', which covers church history prior to the Reformation; 'Reformation', which covers the 16th and 17th centuries; and 'Enlightenment and Modern', which covers the history of the church from the 18th century to present day.

Patristic and mediaeval

Dan G. McCartney, 'Literal and Allegorical interpretation in Origen's Contra Celsum', *Westminster Theological Journal* XLVIII, Fall 1986.

As the title suggests, McCartney examines Origen's literal and allegorical interpretation of Scripture as exemplified in the *Contra Celsum*. His conclusion is that Origen interpreted the Bible literally 'when intellectual proof was required', but allegorically 'where edification and stimulation were involved'.

Alvyn Petersen, 'Did Athanasius deny Christ's fear?', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 39 No. 3, 1986; and 'The Courage of Christ in Athanasius', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 40 No. 3, 1987.

In the first of this pair of articles Petersen contends that given the parameters within which he was writing, Athanasius' treatment of Christ's fear is 'poignantly realistic'. In the second, he argues that Athanasius portrays Christ as manifesting courage by showing 'confidence in God' and 'willing obedience to and acceptance of the divine will despite the fearsome situations in which the individual is found'.

David Wright, 'The origins of Infant Baptism – Child Believer's Baptism?', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 40 No. 1, 1987.

Debate continues about the origins of infant baptism, and Wright contributes to this debate by suggesting that the idea that infant baptism originated as an extension of the baptism of believing children is an 'increasingly attractive hypothesis'. An issue which Wright does not tackle, but one which is nevertheless important, is that of the theological significance of his suggestion. If infant baptism did have its origins in the baptism of believing children, in what ways should this affect our baptismal policies today?

Michael Root, 'Necessity and Unfittingness in Anselm's Cur Deus Homo', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 40 No. 2, 1987.

In his *Cur Deus Homo* St Anselm sought to show why Christ's incarnation was necessary. In his examination of this work Root argues that Anselm's attempt to prove the necessity of God's action in Christ is flawed because it does not allow God freedom to act in new and creative ways after his initial creation of the world.

Ruth M. Siddals, 'Logic and Christology in Cyril of Alexandria', *Journal of Theological Studies* n.s. 38 pt. 2, October 1987.

Anyone interested in patristic Christology should note this article by Siddals in which she maintains that Cyril's use of Aristotelian and Porphyrian logic needs 'to be recognised in any evaluation of Cyril's theology, and indeed, in any assessment of the Nestorian controversy'. If Siddals' interpretation of Cyril is correct, however, the question still needs to be asked whether Cyril's use of logic clarified or distorted his understanding of the biblical witness to Christ.

Arthur J. Droge, 'Justin Martyr and the Restoration of Philosophy', *Church History* 56 No. 3, September 1987.

In this article Droge examines the claim made by Justin Martyr in his 'Dialogue with Trypho' that Christianity is the true philosophy, and argues that it has its background in the thought of the second-century Middle Platonist, Numenius of Apamea, and the intellectual movement of which he was a part. A helpful article for those seeking to understand the background to the thought of Justin and of the patristic apologists in general.

T. F. Torrance, 'Physikos kai Theologikos Logos, St Paul and Athenagorus at Athens', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 41 No. 1, 1988.

As part of his continuing attempt to expound the thought of the Fathers and their contemporary relevance, Torrance looks at the teaching on creation, providence and resurrection in the work of the second-century apologist Athenagoras. He concludes that Athenagoras helped to lay the basis for that idea of the contingent and rational nature of the universe which underlies modern scientific discovery, and that he 'integrated physical and theological ingredients in our knowledge of God and his interaction with the universe' in a way that has much to offer to the continuing dialogue between theology and natural science.

T. A. Noble, 'Gregory Nazianzen's Use of Scripture in defence of the Deity of the Spirit', *Tyndale Bulletin* 39, 1988.

With the current interest in hermeneutics it is instructive to see how a Christian of the past used Scripture in the construction of doctrine. Noble enables us to do this in this Tyndale Christian Doctrine lecture for 1987 in which he considers Gregory Nazianzen's use of Scripture in defence of the deity of the Spirit in the last of his 'Five Theological orations on the Trinity'. He shows how Nazianzen argues that the deity of the Spirit coheres with the doctrine of the Trinity, that the Spirit's deity is implied in Scripture when not explicitly stated, that the Spirit's deity was revealed after Pentecost, and that there are explicit Scriptural testimonies to the Spirit's being truly God.

M. J. Edwards, 'Gnostics and Valentinians in the Church Fathers', *Journal of Theological Studies* n.s. 40 No. 1, April 1989.

The early heretic Valentinus is normally described in theological textbooks such as J. N. D. Kelly's *Early Christian Doctrines* as a Gnostic. Edwards, however, points out that neither Valentinus himself nor any of the early Fathers used this description of him, and gives reasons to explain why this was the case. This article should be read by anyone who has to write an essay on Gnosticism!

Oliver Nicholson, 'Flight from persecution as imitation of Christ; Lactantius Divine Institutes IV, 18, 1-2', *Journal of Theological Studies* n.s. 40 No. 1, April 1989.

In this article Nicholson examines Lactantius' justification of flight from persecution, and seeks to show that it was part of a widespread 'spirituality of flight' in the early church which 'made sense of the suffering of the refugee by encouraging him to trust in God's providence'. An article that is worth pondering as a reminder that those who flee persecution may be seeking to obey God just as much as those who stay to face it.

P. S. Davies, 'The Origin and Purpose of the Persecution of AD 303', *Journal of Theological Studies* n.s. 40 No. 1, April 1989.

Lactantius argued in the *De Mortibus Persecutorum* that Galerius was the evil genius behind the persecution of AD 303, and this idea has been generally accepted by modern scholarship. Davies, however, attempts to prove that it was in fact Diocletian who was responsible for the persecution, and that Lactantius blamed Galerius for reasons that had more to do with apologetics than with knowledge of what had really taken place. He also explains why he thinks Diocletian started it and why in AD 303.

Reformation

Lynne Courter Boughton, 'Supralapsarianism and the role of Metaphysics in Sixteenth Century Reformed Theology', *Westminster Theological Journal* XLVIII, Spring 1986, No. 1.

The question addressed in this article is how the early reformers' belief in predestination developed into the supralapsarian doctrine which held that God decided between the elect and the reprobate before the fall of Adam. Boughton notes that: 'several scholars have assumed that metaphysics was the perturbation in Reformed theology that turned the mystery of predestination into the doctrine of supralapsarianism', but argues that 'a case can be made for supralapsarianism being both independent of traditional scholastic metaphysics and faithful to the early Reformers'.

Rudi Heinze, 'Martin Luther – A Pathfinder?', *Churchman* 100 No. 2, 1986.

In this article Heinze maintains that Luther's unique contribution to theology was his teaching that 'the righteousness of Christ was always external and alien and can never be said to belong to human beings. It is entirely a free gift and the sinner has no role to play in his justification'. A clear introduction to Luther's distinctive teaching on justification.

Jill Raitt, 'Beza, Guide for the Faithful Life', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 39 No. 1, 1986.

Theodore Beza is normally seen as an academic theologian, but he was also a pastor. Raitt looks at his pastoral teaching and concludes that: 'Beza worked hard to be a good shepherd, drawing from Scripture the doctrine that nourished the faithful'. A useful article that draws attention to a neglected area of Beza's teaching, and reminds us that theology needs to be pastorally applied!

Alan C. Clifford, 'John Calvin and the Confession Fidei Gallicana', *Evangelical Quarterly* LVIII No. 3, July 1986.

The Confession of Faith drawn up by Calvin and his pupil De Chadieu, and adopted by the First National Synod of French Protestants in 1559, has tended to be neglected in favour of other reformed statements of faith such as the 'Westminster Confession' of 1643. Clifford maintains, however, that such neglect is unjustified because: 'It becomes increasingly clear that the Confessio Fidei Gallicana is, for all its neglect, a model confession. The range and character of its statements fully reflect the chaste balanced biblicism of John Calvin, anxious as he always was to avoid any unwarranted extra-scriptural speculation.'

Avihu Zakai, 'The Gospel of Reformation: The Origins of the Great Puritan Migration', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 37 No. 4, October 1986.

In this study of the origins of the Puritan migration to America in the 17th century, Zakai argues that this migration was not caused by any great crisis in English society as a whole. It was instead the result of increasing strife between Puritans and their non-Puritan neighbours, and the lessening of prospects for a Puritan reform of the church at a local level. To put it simply, it was the attitude of their neighbours and state of their local churches that made the Puritans leave for America.

Robert Letham, 'Theodore Beza: A reassessment', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 40 No. 1, 1987.

As I have said, Beza is normally seen as an academic theologian. He is also widely perceived to be the villain who was responsible for the corruption of Reformed theology by encouraging it to move away from the biblically based thought of Calvin. In this reassessment of Beza, Letham accepts that he gave a warmer welcome to scholastic methodology than did Calvin, and that he firmly defended limited atonement while Calvin did not, but contends nevertheless that Beza's 'overall thought on predestination and on its relationship to christology, his formulations on faith and assurance in connection with election, Christ, sanctification and the Spirit all undermine the idea of a deep-seated departure from his predecessor'.

John E. Colwell, 'A radical Church? A reappraisal of Anabaptist Ecclesiology', *Tyndale Bulletin* 38, 1987.

The Anabaptist understanding of the church and its relationship to society was very different from that of the major reformers such as Luther or Calvin. In the Tyndale Historical Theology lecture for 1987, Colwell seeks to explain this difference in terms of Anabaptist eschatology. He argues that it was the eschatology of the mainstream Anabaptists which determined their views on separation from the world, the necessity for purity of life among believers, church discipline, and their rejection of the right of the state to coerce people in matters of religious belief.

W. P. Stephens, 'Huldrych Zwingli: The Swiss Reformer', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 41 No. 1, 1988.

In this inaugural lecture as Professor of Church History at Aberdeen, Stephens states that: 'There is a thread that runs through the whole of his theology, a conviction that colours every view he expresses. It is the sovereignty of God or the glory and honour of God', and shows how this central idea finds expression in Zwingli's thoughts on 'true and false religion', 'the Bible', 'the state', 'the sacraments', and 'the providence of God'.

J. Alton Templin, 'The individual and society in the thought of John Calvin', *Calvin Theological Journal* 23 No. 2, November 1988.

A concise introduction to Calvin's thought on the individual and society which looks at what he had to say about 'the human being as an individual' and 'social organization as the arena of God's activity in the world', and which suggests some contemporary implications of his teaching on these matters.

Enlightenment and modern

Keith Clements, 'Bonhoeffer: Theist or Moralist?', *Theology* LXXXIX No. 729, May 1986.

In this article on Bonhoeffer's ethics, Clements argues against Stewart Sutherland's interpretation of Bonhoeffer in his book *God, Jesus and Belief,* and maintains that Bonhoeffer's ethics only make sense if they are seen as centred on God and his saving action. On the basis of certain passages in his *Letters and Papers from Prison,* writers such as Sutherland and the late John Robinson have portrayed Bonhoeffer as one who abandoned the traditional Christian belief in a transcendent God. It is good to be reminded by Clements that this was not the case, and that Bonhoeffer's thought was actually based on such a belief.

Timothy Bradshaw, 'Karl Barth on the Trinity: A family resemblance', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 39 No. 2, 1986.

Barth's work on the Trinity has been called the greatest work on the subject since the Reformation or even Augustine. Bradshaw's article examines Barth's doctrine of the Trinity and the influences which shaped it, and concludes that 'Barth's trinitarian doctrine needs to be interpreted as drawing from, not only the classical tradition but also idealism and existentialism'. For me, this conclusion raises a further theological question. If Bradshaw is right, how is the validity of Barth's thought on the Trinity affected by the influence of idealism and existentialism upon it?

Nigel Scotland, 'Darwin and Doubt and the Response of the Victorian Churches', *Churchman* 100 No. 4, 1986.

The 19th century is often depicted as a time of conflict between ever-widening knowledge and an obscurantist Christianity which fought this new knowledge all the way along the line. The truth was, in fact, more complex, and Scotland reflects it in this article in which he explores how the Victorian churches responded to scientific discovery and biblical criticism with either 'immediate, enthusiastic acceptance', or 'open hostility', or a 'cautious but general' willingness to accept some of their findings.

Christina A. Baxter, 'Barth – A Truly Biblical theologian?', *Tyndale Bulletin* 38, 1987.

Many evangelicals are suspicious of Barth and regard his work as unbiblical. In this Tyndale Historical Theology lecture, Baxter considers the question as to whether Barth was a biblical theologian. The conclusion she reaches is that Barth's theology was truly biblical in intention since he was a theologian who was concerned 'that not only the content of his dogmatics but also his method should be in accordance with scripture', but that human error and fallibility meant that this intention was not always carried out in practice.

Norman H. Murdoch, 'Evangelical Sources of Salvation Army Doctrine', *Evangelical Quarterly* LIX No. 3, July 1987.

A fascinating article on a little-known subject which shows how Salvation Army doctrine was influenced by the nine-point statement of faith produced by the Evangelical Alliance in 1846, and the Wesleyan-Arminian 'holiness' teaching of the visiting American preachers Phoebe Palmer and Robert and Hannah Pearsall Smith, and how the broad statement of faith adopted by Booth's Christian Mission in 1865 became a distinctively Wesleyan creed by 1876.

Robert R. Cook, 'Soren Kierkegaard: Missionary to Christendom', *Evangelical Quarterly* LIX No. 4, October 1987.

This article by Cook is intended to dispel evangelical ignorance about Kierkegaard and would make a good starting point for anyone wanting to find out about Kierkegaard and his teaching. Cook defends Kierkegaard against the charges that he was a mystic, a pelagian, or a fideist, and expounds Kierkegaard's thought on mediocrity, individuality, detachment, subjectivity, fame and purity of heart.

John Conway, 'How shall the Nations Repent? The Stuttgart Declaration of Guilt, October 1945', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 38 No. 4, October 1987.

In October 1945 the council of the Protestant Church in Germany produced a 'public acknowledgement of responsibility and guilt' for their inadequate response to Nazism. Conway looks at the background, weaknesses and significance of this 'Stuttgart Declaration' in an article which is worth pondering by anyone who is interested in the political responsibility of the church (and that should be everyone!), and which provokes thought about what God might be asking the church to repent of today.

Samuel T. Logan, 'Where have all the tulips gone?', *Westminster Theological Journal* L No. 1, Spring 1988.

Despite the title, this is not an article which has escaped from Gardeners' World! It is in fact an examination of the decline of orthodox Calvinism in New England between 1630 and 1776, due to the desire for human freedom being given higher priority than zeal for God's glory and the holiness of his people. An article which is worth looking at for the questions it raises about whether Calvinism and modern notions of political liberty and human autonomy are compatible. Does an emphasis on the sovereignty of God necessarily mean a devaluation of human freedom?

Arthur Bennett, 'Charles Simeon: Prince of Evangelicals', *Churchman* 102 No. 2, 1988.

Charles Simeon provided a role model for generations of evangelical Anglican clergy and this article by Bennett provides a good introduction to why this was the case. An article which can be recommended to anyone who wants a clear and concise summary of Simeon's life and thought.

Mark A. Noll, 'Revival, Enlightenment, civic humanism and the development of dogma: Scotland and America, 1735-1843', *Tyndale Bulletin* 40, 1989.

In an article which complements the one by Logan mentioned above, Noll examines the reasons why American theology moved away from Calvinism during the period with which he is concerned, while in Scotland Calvinism remained dominant. He also adds a 'homily' explaining how the history he has outlined indicates that secularization needs to be resisted on an institutional and existential level, as well as on a theological level, and that non-theological factors have to be taken into account when looking at the development of dogma. A brilliant article which should interest those who want to know about Scottish and American church history, how theology can avoid being controlled by non-theological factors, or how to study the way in which doctrine develops.

Book reviews

John Goldingay, **Theological Diversity and the Authority of the Old Testament** (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/Exeter: Paternoster, 1987), ix + 308 pp., £12.25.

This learned and wide-ranging monograph explores a critical nexus of theological and hermeneutical issues (which is a major concern of current OT scholarship) – to see 'how the diverse viewpoints reflected in the Old Testament may be acknowledged, interrelated, and allowed to function theologically' (back cover). The extended review which follows is an attempt to orientate readers to the book's argument. The review editor is grateful for Dr Goldingay's assistance in preparing this review.

A substantial introductory chapter looks at the sorts of diversity to be found in the OT (diversity in the meaning of concepts, themes and institutions; in the messages of different parts of the OT; in the interpretation of particular events or motifs) and reasons for this (in diversity of authors, audiences and contexts, and in the 'complexity of the realities of which the OT speaks' [p. 14]), concluding that 'diversity is an essential characteristic of OT tradition' (p. 12). Thereafter the book is structured in three Parts, each of two chapters. Each Part outlines in the first of the two chapters a particular strategy for dealing with the OT's theological diversity, while in the second that approach is applied to a particular subject. Misunderstanding will arise unless it is clearly perceived that Goldingay writes the book using the standard critical methodology of OT scholarship.

A significant section of the Introduction defines four different types of 'contradiction' said to be found in the OT. Whereas 'formal contradiction involves a difference at the level of words which is not a difference at the level of substance' (p. 16), 'contextual contradiction denotes a difference reflecting the variety in circumstances which different statements address'. On the other hand, 'substantial contradiction involves a true divergence in viewpoint on the part of speakers whose disagreement is neither merely verbal nor merely contextual' (though Goldingay notes that 'for all the differences between them, they arise from faith in the one Yahweh' [p. 24]), while 'fundamental contradiction denotes a disagreement which is a matter of substance and which indicates a basic disharmony at the level of "ethical stance" or "religious outlook"'. This last section is a trifle too hypothetical. Here Goldingay suggests that: 'The ultimate form of this disharmony related by the OT is the conflict reported in Elijah's day, for instance, over whether Baal is God or Yahweh is God. In Jeremiah's day it is the question of allegiance to Yahweh or to the Queen of Heaven' (p. 24). As far as one can see, however much the

allegiance of the populace in Israel or Judah vacillated between Yahweh or Baal or the queen of heaven, the OT nowhere suggests that faith in Baal or the queen of heaven is a legitimate option.

Goldingay next addresses the fundamental question, 'Is it appropriate to look for theological coherence in the Old Testament?' (p. 25) given the existence of diverse viewpoints. Goldingay argues that 'it is a reasonable working assumption' that the community to which the OT belonged believed its Scriptures to be theologically coherent. He suggests that 'only by presupposing that such a coherence exists [because of the community's belief 'that in some sense it receives the scriptures of God'] . . . shall we be able to discover what that coherence is (or to confirm whether or not it exists)' (p. 26). Following D. Patrick, Goldingay in fact suggests that in the early development of the OT tradition portrayal of 'the one God of the one community' functioned canonically in that it 'allowed that tradition to embrace only works in which he could be recognized' (p. 27). Acknowledging that 'the exegetical methods by which Jews and Christians two millenia ago sought to vindicate this conviction [of theological coherence] do not find acceptance in the world of twentieth-century scholarship' impels Goldingay to discover 'whether this conviction can be vindicated by the methods used by scholarship', and beyond that to 'release the value of the OT's diversity in the context of Christian theology and biblical interpretation' (p. 28).

In Part I Goldingay discusses 'A Contextual or Historical Approach'. 'One approach to theological diversity in the OT is simply to acknowledge the variety of viewpoints and to accept all of them as potentially instructive' (p. 29). Among the 'range of insights incorporated within the OT. . . . I may find some insight that relates to my own situation' (p. 29; 'insight' is a word which permeates the book; it overlaps with what others call 'revelation'). It can be suggested that the diverse viewpoints have a 'formal' unity because 'all these writings belong to one history; they are the deposit of the historical experience of Israel in its pre-Christian period. Together they are . . . the deposit of one unified religious tradition' (p. 30), but this is an 'organic unity' not a 'structured unity of a carefully articulated statement'. Goldingay notes that even within certain biblical books diverse viewpoints co-exist: an obvious example being the Psalter which embodies an enormous range of responses to God. But the viewpoints within the OT are asserted to have not merely 'formal' but also 'material' unity: 'First, they not only derive from and belong to one people: they concern one people'; second, as the God of the 'people of *God*' God himself 'is the keystone that holds the OT's diverse materials into one building' (p. 32). 'Third, as Israel's history provides a fundamental aspect of the OT's formal unity, so its history constitutes one aspect of its material unity.'

Goldingay explains unity in relation to diversity on a contextual approach as relating to the fact that different speakers respond to different contexts 'in Yahweh's name'. Much that Goldingay has to say is highly perceptive. He is sensitive to the need to avoid having our prejudices reinforced by a selective concentration on those traditions in the OT which most appeal to us (the danger 'that we look down the well and see our own faces at the bottom'). He acknowledges that simply accepting diversity in OT faith may reflect our own situation rather than that of the authors of Scripture. Using the model of a trajectory in relation to an OT idea can help us to 'extrapolate the path it might be expected to take in relationship to questions which are not raised in the OT. . . . Thus the contextual nature of the OT also functions as a model for our attempt to see what new thing God may have to say in contexts that were unknown in ancient Israel' (p. 36). The material in the OT is to be seen as building material in the task of theological construction, rather than as the finished product itself. It is not sufficient to stop with diachronic analyses, we must go on to synthesis.

Stressing the need to relate a historical understanding of the text to a historical understanding of the contemporary situation, and noting the danger of getting either wrong, Goldingay avers that sometimes a contextual/historical approach cannot explain the divergent responses to be found in Scripture: 'Sometimes Scripture offers several possible paradigmatic responses to a recurrent set of circumstances: for instance, for a landless or insecure people, is the matching scriptural message that of Joshua (attack), that of the exile (wait for Yahweh to act), or that of some postexilic situation (accept the situation)?' (p. 37). But is this so? To achieve these 'paradigms' Goldingay has had to isolate the biblical 'message' from the historical situation which gave rise to it; and it is unclear on what basis he moves hermeneutically from the ancient sacral context (where the nation of Israel is also the people of God) to today's non-sacral situation (where the people of God is not co-extensive with any national group). To take one of his examples, the OT never suggests that Joshua's means of entry into Canaan was to be paradigmatic for any other group of people. (Much later in the book Goldingay has a more balanced understanding of what was involved when he discusses the 'conquest' in his section on holy war in Deuteronomy, pp. 162-163.) Yet it is undoubtedly true that while 'All the OT's perspectives on the people of God or on the land may contain insights . . . all those insights cannot be normative in the same way at the same time' (p. 37).

Are some contexts more illuminating than others? In short, yes. Developing the idea of a trajectory, Goldingay suggests that 'The whole trajectory is potentially illuminating. . . . It is not the high point of the trajectory that alone counts' (p. 42). Applying this to the question of the relationship of law and covenant, Goldingay comments: 'the law fulfils many theological functions within scripture. It provides a basis for the declaration of judgment, the key to avoiding judgment, and the explanation of the experience of judgment' (p. 47). It has a different function in different situations. 'But one needs to ask whether any particular biblical context allows the essential significance of law to emerge more clearly than others. Does the trajectory traced by law have a high point?' Noth's position, as modified by subsequent scholarship, 'implies that it does. Specific instructions on the content of human behaviour before God are most at home in the context of a declaration of the lordship of God over the lives of the beings on whose behalf he has acted in love and power, both in creation and redemption' (pp. 47-48). Other significances of law derive from the covenant significance.

Applying the trajectory model to 'life, death, and the possibility of afterlife' evinces these striking comments: 'The variety of views in the OT accumulates, and the earlier have to be read in the context of the latter. One cannot simply revert to an earlier view as if the later ones had not emerged' (p. 56). On the other hand, what is older is not rejected: 'The old is not abandoned but preserved and set in a new light. The history of revelation is not a journey toward truth, but a journey which starts from truth — though not a static doctrinal truth' (p. 56). Summing up this section, the need is noted for the interpreter to analyse both the contexts and the interrelationships of themes in those contexts as part of the task of OT theology.

In Part I Chapter 3 Goldingay offers 'A Contextualizing Study of "the People of God" in the Old Testament'. Here he traces the changing fortunes of Israel from 'wandering clan' through 'theocratic nation' and 'institutional state' to 'afflicted remnant' and 'the community of promise', concluding with 'the continuing story of the people of God in Judaism and Christianity'. The chapter is thought-provoking and abounds in material that demands to be quoted. Goldingay is well aware on the one hand that 'God's people is a clearly identifiable social entity, for a significant period an actual nation' (p. 60), yet 'Israel actually threw off statehood along with monarchy with remarkable ease — "the state as such was somewhat of a borrowed garment for Israel" [von Rad]. They had been the people of Yahweh before, and could be after' (p. 77). 'To the extent that the people of God is where the kingship of God is a reality (a notion given outward form by the theocratic nation), it forms a microcosm of what the whole world is called to be' (p. 74). Israel's status is dependent on her relationship with Yahweh: if 'the people of God is not a means of God's revelation, but a threat to it; for the sake of that revelation Israel therefore has to be cast off. The people of God has no security independent of their obedience' (p. 75). And when the community is faithless 'God will reveal himself through them by judging them. . . . They thus represent in microcosm the judgment of all those who go against God' (p. 75).

Goldingay is acute on the remnant: 'when God abandons the people as a whole, it is not to the individual that he turns' (p. 73). Goldingay suggests that the OT embodies four responses to the consequent post-exilic situation, those of 'a *worshipping* community' (*e.g.* Chronicles; p. 77), 'a *waiting* community' (*e.g.* Haggai, Zechariah; p. 78), a community '*obeying* the pentateuchal law' (*e.g. certain Psalms; p. 79), a 'questioning*' community (*e.g.* Job, Ecclesiastes; p. 80), though it is less than obvious that either Job or

Ecclesiastes fits this scenario. Goldingay suggests that 'some of these modes of [Israel's] being are of more lasting significance than others' (p. 92) and he argues that 'the people of God cannot take it for granted that each of these models of what it means to be the people of God is equally available for appropriation' (p. 93). His final answer to the question 'when is Israel really Israel?' [Gunneweg] (p. 94) is 'when the vision of the theocratic nation and the vision of the afflicted servant come together in the exile' (p. 96).

Goldingay moves on in Part II to consider 'An Evaluative or Critical Approach' under the subheading 'Can we affirm some viewpoints and criticize others?' The answer to which is, basically, yes. Among the evaluative approaches Goldingay discusses is that of development where he correctly rejects an evolutionary approach to the OT. He believes that 'There is, of course, development in the sense of change, but this development follows a zigzag line, an up-and-down one in which insights are lost as well as gained' (pp. 103-104). The NT is not accepted as an adequate control on the OT, for 'Even the NT, however, is usually reckoned to contain material that falls short of an absolute standard' (p. 110) – though where we might have access to that absolute standard, if not in Scripture, is not indicated. Goldingay is concerned to allow the OT 'to determine what is central to its faith and what is peripheral' (p. 111), and in this quest he concludes that if 'we have not yet discovered the single correct key to producing a satisfactory final synthesis of OT faith, this suggests that there is no such key' (p. 115). Consequently there is need to reflect that in our handling of the OT – and 'a multiplicity of approaches will lead to a multiplicity of insights' (p. 115).

Goldingay takes the teaching of Deuteronomy as his test case and examines it under the aspects of 'Behavioural Values', 'Theological Perspective' and 'Pastoral Strategy'. There is a fine exposition on pages 142-143 of what it meant for Israel to be Yahweh's special people. An important section is Goldingay's discussion of 'Deuteronomy's compromises' where he well portrays the tension which any legislation must embody between what may be deemed to be desirable and what is in fact realistically attainable. When Goldingay concludes the section on theological perspective he highlights what he sees as a 'limitation' in Deuteronomy's theology. Believing Deuteronomy to date from the 7th century BC, he sees Deuteronomy's stress on 'Israel as Yahweh's people and Yahweh as Israel's God' as relating to 'what it saw the situation to demand', but 'this is not all that needs to be said about Israel or about Yahweh. By focusing on Israel's privileged calling and responsibility and the importance of Israel's distancing itself from the nations, Deuteronomy *obscures* the fact that it is ultimately for the sake of the nations that Israel is called at all' (p. 152, my emphasis). This is strong language and others may well think that the evidence demands a different reading. (It is an interesting point how far an earlier dating – dependent on vassal treaty analogies – would affect Goldingay's assessment. Goldingay had earlier noted 'the covenant shape of Deuteronomy' (p. 66) while leaving open the question of the relationship of form to date.)

Part III, 'A Unifying or Constructive Approach', seeks to answer the question 'Can we formulate one OT theology?' (p. 167). The reason for Goldingay's use of the word constructive is that, as noted above, he conceives the task of OT theology as like building: 'working with these [OT] materials, we seek to construct a whole which does not correspond to anything that any individual OT writer knew, but which does justice to what he knew' (p. 184). That suggestion is perhaps unobjectionable, but Goldingay continues: 'OT theology's task is a constructive one in a further sense. In analysing, explicating, articulating, and defining the theological implications of OT faith, interpreters are not merely describing that faith; *they are creating new concepts of God and the world* through the interaction between what the OT actually says and the tools they bring to it' (p. 185, emphasis mine). Goldingay attacks Stendhal here for arguing that OT theology should be 'purely descriptive', but it is unclear that Goldingay's position does not in fact undermine the notion that what we have in Scripture is – as well as being human word – divine revelation.

Grouses: one occasionally wishes that, in the midst of his interaction with a range of scholarly opinion, it was a little clearer what is *Goldingay's* view: for instance, a substantial quote from L. R. Bailey on death (pp. 33-34) might be thought to represent Goldingay's own position as no critique is offered – until page 39, which is a trifle disconnected! Goldingay's caution is evident at many points, yet one sometimes feels that the evidence has been unnecessarily read in a manner designed to maximize differences. Despite his encyclopaedic reading (*cf.* the forty-nine-page bibliography) there is little interaction with conservative OT scholarship; for instance, M. G. Kline's work on the covenantal dimensions of canon or his concept of intrusive ethics is nowhere picked up – the latter idea being important in evaluating the morality of the 'ban'. A second edition might benefit from a revised title omitting the word 'authority' – hardly the subject of the book. A second edition would be somewhat more approachable if the quite unnecessary untransliterated Hebrew was excised.

In conclusion, it is patent that Goldingay – using throughout the methodology of contemporary scholarship – has made a major contribution to the ongoing discussion of unity and diversity in the OT, and for this he deserves our thanks. Few are likely to rival his grasp of the issues, his command of the scholarly literature or his perspicacious writing. It is a book that would form an excellent basis for discussion in a seminar over a term. It is certainly an indispensable book for anyone wishing to appreciate and appropriate the theological largesse of the OT.

David G. Deboys

John I. Durham, **Word Biblical Commentary: Exodus** (Waco: Word Books, 1987), xxxiv + 516 pp., n.p.

The present volume is one of more than twenty that have appeared since the Word Biblical Commentary series was launched in 1977. Word's ambitious series is intended to be 'a showcase of the best in evangelical critical scholarship', although judging from the available volumes, the evangelical and critical stance as well as the distinctiveness of each contribution will need to be assessed individually. Durham's work on Exodus deserves to be counted as a positive and most useful addition.

In his preface and introduction Durham declares something of his own commitment to the canonical text, as a masterful declaration of Yahweh's presence and its implications. He says, 'It is a book of faith, about faith, and directed to those with faith. Those who read the Book of Exodus without faith, though they will inevitably profit from their reading, will not understand its message.' His stated concern for a scholarly investigation of the text we have before us, integrated with a living faith, is important for both the 'fledgling student' and the professional scholar whom the series seeks to assist.

In general the reader will find Durham's *bibliography* helpful. Those desiring a wider coverage will want to turn to other major commentaries like Childs' (1974). A quick comparison based on four randomly chosen sections covering a total of *c.* 500 references showed a shared bibliography of 100+ works between Durham and Childs. Durham is able to include more recent works while Childs ranges more widely, including NT context, history of interpretation and extended theological reflection. They complement each other well, but by no means exhaust the possibilities. Unfortunately the bibliography seems to leave untouched a number of evangelical works that would seem to be appropriate given the stated 'evangelical stance and commitment'.

The sections assigned to *translation and notes* are of paramount interest to Durham, and most readers will find his material very helpful. This reviewer found the translation a bit too choppy and mixed in idiom when read aloud, but most stimulating and helpful for the student who wants to get into the original text and capture its vibrance. Durham's notes confirm his deep respect for the text as we have received it and he sees no reason to take a sound textual tradition and recast it to represent some linguistic or theological model.

The sections headed *Form/Structure/Setting* could be the forum for long discourses on the many and divergent scholarly opinions on source criticism and tradition history, but Durham succeeds most often in disciplining the discussion in line with his insistence on interpreting the text as it stands. Building on its literary-critical

foundations, modern critical studies, especially after Noth's and von Rad's work, have tended to place all too heavy an emphasis on diachronic analysis of the OT traditions. The search for the sources of tradition and the reconstruction of the complex history of reformulation and application has tended to drive comment in the direction of fragmentation and speculation. Dissatisfaction with unconvincing and inconsistent results of scholarly effort has contributed to the recent turbulence in the area of OT studies and the search for new approaches. The synchronic approach which Durham affirms is one of the positive reactions to emerge over the last decades. He thus sketches the current critical opinion briefly, expressing appreciation for its value and opening the way for further investigation, but he insists on pushing on to the text as it stands before us. He repeatedly eschews the speculation which has been so rife in the field, though his own weakest moments come when he allows himself to drift into the same mode of analysis.

Durham generally handles the *Comment* sections well as it is here that he develops the bulk of his central theme. From the very first pages of the introduction he makes it clear that the complex and diverse richness of the material found in Exodus is unified by its theological purpose. As he states, 'The centerpiece of this unity is the theology of Yahweh present with and in the midst of his people.' This is the major theme under which the others are subsumed, including deliverance (salvation, rescue), covenant and a wealth of others. The thology of Yahweh's presence draws everything to itself in this work and it permeates every page. One will have to turn elsewhere to consider other theological centres and priorities in the book of Exodus. He has avoided serving up 'literary or theological goulash' for us, but the 'sub-themes' in his analysis definitely deserve more attention.

Additional space could profitably be devoted to historical considerations too. The theological purpose is set *in* history, but could be illuminated more *as* history. Having affirmed the historical origin of the traditions against a backdrop of the beginning of the 19th dynasty of Egypt, Durham does not probe much more into matters of history or historicity. For him it is best to leave the matters of specialized historical, scientific and archaeological inquiry to the experts. Much lies beyond our reach and therefore excessive speculation or binding the text to specific historical reconstructions is not productive. He maintains that it is not essential for the interpreter to delve into these matters deeply, because the theological message of the text does not require it. One positive result of this is that he treats the text's own coherent presentation of the revelation and development of Israel's Yahwistic faith in the pre-conquest/settlement period as opposed to the synthesis of diverse and scattered tribal history and religion as some reconstruct it.

Many, including the present reviewer, will see a much more significant connection between historical inquiry and the theological purpose of the text. There is an undoubted need for caution in avoiding conclusions that reach beyond the available evidence; however, the available evidence is substantial. There is a wealth of non-biblical archaeological, historical and linguistic data, which is the fruit of abundant archaeological and ancient Near Eastern studies. When handled properly this material can do a great deal to illuminate the text before us. The Hittite and Mesopotamian covenant-treaty forms for example deserve much greater recognition in explaining the shape of the text. One will have to look elsewhere for help in these matters.

The *explanation* sections are often the shortest and include a good bit that is repetitive. Given the format, it is unavoidable. There are some good summaries here, but one longs to see something of the wider canonical and theological reflection on the text along the order of some of B. S. Childs' material, even if in only a brief sketch.

A few concluding words on the collective impressions of these sections is in order. In his theological analysis of the content of Exodus, Durham follows closely the sequence of the text. The 'swarms' of Israelites we meet in the opening scenes of the book are directly related to the patriarchal narratives, personages and promises. Their numbers are a fulfilment of the promise and the turbulent days of conflict in Egypt point to the release and promised land motifs. The theological purpose undergirding all of these recorded events is seen in the God of the Fathers taking active initiatives on their behalf and ultimately for the benefit of all mankind. Thus Durham presents us with an account of the deeply moving currents of salvation history and not some dark and fragmentary picture of early tribal life and religion as some authors do.

Throughout the commentary he remains faithful to this theological understanding of the text. Moses' arrival and survival is part of God's carefully wrought plan, the family and Pharaoh being assigned to lesser roles as a result. This is clearly seen in Durham's assessment of the 'ten blows' and 'hardening motif' throughout the mighty act sections (7:8 - 13:6). What occurs is the result of Yahweh's supernatural 'proof of presence' initiative and not to be explained solely on human or natural terms. According to Durham, this is how the text unabashedly presents itself and thus we must accept it on its own terms. He does not adopt the position of some, however, who over-emphasize divine action as part of a series of sporadic and dramatic acts of Yahweh which dominate *heilsgeschichte*. Such an analysis has led to the loss of significance for the ten blows, the golden calf story, the details of the cult and even Moses himself. For Durham the proof of Yahweh's presence, the advent of his presence, the people's response and the necessity of his continued presence bind this material together in significance. The theophanic advent may be centre stage, but the daily life of the faithful, the role of leadership, the vitality of the cult and even the details of moral and cultic legislation have an important role to play.

The constructiveness of this approach for the student of the present text of Exodus can be illustrated with two examples. The dominant theme of presence/response is seen expounded in the call and obedience section (3:1 - 7:7). From the outset Yahweh is the active partner revealing himself and declaring his unique name and purpose. Moses at the burning bush, who is at this juncture not characterized as an ardent religious seeker but a shepherd, must respond. As our author says, 'Theophany describes the advent of God's presence; call describes the opportunity of response to that Presence. Theophany provides both stimulus and authority for response; response, despite a choice, is virtually inevitable following theophany.' Moses' experience foreshadows the Sinai events and the theme propels the narrative cohesively forward through to the greater Advent of Presence and the people's response at Sinai. 'Necessity' leads to the 'ideal' response in Exodus 24 and 'choice' to the real and tragic ending in Exodus 32 - 34. Despite source-critical visions of a 'labyrinth of seams and separate parts' in the latter section, Durham sets these aside for a valuable discussion of this material as a paradigm of Israel's relationship with Yahweh.

The prescribed 'media of worship' (25:1 - 31:8) and obedience (35:1 - 40:38) sections also benefit from this approach. A close comparison of parallel portions has led many to disassemble the text and finally get bogged down in the vagaries of source and tradition analysis. Durham's emphasis is on seeing the obvious repetition, reordering, compression and expansion as a sign of the conscious literary skill and theological purpose attributed to the final editor. Above all it is to be seen as bound together by theological connections which bear the key theme of the immanent Presence of Yahweh and the authorized media for response.

Durham's commentary does make a definite and positive contribution to our understanding of Exodus within the scope of Word's new series. He has rigorously focused his attention on the interpreter's task as he sees it and constructively develops the significance of the theology of Yahweh's presence. Though working from a moderately source-critical stance, he has for the most part left speculation aside and concentrated on the text at hand. This focus and scope will be a help to the student, but only a beginning to the study of this foundational book of the OT.

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William J. Dumbrell, **The End of the Beginning. Revelation 21 - 22 and the Old Testament** (Homebush West, NSW, Australia: Lancer Books, 1985), 200 pp., £7.95.

This book represents the Moore Theological College Lectures of 1983 given by Dumbrell. The reader should not be misled by the title of the

book since it is not primarily a study of Revelation 21 - 22 nor of the use of the OT in the concluding chapters of Revelation. Indeed, only about twenty pages of the entire 204 are dedicated to direct discussion of Revelation 21 - 22. Rather this work is a biblical theology of the OT and NT organized around the five themes of the new Jerusalem, new temple, new covenant, new Israel and new creation. There are five chapters in the work in which Dumbrell discusses each respective theme by surveying its development in the OT, gospels, epistles and Revelation. Surprisingly, only about one page at the end of each section is given over to discussion of the respective theme in Revelation 21 - 22, betraying the author's broader aim throughout the book. The formal reason for tracing these themes throughout Scripture is that they form the core of the conclusion of biblical history in the perspective of John's Apocalypse. Therefore, Dumbrell believes that such a broad study will shed light on the biblical background upon which John drew to compose his final panoramic vision and how he utilized these antecedent biblical ideas. In short, the prior development of these biblical themes becomes a commentary on their use in Revelation 21 - 22.

Dumbrell gives no adequate rationale as to why he views the above-mentioned five topics as the 'centers' of his biblical theology, except for their formal presence in Revelation 21 - 22. But it is apparent that he has chosen these as the most overarching ideas of the canon as a result of his overall study of the Bible. For him each theme serves as a window, an entire perspective on the whole structure of the Bible. Each theme is not to be viewed as of equal importance nor is each independent of the others. And although Dumbrell admits that these are not the only possible themes for consideration in this kind of work, it is clear that he thinks that together they are the most important.

The author admits that the order in which the themes are discussed is subjective even though he makes a plausible attempt to give a logical explanation for this: each is an aspect of 'the Bible's wider concept of government, the Kingdom of God . . . the New Jerusalem is the symbol of government and those governed; the New Temple is the seat of government; the New Covenant is the instrument of government; the New Israel reveals those governed and their role; and the New Creation is a final comprehensive presentation of both the governed and the Governor' (Introduction).

Although Dumbrell has organized his biblical theology around these five themes, he finally opts for the new creation as the most comprehensive idea and the summary of the other four. The entire scheme of the Bible is structured around the movement 'from creation to new creation by means of divine redemptive interventions', climaxing in Christ's death, resurrection and second coming which conclude all things (*e.g.* pp. 166, 196). In this regard, redemption is always subordinate to creation in that it is the means of reintroducing the conditions of the new creation (*e.g.* pp. 184-185, 191, 194). All events since the fall are to be seen as a process leading to the reintroduction of the original creation. In order to evaluate Dumbrell's proposed 'center' of biblical theology and to become exposed to other proposed 'centers' the student will be helped by consulting G. Hasel's two works on the subject. The works of Warren A. Gage (*The Gospel of Genesis* [Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1984]) and Meredith Kline (*Images of the Spirit* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980]; *Kingdom Prologue,* Vol. I-III [S. Hamilton, MA: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary Press, 1986]) would be excellent supplements to Dumbrell's book since their focus also is upon a tracing of creation themes throughout Scripture.

I believe Dumbrell's proposal is very close to the mark. He demonstrates well how the OT develops this overriding concern of creation. However, not only is his discussion of Revelation too brief (in view of the book's title) but so also is the analysis of NT material (especially Pauline literature) in general. This is a major limitation since according to Dumbrell's own view the death and resurrection of Christ are the climactic expressions of the OT doctrine of redemption woven throughout all of the covenants (p. 166). Nowhere is there a precise explanation of *how* Christ's death and resurrection relate to or inaugurate the new creation. Indeed, much could be said about this relationship. For example, at the least, Dumbrell should have attempted serious discussion of 2 Cor. 5:14-17; Gal. 6:14-16; Eph. 1:20-23 and 2:13-15; Col. 1:15-18 and Rev. 1:5 and 3:14. In each of these texts Christ's death and resurrection is formally related to the beginning of the new creation. But how? Dumbrell's thesis demands that this question be answered more thoroughly and clearly. I think the basic answer in these texts is that Christ himself became the beginning of the new creation through his resurrection (*cf.* 2 Cor. 5:15-17; Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5 and 3:14) and his death was the inaugurated destruction of the old creation (Gal. 6:14-15; 1 Jn. 2:2, 12-17). Of course, this explanation needs trenchant development. Dumbrell himself does formally analyse Col. 1:15-20 in an illuminating manner but he still does not answer the above question.

Dumbrell makes his most helpful and creative contributions in the area of covenant theology. Especially in this respect the author's present work is a further development of his earlier *Covenant and Creation* (Lancer/Paternoster, 1984), where he argues that the diverse expressions of covenant(s) throughout the Bible are but aspects of 'only one biblical covenant, that made implicitly by the fact of creation itself and reestablished in the details of Gen. 6:18 and 9:7-13' (*cf. End of the Beginning,* p. 103). Dumbrell makes a good case that all the covenants and promises after the Abrahamic are primarily intended as positive developments of that covenant (*e.g.* pp. 49-52, 97-99, 129, 134, 149, 195). Likewise, the Abrahamic covenant is placed after the preceding chapters of Genesis as a keynote explaining how the problems introduced by the fall will be resolved (*cf.* p. 132). Similarly, 'Israel' is defined not ethnically nor nationally but as a worshipping community among whom God's tabernacling presence dwells (*e.g.* pp. 84-85, 87, 143-144, 150, 155). Those who traditionally hold to a distinction between true Israel and the church will have to consider seriously Dumbrell's remarks. If there is only one ultimate covenant, it is likely there is only one people of God, not two distinct peoples.

One of the most interesting parts of the book is a section where Dumbrell resummarizes and develops his earlier discussion in *Covenant and Creation* on the relation of the Sinaitic and new covenants (pp. 90-92, 105-110). In relation to this, Dumbrell also has a stimulating study of 2 Cor. 3:7-18 and the use of Exodus 32 - 34 therein (pp. 107-113). In this regard, his analysis is novel and possibly correct in its broad outlines.

On the whole, Dumbrell presents cogent arguments in support of his conclusions. But his study would be impossible if the various biblical authors had radically different theologies. However, Dumbrell has the presupposition that 'the rich diversity of Scripture serves its profound unity' and that 'the entire Bible is moving, growing according to a common purpose and towards a common goal' (Introduction). Consequently, Dumbrell's database for doing biblical theology is not limited to particular biblical authors but extended to the entire canon. This then is an excellent book for the student desiring to understand the inner-relatedness of the Bible, and especially of the two testaments. If the book is ever revised it should be given a title reflective of its broad biblical and theological themes rather than one which suggests that only a study of two chapters in Revelation are the focus. This work will be understood best by those who have also read Dumbrell's *Covenant and Creation,* since more detailed argument is given there of some issues which are addressed here. In fact, it would be ideal for Dumbrell to revise his earlier work on biblical theology, *Covenant and Creation,* by integrating the new material found in the present work.

The lack of any survey of the development of the relevant themes in intertestamental Jewish literature is an unfortunate omission in the study. Although this is not a thorough exegetical work (it apparently was not intended to be), it is one of the most concise and best studies of biblical theology to be found. It is orthodox yet creative, original yet written with awareness of other relevant secondary works. I especially commend this book for those interested in the theological relationship of the two testaments. I have benefited very much from reading this book.

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D. A. Carson, **Showing the Spirit. A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12 - 14** (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), 229 pp., £10.95.

This book is another of Dr Carson's useful expositions of a small section of NT text. With such expositions already in print on Matthew 5 - 7, John 14 - 17, and 2 Corinthians 10 - 13, this book tackles another text of particular significance and relevance to the church today.

The discussion of these complex chapters combines a high level of scholarship with a good awareness of the modern pastoral issues involved. Students and ministers alike will be able to read the work since it is well written and clearly marked out into chapters and sections with titles. The footnotes are quite considerable and will introduce the student to the more detailed work of other scholars.

The first four chapters of the book simply follow the exegesis of the text. A final chapter ('Unleashed Power and the Constraints of Discipline: Toward a Theology of Spiritual Gifts') reflects, from a wider standpoint, on the theological issues concerning the gifts of the Spirit. Here Dr Carson looks at the 'baptism of the Spirit' in Acts and the place of tongues and miracles in that early church. He argues against seeing incidents such as the coming of the Spirit in Acts 8 in normative terms. He spends time reflecting on the nature of revelation as it appears in prophecy and here he argues that, when we think of such revelation, even in the modern church, we need not limit ourselves 'to a form of authoritative revelation that threatens the finality of the canon. . . . Such prophecies must still be evaluated . . .' (p. 163).

This approach to defining the 'revelation' received through gifts such as prophecy follows, with certain clearly expressed caveats, the views propounded by W. Grudem in his book *The Gift Of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians* (University Press of America, London, 1982). The reference to 'perfection' in 13:10 cannot then refer, as some more traditional scholars suggest, to the completion of the canon, but rather to some point in the future designated by Paul as 'perfection' (p. 70). After detailed exegetical discussion and considerable interaction with various interpretations of this passage, Carson concludes that the reference to 'perfection' and the cessation of gifts anticipates the parousia.

It is perhaps a great pity that G. D. Fee's commentary on this epistle (Paternoster, Exeter, 1987) and this work by Carson must have been written around the same time, since neither interacts with the other. For example, the position adopted by Fee on 14:34-35 (where he doubts the authenticity of the verses) is not discussed by Carson in his otherwise very extensive discussion of the exegetical issues. Carson adopts the view that these verses are original and in their right place in the text. He interprets them along the lines suggested by Hurley (*Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective,* Leicester, IVP, 1981) and Grudem (mentioned above).

It is in the nature of these expositions of short sections that they cannot do justice to the setting of the chapters in the epistle as a whole. While Carson demonstrates some links with the earlier chapters of the epistle, there is no real attempt to explain why it is that the issues of chapters 12 - 14 arise at this point. He takes just over two pages to summarize 'the story so far' (pp. 15-17). The discussion about the link between these chapters and chapters 8-10 covers a total of about fifteen lines, although there are some references back to chapter 11 in his later exegetical work. This is a pity, as surely the discussion of 'knowledge' in chapter 8 is foundational to the more detailed discussion of the gifts in chapters 12 - 14.

This is not a book that can easily be read as a commentary might be. The reader cannot easily look up 'Carson's view' on a particular verse. However, this is surely one of its strengths. The book shows the coherency of the argument of these chapters and the whole must be read if the arguments concerning individual verses are to carry their proper weight.

I warmly recommend this work to first- and second-year theology students and to ministers. It has already caused lively debate among my own students. Neither those from a traditional Warfield-type position, nor those in the charismatic camp, like the conclusions of several sections of the work, but all are challenged to think again about what is or is not a legitimate interpretation of three very complex and highly relevant chapters of this epistle.

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Book notes

Brad H. Young, **Jesus and His Jewish Parables: Rediscovering the Roots of Jesus' Teaching** (New York and Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1989), 365 pp., $13.95.

This book makes accessible for the first time in English the approach to interpreting the parables of David Flusser, a leading Jewish Israeli NT scholar, whose major work is *Die rabbinische Gleichnisse und der Gleichniserzähler Jesu.* Young's studies under Flusser at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem convinced him of such unfashionable views as (1) Jesus' parables are extremely comparable to those of the rabbis and not nearly as dissimilar as usually alleged; (2) the picture of the kingdom depicted in the parables of Jesus is almost exclusively one of realized eschatology; (3) both groups of parables owe their origin to wisdom material; (4) the priority of Luke is the best solution to the synoptic problem. (1) is an extremely crucial corrective; (2) is overstated but helpful in light of a prevailing trend to overemphasize futurist eschatology; (3) is possible but not demonstrable; and (4) is almost certainly wrong.

Orlando E. Costas, **Liberating News: A Theology of Contextual Evangelization** (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), xiv + 182 pp., $12.95.

Completed just before his untimely death, this volume represents the mature synthesis of the theological reflection and practical experience of one of South and North America's leading advocates of holistic evangelization. Ranging deftly between English and Spanish language sources, and illustrating his points with numerous examples from 'two-thirds world' Christian communities and ministries, Costas convincingly defends the need to call people to personal conversion and faith in Jesus Christ hand in hand with the creation of redemptive social structures (both within and outside the church). A sample of his convicting challenge: 'When people claim to be born of the Spirit and then icily continue to turn their backs on the outcast and disenfranchised, then it is time for us to ask whether they have been born of the Spirit of the crucified Christ or born of the spirit of the Antichrist' (p. 82).

Roger S. Greenway and Timothy M. Monsma, **Cities: Mission's New Frontier** (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989), xiii + 321 pp., $18.95.

For people who still believe overseas mission largely involves rural ministry in backward places, this book is must reading. The authors show that the biblical (especially Pauline) paradigms for ministry targeted the cities as the strategic centres from which to disseminate the gospel. Current demographic trends virtually all point to the continued expansion of megalopolises for years to come. Individual chapters in this volume cover very specific, practical considerations (how to survey a community in order to understand its ethnic, social, and economic subgroups or how to minister to prostitutes) and very sweeping, theoretical models (the stages of church growth or church-state relationships). Not every conclusion is equally defensible, but in an age when Western (and especially American) Christianity is fleeing to the suburbs as fast as it can, prophetic mandates to return to the city, such as this one, are desperately needed.

BOOK REVIEWS

John Goldingay **Theological Diversity and the Authority of the Old Testament** (David G. Deboys)

John I. Durham **Word Biblical Commentary: Exodus** (Douglas Jackson)

William J. Dumbrell **The End of the Beginning. Revelation 21 – 22 and the Old Testament** (G. K. Beale)

D. A. Carson **Showing the Spirit. A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12 – 14** (Paul D. Gardner)

ἐποικοδομηθέντες ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν, ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ.