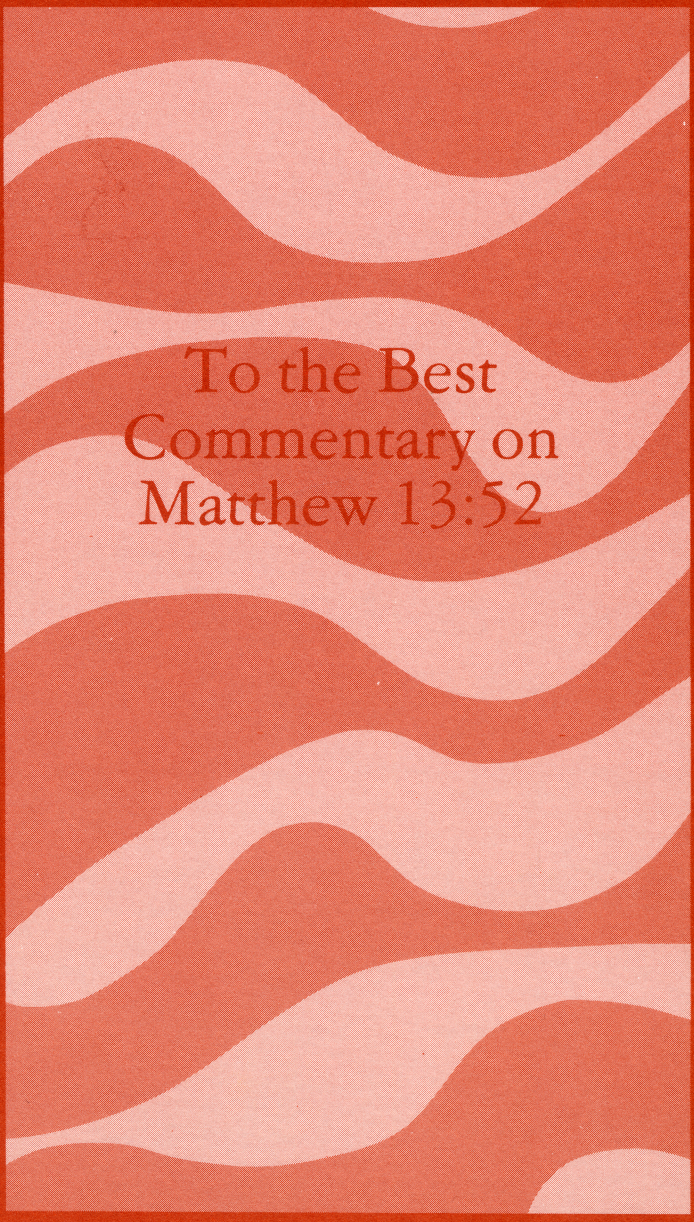
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Editor: **Ralph W. Klein**
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

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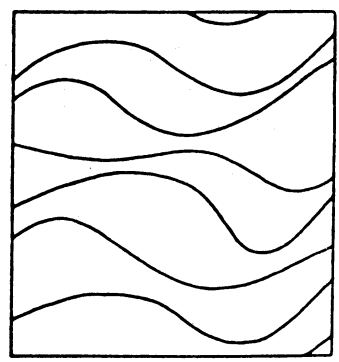
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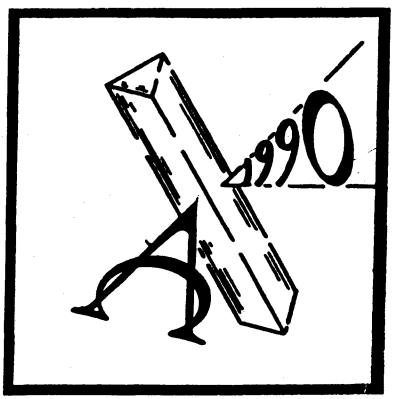
To the Best Commentary on Matthew 13:52

Every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old. —Matthew 13:52

The title of this editorial is no allusion to a volume in the Meyer or *Hermeneia* series, but I refer instead to a living commentary, a life dedicated to the pursuit of truth, the precise meaning of words, the social setting of the New Testament, and the application of the New Testament message to church and world today. That scribe-become-disciple-in-respect-to-the-kingdom is none other than **Frederick W. Danker**, my own teacher and long-time colleague in St. Louis and Chicago, who turns 70 on July 12, 1990.

A recent book-type commentary on Matthew tells us that the new things in 13:52 are not opposed to the old, as if the New Testament were opposed to the Old. Rather, the new things are also the old, as Matthew tells us, and as Fred Danker showed and shows us. Let the credits roll: lexicographer, teacher, spouse, parent, gadfly, innovator, antiquarian, classicist, colleague, confessor, epigrapher, friend, scribe trained for the kingdom of heaven, or, affectionately, Red Fred.

To mark and celebrate his three score years and ten, nine of Fred's colleagues have written essays on the New Testament, four for this issue and five more for December.* Like Fred they all believe that scholarship worth doing is also for the church and for the frontline leaders who regularly read *Currents*.



John H. Elliott writes on the fascinating topic of the Evil Eye, the widespread notion in antiquity that certain individuals have the power of casting an evil spell or causing some malignant effect upon every object upon which their eye may fall. In Galatians Paul is attempting to refute an Evil Eye accusation leveled against him by his rivals. Paul tells the Galatians of his fatherly love whose glance was not injurious, though he counters that his opponents had, in fact, posed great harm: "O foolish Galatians, who has injured you with the Evil Eye?" Modern interpreters need to keep an eye on the popular culture which informed the biblical authors and provided the cultural scripts according to which they thought, acted, and communicated.

Everett R. Kalin presents a revised history of the New Testament canon, in which the first canon lists appear in the 4th century as an attempt to promote unity both in the church and in the empire. Those who claim that the canon was closed in the 2nd century point to the Muratorian Canon (often dated to the 2nd century and attributed to Rome) or to the canon of Origen (3rd century), preserved in the church history of Eusebius. But the author puts the Muratorian Canon in the

East in the 4th century, and he argues that there is no evidence that Origen ever had a NT canon, a closed collection of scriptures to which nothing is to be added, from which nothing is to be taken away. Before the 4th century the church had a different "canon," the canon of truth or the canon of faith. This scriptural center, or rule (canon), still gives the canon of sacred writings its normative character.

Jack Dean Kingsbury suggests that the term "Son of Man" in Luke does not function to explicate the identity of Jesus; it does not tell the reader or characters who Jesus is. It does not refer to a supernatural, messianic figure that Jesus' contemporaries anticipated would return at the consummation of the age. Rather, the "Son of man" means "the man or the human being." This Son of man is repudiated by Israel and gentiles, but vindicated and exalted by God. The term emphasizes the twin features of repudiation and vindication. Guess who sensed this shift in emphasis almost twenty years ago in his commentary on Luke.

Carolyn Osiek calls into question the idea that prophecy ceased in Israel and in the early church. Jesus identified himself with the legacy of the Old Testament prophets, who called into question established practices and assumptions in the name of covenant fidelity. Prophecy, according to Paul, was useful for upbuilding, encouragement (comforting and exhortation), and consolation. Paraklesis, the effect of prophecy, can best be understood as the power of connectedness with life. In most of our church situations today, there is probably far greater danger of despising prophecy than of misusing it. In the midst of enthusiasm, the task is to order, direct, and pacify. But in rigidity and indifference, the task is to stir up, to warm, to incite to a passion that will lead to commitment. As she notes, our honoree is a prophet in more ways than one.

Fred Danker once wrote, "A commentator who takes seriously Luke's emphasis on the presence of the future cannot opt for a safe archaeological haven." With **Lois**, his colleague and publisher at the helm, the good ship Fred never steered clear of truth's waters: "Moral fascism is a perennial disease." "Concern about property values is a virus deeply imbedded in racism." "If one's bank deposit is made in Heaven First National Bank, then the real choices of life will be

governed from that perspective." "A church that encourages its members to play it safe loses all claim to association with the revolutionary cause of the Kingdom." "The church's long sad tale of persecution of dissenters is only a reminder that the thick-headedness of the earliest disciples did not go out of style after Pentecost."

Fred, the commentary, would never want his expertise to let you, dear reader, off the hook. Thirty years ago he wrote: "Commentaries are valuable aids, but they are not meant to relieve the interpreter of the task of making his or her own commentary on the sacred text."

Ralph W. Klein
Commentary

*The December issue of *Currents* will contain a second series of articles dedicated to Professor Danker. They are:

- Edgar Krentz, "The Name of God in Disrepute: Romans 2:17-29."
- Gerhard Krodel, "The Katechon as Precursor of the Anomos."
- Wilhelm C. Linss, "Example Stories?"
- John Reumann, "Colossians 1:14 ('What is Lacking in the Afflictions of Christ'): History of Exegesis and Ecumenical Advance."
- Robert H. Smith, "Matt 27:25, The Hardest Verse in Matthew's Gospel."

Paul, Galatians, and the Evil Eye

John H. Elliott
University of San Francisco

A personal homage

Fred Danker has been my teacher, colleague, and friend for thirty years. From the time when we were teacher and student together at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (1955-60), through the period when we taught together there as colleagues (1963-67), and all the subsequent years, I have been shaped and inspired in more ways than I am probably even aware, by his erudition and wisdom, his commitment to the church and its ministry of good news for a suffering world, and his exuberant zest for life lived to the glory of God. It is therefore for me a privilege and a delight to join with others in honoring and giving thanks to a friend who not only has contributed so greatly to the advance of biblical scholarship in this century but who also has enlivened my life as *paedagogus et amicus extraordinarius*. Fred has few contemporary peers in his sovereign grasp of both the New Testament and the ancient culture in which these writings emerged. So it seemed to me appropriate to thank him for the *apophoreta* (presents which guests received at table) I have taken home from his generous table with a study exploring one of his favorite biblical texts within the contours of its cultural context. The subject of the following remarks will be familiar to Fred from our previous discussions. But contributing this study to his *Festschrift* allows me to acknowledge personally how much the approach taken here has benefitted from our conversations and collaboration over the years.

Introduction

Paul's celebrated Letter to the Galatians has remained through the centuries an inexhaustible source of inspiration and fascination. For historians it provides not only information which is basic for a reconstruction of Paul's early career and the early course of Christian history, but also a graphic insight into the practical struggles of the Jewish messianic movement as it sought to gain not only Jewish but also Gentile adherents to its gospel of universal salvation. For theologians it has represented a revolutionary "magna charta of Christian freedom" in which Paul contrasts the favor of God available to all who are one with Jesus Christ in

faith and life in the Spirit to the exclusionary and ineffective observance of the Mosaic law.

This letter, however, is valuable for another reason as well. For it provides revealing evidence of the social and cultural world which Paul and his contemporaries inhabited. This was an environment marked by constant competition and conflict, a world viewed as inhabited by demons and humans with extraordinary powers who played a regular and threatening role in human affairs, a world in which the mysterious forces of magic, witchcraft, and the Evil Eye were everywhere at work.

My intention in what follows is to focus on one aspect of that magical world which receives particular expression in Paul's letter to the Galatians: the omnipresent conviction in Mediterranean antiquity concerning the malignant power of the "Evil Eye" and the destructive powers of its various possessors.

In the opening words of chapter three of Galatians, Paul makes direct reference to this belief when he states: "O foolish Galatians, who has afflicted you with the Evil Eye...?" (3:1). The verb he employs here, *ebaskanen*, as the Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker lexicon indicates, is the conventional term used throughout the hellenistic world for injury and bewitchment with the Evil Eye. Its occurrence here, together with several other allusions to features of Evil Eye belief and practice, make it clear that accusation and counter-accusation concerning the Evil Eye play a greater role in the Galatian conflict than is generally realized.

Evil Eye belief in the ancient world

Throughout the Mediterranean and Near Eastern regions of antiquity, fear of the Evil Eye and its pernicious effects was pervasive (Jahn 1855; Elworthy 1885, 1912; Blau 1898, 1907; Kuhnert 1909; Park 1912; Lafaye 1926; Levi 1941; Koetting 1954; Noy 1971; Engemann 1975; Budge 1978; Johns 1982; Russell 1982; Dunbabin and Dickie 1983; Bernidaki-Aldous 1988). From its ancient circum-Mediterranean origins, Evil Eye belief eventually traveled across the centuries and around the globe (Elsworthy 1895; Maclagan 1902; Seligmann 1910, 1922, 1927; Trachtenburg 1939; Gifford 1958; DiStasio 1981; Dundes 1981; Siebers 1983). In recent time it has been studied most extensively by anthropologists and is considered to be one of the most widespread and enduring instances of magical thought and behavior (Forster 1972; Maloney 1976; Lykiardopoulos 1981; Gilmore 1982).

Evil Eye belief and practice, of course, can only be understood and analyzed as particular components of an entire worldview and cultural system. A full treatment of the subject would require consideration of a constellation of factors which can only be mentioned here but left undiscussed. This would include such issues as the system of beliefs of which the Evil Eye concept is one instance—belief in spirits, demons, witches, and extraordinary human and superhuman agencies thought to affect or control human welfare and destiny; the cosmologies, worldviews, and plausibility structures which lend these beliefs credibility and power; the ecological, economic, and social conditions in which these cosmologies and beliefs emerge and thrive; and the specific social and cultural scripts according to which these beliefs are enacted—in the case of Evil Eye and witchcraft accusations, for example, the social dynamics of the interaction, the expectations aroused, and the consequences anticipated; and finally how such a concept, in the

case of the biblical communities, was considered compatible with a monotheistic belief system.

To such issues, historians, exegetes, and theologians are just beginning to turn their attention. In regard to the cultural and conceptual framework for analyzing the magical world of early Christianity, David Aune's recent *Forschungsbericht* (1980) surveys recent steps in this direction (see also Derrett 1973:114-28; Brox 1974; Engemann 1975). Bruce Malina and Jerome Neyrey (1988) illuminate the witchcraft accusations in the Gospels through comparative use of anthropological studies of other witchcraft societies. In two further studies on 2 Corinthians and Galatians, Neyrey (1986, 1988a) also shows how demonic belief, witchcraft, and Evil Eye accusations are part and parcel of the world of Paul.

Salient features of Evil Eye belief and practice

Turning now to the Evil Eye phenomenon in particular, let us first consider some salient features of this belief and its accompanying practices. Basic to this belief is the conviction that certain individuals, animals, demons, or gods have the power of casting an evil spell or causing some malignant effect upon every object, animate or inanimate, upon which their eye or glance may fall. Through the power of their eye, which may operate involuntarily as well as intentionally, such Evil Eye possessors were thought capable of injuring or destroying the life and health of others, their means of sustenance and livelihood, their honor and personal fortune. As the eye was considered the window to and of the heart and the physical channel of one's innermost attitudes, desires, and intentions, an Evil Eye was linked with the negative moral attitudes of envy and greed, stinginess and covetousness, and was considered directed against objects of the possessor's displeasure or envy.

In Greek culture, this association of Evil Eye and envy is evident in the combination of *ophthalmos* ("eye") or *baskainos* ("Evil Eye possessor") and paronyms with *phthonos* ("envy"), *phthoneros* ("envious") (e.g. Sir 14:10: *ophthalmos ponēros phthoneros*; Tob 4:7,16: *phthonēsēto sou ho ophthalmos*; Test. Is. 3:3: *phthoneros kai baskanos*; and frequently in Philo [De Cher. 33; De Mut. 112; De Somn. 1.107; De Vit. Mos. 1.246; De Virt. 170; In Flacc. 29]). Plutarch, in his Table Talk on the Evil Eye (*Moralia, Quaest. conviv.* 680C-683B; esp. 681D-82A) expatiates at length on its connection with envy.

In Latin, the Greek terms *baskaino*, *baskanon*, *baskanos*, and *baskania* are taken over directly (f for b, c for k etc.) and latinized as *fascino*, *fascinus*, *fascinator*, and *fascinatio*. Thus "to fascinate" is actually to injure with the Evil Eye. Moreover, in Latin, the same association of Evil Eye and envy is expressed linguistically in the very word for envy, *invidia*, a composite of *in* + *videre*, lit. "to over-look." Thus *invidia* involves the notion of "looking over" something or someone with the desire to possess or destroy it.

The enormity of the danger posed by the Evil Eye, coupled with the fear that its possessors lurked everywhere, led the ancients to constant vigilance against potential fascinators and to employ a vast array of protective devices and strategies to ward off attack. Though all objects were thought susceptible of injury, it was especially children and persons enjoying good fortune or social prestige who were regarded as particularly vulnerable.

Likewise important was the detection of potential Evil Eye possessors. Here strang-

In the world inhabited by the biblical communities, fear of the Evil Eye was pervasive.

ers, outsiders, social deviants, or the physically deformed, disabled, or blind (Bernidaki-Aldous 1988) were judged prime candidates as fascinators. To protect themselves, their homes, shops, and public places, the ancients wore or exhibited a host of apotropaic amulets. In the presence of an epileptic, a lame man, or a stranger, Pliny notes (*Natural History* 28.36,39), persons would also defend themselves against possible Evil Eye injury by spitting (a strategy to which Paul also alludes in Galatians 4:14!). Beyond spitting, the ancients employed a veritable arsenal of devices and methods for warding off the dread Evil Eye. The underlying principle was that of homeopathic magic and *similia similibus*, the use of "like against like." Such practices, attested in art, artifacts, and architecture as well as literature, included the hanging of *bullae* around the necks of children; the wearing of *fascina* (replicas of phalluses), engraved amulets, and cloth of red or blue color; the manual gestures of the *digitus infamis* (extended middle finger of a fisted hand—the American "high sign"), the *mano cornuta* (extended second and fifth fingers of the fisted hand), and *mano fica* (thumb inserted between second and third fingers of fisted hand); and an array of similar designs and devices on public monuments and private homes, thresholds, shops, and graves—all for the purpose of distracting, deflecting, or counteracting the omnipresent threat of the Evil Eye.

Such information on the particulars of Evil Eye belief and practice is derived from the literary sources and numerous authors including Plato, Aristotle, Pliny, and Plutarch who in his *Moralia* devoted an entire section of the *Table Talk* (*Quaest. conviv.* 680C-683B) to the subject of the Evil Eye. There is a continuous record of evidence of this belief and its accompanying practices from Sumerian civilization onward through Egyptian, Hebrew, Greek, Roman, Jewish, and Christian cultures down through and beyond Late Antiquity. In the immediate environment of the biblical communities this includes not only information from secular Greek and Roman literary sources (Jahn 1855) but also much material from the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures (Blau 1898; Elliott 1988), the Mishnah, Talmud, and Jewish tradition (Blau 1907; Trachenburg 1939; Schrire 1966; Noy 1971) and the Church Fathers (Koetting 1954) as well as the evidence from private letters preserved on papyri; from inscriptions and epigrapha; and from art, artifacts, and monuments (Kuhnert 1909; Dobschuetz 1910; Lafaye 1926; Levi 1941; Delling 1964; Engemann 1975; Russell 1982; Johns 1982; Montfield 1982; Dunbabin and Dickie 1983).

In sum, in the world inhabited by the biblical communities, fear of the Evil Eye was pervasive and the specific features of the belief were remarkably consistent. Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian communities shared with their contemporaries a firm conviction of the power of the Evil Eye, a constant fear of its possessors, and conventional strategies for neutralizing their suspected malice.

The magical world of Paul and the conflict at Galatia

Paul and the Galatians were inhabitants of this same world. In a recent study of the apostle's letter to the Galatians and the magical thought-world it presumes, Jerome Neyrey (1988) has analyzed salient features of the cosmology of this world, described by anthropologists as that of a witchcraft society. In such societies where humans saw themselves subject to the powers of demons and malicious forces lurking everywhere and often operating through human agents, belief in witches and Evil Eye possessors played a powerful role in the regulation of behavior and social interaction. Neyrey has advanced a more accurate reading of the Galatian letter by situating it in its actual cultural context and pointing out aspects of the cultural script heretofore unconsidered by modern interpreters. This sets the stage for now examining how Evil Eye belief and practice in particular come into play here and especially the strategy of Evil Eye accusation and counter-accusation.

In Evil Eye cultures, anthropologists have observed (Maloney 1976), where competition and conflict are constant and formal means of adjudicating disputes are unavailable, Evil Eye accusations are employed in issues concerning the marking of social boundaries, the maintenance of social well-being, and the control of social deviance. Among these closely-knit communities, defined primarily by geographical proximity and group loyalty, the stranger or outsider is generally perceived as a threat to the common weal, and thus a likely Evil Eye fascinator with malicious or envious designs. Within such communities, subject more to custom than a centralized and effective system of law, accusations of Evil Eye possession and injury are frequent means employed by rival factions for discrediting and disabling their opponents. Labelling an opponent a fascinator or Evil Eye possessor serves as an informal but effective social mechanism for marshalling public opinion against that person, discrediting his honor and credibility, censuring his behavior, and ostracizing him as a social deviant.

A close reading of Galatians indicates that such a strategy of Evil Eye accusation played a prominent role in Paul's confrontation with his opponents in Galatia. Here rival Jewish-Christian and Gentile-Christian factions of the messianic movements had clashed over the social and moral implications of a gospel and a household of faith founded not on fidelity to the Mosaic law but on solidarity with a crucified Messiah. In his initial visit to Galatia, Paul had preached a gospel proclaiming a universal salvation, offered as a divine gift of the Spirit and accepted by trust/faith in a divine promise rather than by submission to the Mosaic law. After his departure from Galatia, this teaching was challenged by rival Jewish Christians demanding continued observance of the Mosaic law, kosher food laws, circumcision, and the traditional Jewish calendar. In addition they challenged Paul's apostolic authority and tried to discredit him with a variety of *ad hominem* arguments. Their attack had produced debilitating cleavages within the Galatian churches and had seriously undermined Paul's credibility.

Responding to this situation by letter, Paul attempted to repair the damage, restore order, and regain the upper hand and the moral high ground. This response includes a historical retrospective of his own career and previous friendly reception by the Galatians, a further elaboration of his gospel, a defense of his own person, actions, and motives coupled with a counter-attack upon his opponents, and a concluding ap-

peal for faith active in love, communal solidarity, and cooperation within the "household of faith" (6:10) and the "Israel of God" (6:16).

In this process of attack and counter-attack, Evil Eye belief and practice is invoked and Evil Eye accusations are hurled back and forth. Familiarity with salient features of Evil Eye belief and practice now makes it possible for us to see its role in this bitter exchange of accusation and counter-accusation.

Elements of the Evil Eye repertoire in Galatians include the following:

1. Paul explicitly refers to Evil Eye injury in 3:1: "O foolish Galatians, who has injured you with the Evil Eye (*tis hymas ebaskanen*), you before whose very eyes (*ophthalmous*) Jesus Christ was proclaimed as justified?" Here Paul employs the specific verb for Evil Eye injury (*baskaino*), a fact generally overlooked or obscured by modern translations. Renditions such as "who has bewitched you" (KJV, RSV, NEB and most other versions) or "who has put/cast a spell on/over you" (NJB, NAB) fail to convey to modern readers the ancient association of spells, bewitchment, and the Evil Eye. Among modern commentators, the translation of J. B. Lightfoot (1905), "who has fascinated you," is directly on target and his commentary on the Evil Eye phenomenon, though limited, is more informative than most. Ancient Christian commentators, of course, including Jerome (*PL* 26, 372-73) and John Chrysostom (*PG* 61, 648), were still familiar with the term, the Evil Eye concept in general, and the danger fascination was thought to pose to children in particular.

Centuries later, the phenomenon was still known to Luther who in his commentary on this verse devotes extensive attention to the subject (*Lectures on Galatians 1519, 1535* ad 3:1; *LW* 27:243-45; 26:189-98, resp.). "'To bewitch'," states Luther, "means to do harm with an evil look... the Greek word [*ebaskanen*], as Jerome attests, means not only to bewitch but also to envy" (*LW* 27:244).



In accord with Jerome, Luther repeats the citation of Vergil, "I do not know what eye is bewitching my tender lambs" (*Eclogues* 3.103), and notes the threat which the Evil Eye poses to children, including the Galatians "who were like new-born infants in Christ" (cf. 4:19; 3:23-4:7). In contrast to Jerome, however, who questioned whether Paul actually believed in such witchcraft, Luther affirmed its reality—for both the apostle and himself. "Paul does not deny that witchcraft exists and is possible; for later on, in the fifth chapter (v.20) he also lists 'sorcery,' which is the same as witchcraft, among the works of the flesh. Thereby he proves that witchcraft and sorcery exist and are possible" (*LW* 26:190).

Luther too envisioned witchcraft and the Evil Eye as operative in his own day. "As I have said, I believe that with God's permission those witches, with the aid of devils, are really able to harm little infants for the punishment of unbelievers and the test-

ing of believers, since, as is evident from experience, they also work many other kinds of harm in the bodies of men as well as of cattle and everything. And I believe that the apostle was not unaware of this" (*LW* 27:245). Citing experiences from his own time, Luther observes: "This [Evil Eye bewitchment], I believe, is the ailment of little infants that our womenfolk commonly call *die elbe* or *das hertzgespan*, in which we see infants wasting away, growing thin, and being miserably tormented, sometimes wailing and crying incessantly. The women, in turn, try to counter this ailment with I know not what charms and superstition; for it is believed that such things are caused by those jealous and spiteful old hags if they envy some mother her beautiful baby" (*LW* 27:244).

With respect to Galatians, Luther sees Paul accusing the false apostles of the Law as bewitchers in league with Satan (*LW* 26:194,197). Regarding his own time, Luther cites as a further example of satanic bewitchment the tragic suicide of his contemporary, Dr. Krause of Halle (*LW* 26:195-96).

2. A second indication of the Evil Eye repertoire in Galatians involves Paul's repeated reference to "eyes" (*ophthalmoi*) and ocular aversion as Evil Eye defense. Twice Paul mentions the "eyes" of the Galatians which they not only did not avert from Paul when he first proclaimed Christ to them (3:1) but which they were actually ready to pluck out and offer to him in gratitude (4:15).

3. and 4. In this rehearsal of their first encounter (4:12-15), Paul refers to two further elements of Evil Eye belief and behavior. When the Galatians first met him, Paul notes, despite his off-putting physical appearance (4:13-14a), they did not "spit" (*ouk exeptusate*; 4:14), as was the custom when encountering a suspected Evil Eye possessor with tell-tale physical markings of physical deformity or bodily ailment. Rather, he recalls, they received him "as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus" (4:14b).

5. As already noted by Luther and ancient commentators, another aspect of Evil Eye belief here is the particular vulnerability of the Galatians as newborn "children" in Christ (4:19; 3:23-4:7) to the attack of Evil Eye possessors.

6. The repeated stress on "envy" here (*zeloo*, 4:17-18) and elsewhere in the letter (*zelos*, 5:20; *phthonos*, 5:21; *phthonein*, 5:26), that moral disposition most frequently associated with the Evil Eye, is yet another indication of the Evil Eye repertoire.

7. Finally, all these related features of the Evil Eye phenomenon, taken together with still further indications of Paul's conceptual world and strategy, such as his censure of "sorcery" or "magic" (*pharmakeia*, 5:20) and his invocation of a curse upon his opponents (1:8, 9), make clear the magical dimensions of the universe presumed here as well as the role which Evil Eye belief in particular played in the Galatian conflict.

Although it could be inferred from 3:1 that Paul himself first introduced the issue of the Evil Eye, a closer examination of the letter suggests a different scenario in which Paul is in fact parrying an Evil Eye accusation directed against him with a counter-accusation levelled against his opponents. This scenario may be reconstructed as follows.

Paul's opponents, beside challenging his gospel and its novel social implications, sought to discredit him personally by stressing his unusual physical appearance and its negative moral implications. Two references by Paul to his physical condition appear to deal with this tactic of his rivals. (1) When reminding the Galatians of their first encounter in 4:12-15, Paul concedes that he appeared with a "bodily ailment"

In 4:12-20 and elsewhere in the letter Paul is attempting to refute an Evil Eye accusation levelled against him by his rivals.

(*astheneia tes sarkos*) which was a "trial" (*peirasmos*) to them (vv. 13-14). This was most likely the physical condition he described elsewhere in a letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor 12:7) as a "thorn in the flesh" (*skolops te sarki*). (2) Again at the very end of the Galatian letter he abruptly returns to this subject and defends his physical appearance with the warning: "Henceforth let no one trouble me, for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus" (*ta stigmata Iesou en to somati mou*, 6:17). This repeated attention to his physical condition and the defensive tone of both passages indicate that Paul is countering a charge of utmost gravity involving conclusions drawn concerning his physical condition.

In Evil Eye cultures, as documented profusely in the anthropological and historical evidence, unusual physical features, disfigurement such as a humped back, epilepsy, lameness, or strange ocular features, including blindness and joined eyebrows, have signalled their bearers as potential possessors of the Evil Eye. To protect themselves against such suspected fascinators, as already noted, persons spit in their presence. This same combination of Evil Eye elements occurs in Gal.4:14-15 where Paul states that "though my physical condition was a trial to you, you did not despise [me] or spit (*exeptusate*).

In connection with this issue of Paul's strange physical appearance, it is interesting to recall other early Christian tradition according to which Paul was once afflicted with blindness (Acts 9:1-19). Also relevant is the first description of Paul's physical appearance in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* (2:3), where attention was called to unusual aspects of Paul's anatomy including, of all things, his knitted eyebrows. Paul was, the description notes: "a man of small stature with a bald head and crooked legs, in a good state of body, *with eyebrows meeting* and a nose somewhat crooked...." Here too we meet precisely those features conventionally associated with Evil Eye possessors!

Paul's acknowledgement and defense of *his strange physical appearance* coupled with a specific mention of the Galatians *not spitting* puts us once again in the arena of Evil Eye belief and practice. This fact, when combined with further contextual references to the Galatians as "*children*" (especially vulnerable to the Evil Eye) (4:19), who yet were willing even to "pluck out their *eyes*" on Paul's behalf (4:15) or who *did not divert their eyes* at Paul's public announcement of his gospel (3:1), together with Paul's censure of the *envy* of his opponents (4:17-18; cf. 5:20, 21, 26), all indicate that in 4:12-20 and elsewhere in the letter Paul is attempting to refute an Evil Eye accusation levelled against him by his rivals. His physical features, they had asserted, betray this stranger with his strange gospel as an Evil Eye possessor who aimed to injure the Galatians, and therefore his gospel deserves no credence.

Paul's response to this accusation was two-pronged. It involved both a defensive and an offensive maneuver in line with his

strategy in general (1:6-2:14; 5:7-12; 6:11-17). To repel the charge of Evil Eye aggression, he reminds the Galatians of his fatherly love for them (4:19) and their cordial reception of him at their first encounter (4:12-15). Despite my physical appearance and my status as a stranger, he states, you did not treat me as a hostile fascinator and spit (to protect yourselves from my supposedly injurious glance). On the contrary, you received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus, and "you would have plucked out your [own] eyes and given them to me," he notes. Returning to this point at the conclusion of his letter, he warns: "Let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus" (6:17). These are not the marks of an Evil Eye possessor, as might be inferred, but of a suffering apostle of the suffering Christ.

The other prong of Paul's response involved his taking the offensive by countering the accusation of his opponents with an Evil Eye accusation of his own. It is not I but *they*, he asserts, who have afflicted you with the Evil Eye. This is the sense in which we may take 3:1. Implied in the rhetorical question, "Who has afflicted you with the Evil Eye," is Paul's answer: It is not I who did so, but *my opponents*. He develops this accusation further in 4:17 and what follows. It is *they* who have taken advantage of your child-like condition in the faith (4:19; cf. 3:23-4:6). It is *they* who envy your liberty, exploit you for their self-seeking purposes, and injure you by attempting to exclude you from the household of faith (4:17; 6:12-13). It is *they* whose sorcery and envy engender envy and dissension in the community (5:19-21,26) in contrast to my gospel of freedom and love in the Spirit (5:1-6:16). It is *they* with their preoccupation with aspects of the physical body, circumcised converts (5:2-3,6,11; 6:12-13; cf. 2:3,7-9,12), and my stigmata (6:17), who reveal themselves as slaves of the flesh rather than as children of the Spirit (5:1-6:10). It is *they* and their supposed gospel that are accursed (1:6-9; 3:10).

Thus behind the angry question of 3:1 looms the implication: It is not I but rather my opponents who have injured you with the Evil Eye! To substantiate this, Paul asks that the Galatians recall their own experience which only validates the truth of his gospel and his integrity, the bond of friendship between apostle and Galatians, and the malicious and destructive actions of his adversaries.

Conclusion

In this factional struggle for the faith and commitment of the Galatians, Paul and his rivals confront each other with equal claims to authority: apostolic credentials and the word of God. In this situation where a superior legal authority for adjudicating conflicts is absent, both contending parties are subject finally to the court of public opinion. Consequently his opponents resort to Evil Eye accusation, and Paul parries with curses (1:8, 9; cf. 3:10) and counter-accusation (3:1; 4:17; cf. 1:6-7; 5:7-12; 6:12-14). The experience of the Galatians (3:1-4; 4:8-20; 5:1-6:10, 12-13) and public opinion are Paul's court of final appeal. Their experience, he argues, makes it clear that it is not he but his opponents who are the malicious agents of evil and strife infecting the community. Evil Eye accusation is countered by Evil Eye accusation, and Paul seeks to hoist his opponents on their own Evil Eye petard.

Though resort to Evil Eye accusations as attempts to marshall and move public opinion played a noteworthy role in the struggle at Galatia, its importance should also not be exaggerated out of proportion. Though the reputation and credibility of rival factions

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were at stake, the issues over which they contended—Christ versus Torah as basis and norm for righteousness and membership in the Israel of God, the incompatibility of exclusivistic Torah observance and the inclusiveness of divine favor and salvation proffered in a crucified Christ, infantile subjection to the Law versus adult freedom in the Spirit of Christ, promise and trust versus command and obedience as contrary modes of the divine-human relationship—overshadow by far in importance the social mechanisms employed by the proponents of these opposing positions to mutually discredit their rivals. In Paul's thought the notion of the Evil Eye plays as minor a role as in that of Jesus and the Evangelists (Matthew 6:22-23, 20:1-15; Mark 7:22; Luke 11:33-36). But play a role it did. The examination of this role enables us to grasp more concretely the social as well as theological strategies at work in the bitter conflict at Galatia. Familiarity with this fascinating feature of ancient belief and practice, moreover, brings us one step closer to that foreign, magical world of the biblical communities, their conceptual horizons, and the cultural scripts according to which they thought and acted.

Anxiety about the present evil age (1:4), enslavement to the elemental spirits of the universe (4:3), and magic (*pharmakeia*, 5:20), and resort to curses (1:8-9; 3:10), solemn warning (6:17), and charges of Evil Eye possession, are all vivid features of the witchcraft society in which Paul, the Galatians, and the early church were at home. Such societies may strike the modern reader as distressingly strange and uncomfortably alien in their "primitive" beliefs and "superstitious" practices. Modern biblical translators and commentators with a worthy concern for the Bible's contemporary relevance may even resort to minimizing or domesticating its alien features for modern consumption. But for those committed to understanding the word of God in all its historical and cultural particularity, the only course possible is to study and comprehend these texts as products of and witnesses to their own historical, social, and cultural contexts, including their characteristic perceptions of the world, constellations of beliefs, and patterns of behavior. The role of Evil Eye belief and practice in Galatians and numerous other biblical documents should serve as an important reminder to exegetes and theologians often preoccupied exclusively with lofty theological concepts and arguments always to keep at least one good eye also on the popular culture which informed the biblical authors and provided the cultural scripts according to which they thought, acted, and communicated.

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Re-examining New Testament Canon History: 1. The Canon of Origen

Everett R. Kalin
Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

This article's title makes the assumptions that New Testament canon history needs re-examination and that an analysis of the status of canon history in Origen (died c. 254 C. E.) can contribute to that re-examination. Actually, my intention with respect to Origen is rather modest: to present a few key texts and offer an analysis. Presenting the texts enables the reader to participate in the analysis. In a volume dedicated to our colleague Fred Danker, it seems apt to put resources in the hands of the reader. That's the kind of thing to which the editor of the Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker *Lexicon* and the author of *Benefactor* so skillfully dedicated his scholarly life. Incidentally, the "1." in the article title implies that there is more to come; it is my hope to follow this article with a similar presentation of text and analysis from Eusebius.

Before turning to the texts in Origen, it will be useful to discuss the need for re-examining canon history, something that is usually denied. It is widely believed that the issues were settled at the turn of the century in a voluminous and acrimonious debate between Theodor Zahn and Adolf von Harnack. Voluminous? Zahn wrote a two volume, 2000 page canon history and also published—in ten additional volumes—the accompanying research. The acrimony can be illustrated with a few quotes from Harnack's critique of Zahn's history, a critique that appeared within weeks of the publication of the first fascicle of Zahn's massive work.

Harnack first quotes Zahn's assertion that Harnack's own view of the issues is presented "sometimes with the superior attitude of an expert historian, sometimes with the voice of a quack demagogue trying

to impress his followers."[1] Then Harnack follows with his assessment of Zahn's effort:

> I met here chapter for chapter a chain of false conclusions, violations and desperate acts that I can't label anything but biased criticism... in fact, never have I encountered anything more biased.[2]

The debate was over the question of when and how the New Testament collection was closed. Zahn asserted that for all practical purposes the canon was complete, except for a few fringe books, by about 100 C. E. Harnack, on the other hand, maintained that the church still had no canon of scripture in the middle of the second century. But late in that century, swiftly and suddenly, the canon emerged, in opposition to Marcion and other gnostics and especially to Montanism, and under the influence of the church of Rome.

Harnack's view prevailed so widely that the flood of canon histories before him (by Westcott, Leipoldt, Gregory, and Zahn, among others) slowed to a trickle. In recent years there have been several new histories of the New Testament canon (some include the Old Testament canon), by Hans von Campenhausen, Harry Y. Gamble, Bruce M. Metzger, F. F. Bruce, and Lee McDonald, for example.[3] But while each of these modifies details, they almost all (McDonald is an exception) share Harnack's basic conclusion about the timing of New Testament canon closing. Von Campenhausen says, "It is undisputed that both the Old and the New Testaments had in essence already reached their final form and significance around the year 200."[4] And, in a "what's left to talk about" mood, he says elsewhere, "The open questions [about the production and collection of New Testament writings] concern almost only *quisquilien* [little, insignificant details], of no interest to the nonspecialist."[5]

It is my opinion that the prevailing view of New Testament canon history does indeed need re-examination, and revision, and that there is a great deal to talk about. I have been led to this view especially by the work of Albert C. Sundberg, Jr.,[6] whose conclusions have been confirmed by my own work.

Sundberg believes that the decisive period in New Testament canon history is not the late second century but the fourth and fifth centuries, when there appeared a profusion of New Testament and Old Testament canon lists—by Eusebius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Athanasius, Amphilochius of Iconium, Epiphanius, and many other ecclesiastical authors. I agree with Sundberg; in fact, there may well have been *no* New Testament canon lists prior to the fourth century. It is quite possible that only at that time do we finally get a canon of the scriptures of the New Testament.

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[1]Adolph von Harnack, *Das Neue Testament um das Jahr 200* (Freiburg, 1889), 3.

[2]Harnack, *Das Neue Testament*, 4.

[3]von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972); Gamble, *The New Testament Canon. Its Making and Meaning*, Guides to Biblical Scholarship, New Testament Series (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985); Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament. Its Origin, Development and Significance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988); McDonald, *The Formation of the Christian Biblical Canon* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1988).

[4]*Formation*, 327.

[5]"Die Entstehung des neuen Testaments," a lecture of von Campenhausen's quoted in *Das Neue Testament als Kanon*, ed. Ernst Käsemann (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1970), 109.

[6]See, for instance, Sundberg's article "Canon of the New Testament" in the supplementary volume of the *Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible*.

Of course, an extant list of scriptures is not necessarily the only criterion for the existence of a canon. But in the absence of such lists, one needs other strong evidence for the existence of a canon of scripture. It will be useful here to define a few terms. I find helpful Sundberg's distinction between scriptures and canon. He says that it is possible for a religious community to have scriptures, that is, authoritative sacred writings, without having a canon of scripture, that is, a closed collection of scripture to which nothing can be added, from which nothing can be taken away.[7] Christians began to regard various writings of the New Testament era as scripture in the second century (at first primarily various Gospels), but it is quite possible that they first got a canon of the New Testament not about 100 C. E. (Zahn), nor about 180 C. E. (Harnack and almost everyone else), but only in the fourth century. That the issue here is more important than a quibble over a few decades (or centuries) and has implications for our understanding of what early Christians perceived as canonical (that is, *normative*), I shall discuss at the end of this article.

But how can I say that there may well have been no New Testament canon lists prior to the fourth century, when F. W. Grosheide's *Some Early Lists of the Books of the New Testament*[8] has as list #1 the Muratorian Canon, usually thought to come from Rome in the late second century—making it one of the foundation stones of Harnack's view of a late second century canon closing—and as list #2 "The Canon of Origen," who died in the middle of the third century?

As for the Muratorian Canon, Sundberg has tried to show that it is not from Rome in the late second century but from the East in the fourth century.[9] While Sundberg's view is accepted by some writers, including McDonald[10] and Robert Gnuse, who says "the Muratorian Fragment... is viewed now as a fourth century list,"[11] it is safe to say that it is challenged by many more. Gamble says that Sundberg's "arguments, though interesting, are not convincing," while Brevard Childs writes:

> I disagree with Sundberg's revisionist theory and I think that his redating of the Muratorian canon to the fourth century as a crucial support for his hypothesis is tendentious and unproven.[12]

One way to test the need for revision of the prevailing view that the New Testament canon was closed in the late second century is to look at other pertinent texts and see if they tend to confirm this view or call it into question. The burden of the rest of this article is to try to show that there is no extant list of the books of the New Testament from

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[7]Sundberg, "Canon," 137. He developed this distinction in his work on the Old Testament canon. He argued, I believe correctly, that the early Christian community inherited from the Jews a number of sacred writings, but not a canon whose limits had been fixed before the time of Jesus. See his *The Old Testament of the Early Church*, Harvard Theological Studies 20 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964).

[8]Textus Minores, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1948).

[9]"Canon Muratori: A Fourth Century List," *Harvard Theological Review* 66 (1973): 1-41.

[10]*Formation*, 135-39.

[11]*The Authority of the Bible. Theories of Inspiration, Revelation and the Canon of Scripture* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 108.

[12]Gamble, *Canon*, 32, n. 25; Brevard Childs, *The New Testament as Canon* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 238. Both writers refer to Everett Ferguson's critique of Sundberg: "Canon Muratori: Date and Provenance," *Studia Patristica* 18 (1982): 677-83.

Origen, all appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. What Grosheide calls "The Canon of Origen," taken from Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* 6.25.3-14, looks like Origen's New Testament canon list because Eusebius, *a clever compiler, wants it to*. The other passage pertinent to this discussion, Origen's *Homilies on Joshua* 7.1, looks like Origen's New Testament canon list because Rufinus, *its clever translator, wants it to* (the Greek original of this latter passage is lost). We turn first to the list in Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.25.3-14 (Grosheide's "Canon of Origen"). But before I quote and then analyze that text I offer an example of my assertion that what Eusebius offers and what he says he offers are not always the same thing. Just prior to the text in question Eusebius gives us what he wants us to think is Origen's canon of the Old Testament, while what Origen is actually giving in the quoted material is something else entirely. The text is as follows:

> Now while expounding the first Psalm he [Origen] set forth the catalogue of the sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament, writing somewhat as follows in these words: "But it should be known that there are twenty-two canonical books, according to the Hebrew tradition; the same as the number of the letters of their alphabet."
>
> Then further on he adds as follows: "These are the twenty-two books according to the Hebrews:..."
>
> (*Ecclesiastical History* 6.25.1-2, Loeb Classical Library translation).

Despite Eusebius, the list Origen then proceeds to give *is not* his own Old Testament canon or that of the church at his time, but the twenty-two books regarded as scripture *by the Jews* (actually there are only twenty-one books listed, because the book of the twelve minor prophets is inadvertently omitted). This is clear from what Origen says here and by what he says elsewhere. In *Epistle to Africanus* 13 Origen notes that the churches use Tobit and Judith as scripture even though the Jews do not. Origen seems to regard as scripture all or almost all the books and parts of books in the Septuagint which are not in the Hebrew scriptures.[13] And when Julius Africanus chides him for using as scripture what the Jews do not use in this way, Origen defends the use of these books and parts of books, which have edified the church through the years. That's the practice that he believes was committed to the church from the beginning, and so he quotes in support of this practice Prov 22:28: "Remove not the ancient landmark which your forebears have set."

What Eusebius offers and what he says he offers are not always the same thing.

In short, in his *Commentary on Psalm 1*, Origen offered a list of the Jewish scriptures, not his own or the churches' Old Testament, despite what Eusebius, writing a century later, wants us to believe.

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[13]J. Ruwet, "Les 'Antilegomena' dans les oeuvres d'Origene, 2," *Biblia* 24 (1943): 20 gives references to such use for each of the books.

Now I shall present the text from Eusebius on the New Testament books. For reasons that will become clear later, I am presenting the text in two columns. On the left is my translation of the Greek text of Eusebius. On the right are excerpts from my translation of Rufinus' Latin translation of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History.*

...And in the first book of his [Origen's] Commentary on the Gos. Acc. to Matthew, while upholding the ecclesiastical canon, he testifies that he knows only four gospels, writing something like this:

"...as we learned by tradition concerning the four gospels which alone are incontrovertible in the church of God under heaven, the first to be written was the Gos. Acc. to Matthew, the former tax collector and later apostle of Jesus Christ, who published it for believers coming from Judaism; it was written in Aramaic. And the second was the Gos. Acc. to Mark, who wrote it as Peter instructed him; Peter also acknowledged him as a son in his catholic epistle, writing as follows: 'The assembly in Babylon, your fellow elect, and Mark, my son, greet you.' And the third was the Gos. Acc. to Luke, who wrote it for Gentile believers; this was the gospel praised by Paul. After all the others came the Gos. Acc. to John."

And in the fifth book of his Commentary on the Gos. of John, the same writer says this about the epistles of the apostles:

"And he who was made worthy to become a minister of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit, Paul, who completed the preaching of the gospel from Jerusalem in a circle reaching all the way to Illyricum, did not write to all the churches that he taught, and even to those to whom he wrote he sent only a few lines. And Peter, upon whom is built the church of Christ, against which the gates of hell will not prevail, left one acknowledged epistle, and perhaps a second as well; for it is disputed. What need is there to speak of the one who leaned on Jesus' breast, John, who left one gospel, though he confessed he would be able to write so many that not even the world could contain them; and he also wrote the Apocalypse, though even here he was ordered to be silent and not to write the voices of the seven thunders; he left also an epistle of a very few lines, and it may be also a second and third; for not everyone says these are genuine (and anyway, both of them together are not a hundred lines long)."

In addition he says the following about the Epistle to the Hebrews in his homilies on that work:

"Everyone who is capable of discerning differences in phrasing would admit that the character of the wording... [the substance of this section is that the thoughts are Paul's, the wording someone else's]; who wrote the epistle, God only knows... [some say Clement, some Luke, who wrote the gospel and Acts]."

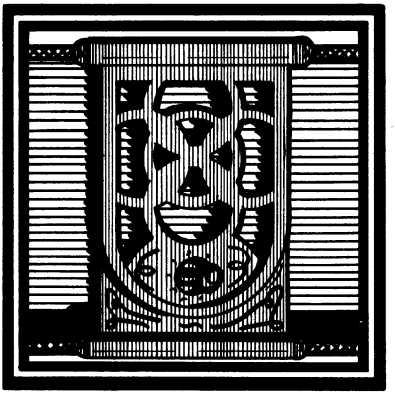
Concerning the New Testament canon he writes in the following way in the first book of his Comm. on the Gos. Acc. to Matt: "From the tradition..." [the section on the gospels follows].

Moreover, he speaks this way about the apostolic writings: "He, indeed, who was made a worthy minister of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit, I mean Paul, who completed the preaching of the gospel from Jerusalem in a circuit all the way to Illyricum, did not write to all the churches he taught but wrote only 14 epistles, and in them he wrote very briefly. However, some have doubted that which is written to the Hebrews... [the section on Hebrews is inserted here, altered to make Paul clearly the author]. Peter, moreover, upon whom the church of Christ is built, wrote only two epistles; even the second of these is doubted by some. John also, who leaned on the breast of the Lord, after the gospel also wrote the Apocalypse, in which, nevertheless, he was commanded to be silent concerning what the voices of the seven thunders said. Moreover, he also wrote three epistles, two of which are very brief, and concerning these there is doubt among some.

This material, gathered by Eusebius from diverse places in Origen's writings—his commentaries on Matthew and John and the *Homilies on Hebrews*—presents in its first paragraph what I believe is the only closed collection of New Testament scriptures Origen knew, that is, the fourfold Gospel collection, something we know already from the time of Irenaeus and Tertullian.

The statements about Paul, Peter, and John are taken from the fifth book of Origen's *Commentary on John*. Although this work is lost, fragments related to this passage are preserved in *Philocalia* 5. Origen is discussing the fact that his exposition of the opening of John's Gospel has already taken four volumes, even though he is only up to John 1:18. He wonders if he is violating the injunction of Eccl 12:12, "Beware of making many books." Before he solves this difficulty (by saying that everything written in conformity with the gospel is *one* book, no matter how many volumes it takes to say it, while "many books" refers to those heterodox teachings that conflict with the gospel, even if they are expressed in only one sentence!), he heightens the dilemma by showing that even the apostles and prophets wrote very little. Every statement in the paragraph should be viewed in that light. Origen is by no means giving in this paragraph quoted from *Commentary on John* 5 a list of the writings in the apostle (i.e. non-gospel) section of a New Testament canon list.

Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.25, does not preserve Origen's list of the writings of the New Testament. It might be noted that even with all the selective quoting Eusebius did in order to compile this list there is no mention of any writing of James and Jude (this will be pertinent as we examine our second passage from Origen). Moreover, Acts is mentioned only parenthetically in the discussion of Hebrews. In short, Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.25.3-14, is not "The Canon of Origen."



The other passage that appears to provide us with Origen's list of New Testament scripture is found in Rufinus' Latin translation of *Homilies on Joshua* 7.1, in which Origen comments on the felling of the walls of Jericho by trumpet blasts. The pertinent portion of the text reads:

> Jericho was destroyed by the trumpets of the priests.... When our Lord Jesus Christ came, whose coming that former son of Nun represented, he sent as his priests his apostles, carrying the "finely hammered trumpets" of the proclamation of the sublime and heavenly teaching. Matthew sounded the first priestly trumpet in his gospel; Mark also, Luke and John individually played their priestly trumpets; Peter, moreover, makes the two trumpets of his epistles resound; James also and Jude. And no less does John add to this by playing a trumpet through his epistles [variant reading: and Apocalypse] and Luke in describing the Acts of the apostles. Last of all comes the one who said, "I think God displays us apostles last of all," and thundering on the fourteen trumpets of his epistles he tore the walls of Jericho right down to the foundations....

If the variant including the Apocalypse is part of the text we have a list that mentions the authors of all the New Testament books and no others and gives the number of writings they contributed (except that the number of John's epistles is not given).[14]

There is a question whether this text, with what amounts to a list of New Testament writings, is in its present form to be credited more to Origen or to Rufinus. Harnack contends that the list stems from Origen and that corrections are unlikely (because of the position of Acts in the order of the list). He remarks that this is the same list found in Athanasius' 39th Festal Letter from 367 C. E. (usually seen as the first list containing the twenty-seven book New Testament canon) and, according to Harnack, in Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.25, where Eusebius presents his own New Testament canon list, divided into books he, Eusebius, designates as *homologoumena* (books accepted without question) and *antilegomena* (contested books). Here I note in passing that Harnack has in my opinion misread Eusebius' list, for Eusebius expressly says that only the *homologoumena* are for him canonical. In any case, Harnack's confidence in the list in *Homilies on Joshua* 7.1 leads him to say that "already 100 years before Athanasius the twenty-seven book canon... arose in Alexandria and Caesarea."[15]

But I doubt that the list in its present form is from Origen. I am led to this conclusion by the status of the catholic epistles in the list and by suspicion about Rufinus' translations, especially those that bear on canon history, in which there was a great change between the time of Origen, who died in the middle of the third century, and the time of Rufinus, who wrote in the late fourth and early fifth century.[16]

Concerning Rufinus' translation methods, it is well known that in the prologue to his translation of *De principiis* he says that if he found discordant materials in Origen's text he omitted them, believing them to be interpolations by heretics. And we can actually see Rufinus the translator at work in canon historical material by comparing the Greek original of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* 6.25.3-14, translated into English in the left column of the text printed above, and Rufinus' Latin translation, reproduced in English in the right hand column. Note the following differences:

1. In his introduction to the passage, Eusebius says that Origen was upholding the "ecclesiastical canon," that is, the church's normative teaching; Rufinus says that Origen is writing "Concerning the New Testament canon." There is no known use of the term *kanon* for a list of the New or Old Testament scriptures until well after Eusebius' time (to say nothing of Origen's)—see below.

2. Origen does not number Paul's epistles; Rufinus has him say Paul wrote fourteen, thus including Hebrews, of which Origen had said, "Who wrote the epistle, God only knows."

3. Origen says Peter left one acknowledged epistle, perhaps a second, for it is

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[14]There is a list giving the same New Testament authors in Origen's Homilies on Genesis 13.2, but no numbers of books are mentioned. Here also Rufinus is the translator, and the Greek original is lost.

[15]*Der kirchengeschichtliche Ertrag der exegetischen Arbeiten des Origenes*, 2 vols., *Texte und Untersuchungen* 42.3-4 (Leipzig: 1918-1919), 1:12.

[16]Johannes Leipoldt says, "The Latin translations of Origen's works are of no value for canon history, since they often reflect the status of the canon in the western church about 400 C.E.," *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1907-1908), 1:237, n.2.

doubted. Rufinus has Origen saying that Peter wrote only two epistles and that the second is doubted by some (Origen, evidently, not among them).

4. Origen says John left a brief epistle, perhaps a second and third; not all say the latter two are genuine. Origen-according-to-Rufinus says that John wrote three epistles, though some have doubts about two of them (Origen, again, after 150 years has apparently lost his own doubts).

The differences are patent and instructive.

As far as the catholic epistles are concerned, compare their apparent acceptance in the Latin translation of *Homilies on Joshua* 7.1 (all seven of them are listed, if we understand the epistles of John to mean all three) with the situation elsewhere in Origen:

• Concerning 2 and 3 John: Origen says in *Commentary on John* 5, not all agree that 2 and 3 John are genuine; in no work of Origen's preserved in Greek does Origen quote either of them;

• Concerning 2 Peter: in the John Commentary he declares that the Petrine authorship is disputed; there are a few quotes in material preserved in Latin only but none in the Greek material;

• Concerning James and Jude: they are not mentioned at all in the material Eusebius quotes from the *Commentary on John*; for both writings quotes can be given in which Origen acknowledges that some doubt their authenticity and quotes that show no indication of such hesitancy.

On the basis of this evidence I find it hard to believe that Origen personally accepts as canonical all seven catholic epistles, as the Latin text of *Homilies on Joshua* 7.1 seems to say. Especially in regard to 2 and 3 John and 2 Peter the evidence is far too weak. And if any *would* wish to argue that the evidence is indeed strong enough to indicate that Origen accepts all seven, then they should consider the even stronger evidence that Origen regards as scripture other Christian writings not now in our New Testament canon, including at least the Epistle of Barnabas and the Shepherd of Hermas (two works that a century after Origen are included in Codex Sinaiticus). Both are quoted as scripture by Origen on several occasions. A quote from Barnabas, for instance, is introduced in *Against Celsus* 1.63 with the words, "It is written in the catholic epistle of Barnabas." And in *De principiis* 2.1.5, where Origen is establishing a point on the basis of the authority of scripture, one of the references is the Shepherd.

In short, I do not believe that *Homilies on Joshua* 7.1 presents us with Origen's New Testament canon any more than Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.25 does. In fact, I am inclined to doubt that Origen ever made a list of the New Testament scriptures at all. He used many Christian writings as scripture, guided by what he understood to be the practice of the churches. If he was aware of a divided opinion on a book, he generally left open the question of its use as an authoritative document (a point he wishes to make from a disputed book might be introduced with some such phrase as, "if anyone wishes to receive this..."). There is no evidence that Origen ever had a New Testament canon, a closed collection of scriptures to which nothing is to be added, from which nothing is to be taken away.

To conclude by returning to our starting point: since Harnack, the widely held consensus is that the New Testament canon was closed in the late second century, in opposition to Marcion and other gnostics and especially to the Montanists. The Muratorian Canon and "The Canon of Origen" are seen as witnesses to that reality.

Sundberg has tried to show that the Muratorian Canon is probably to be dated in the fourth century rather than in the second. This article has tried to show that "The Canon of Origen" is not Origen's New Testament canon at all. In a subsequent article I hope to show that the first New Testament canon from the fourth century, from Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.25, when correctly read, looks like what it may well be, the first such list at all rather than one written when the issues had been settled for 150 years. As long as it is believed that the church settled the issue of the New Testament canon in the second century, it will be seen as a curious and inconsequential accident that the first uses of the term *kanon* for lists of the scriptures of the Old and New Testament come from the second half of the fourth century. Metzger gives several references to such usage in that period, including Amphilochius of Iconium's *Iambics to Seleucus* (about 380 C. E.), which ends an Old and New Testament canon list with the words, "This would be the most unfalsified canon (*kanon*) of the divinely inspired scriptures."[17] I believe that the use of the term *kanon* for scripture in the late fourth century *coincides with* the time in which the church became interested in establishing the limits for this collection.

Why it was only in the fourth century that the church showed this interest is hard to say. It may have been, as Martin Elze once suggested to me, the desire in the Constantinian Era to promote—*through these books*—unity both in the church and in the empire, especially after the Council of Nicea had shown that unity of confession or teaching was not something that could be presupposed. Whether this penchant for unity really was the catalyst in the fourth century for establishing the canon of scripture is not easy to say. The reference to a unity—and a norm—focussed on scripture and on confession leads to my final point.

In one sense, Harnack and those who agree with him are correct—the church did combat the gnostics in the late second century with a canon. But it was not the canon of scripture. Instead, it was the canon of truth, the canon of faith (*regula fidei* or *kanon tes pisteos*), those confessional statements about God and about Jesus Christ in which the church centered its faith and life. That was the church's canon, its norm, as it used and treasured the apostolic documents that would come to be its fixed collection of sacred scriptures. And that canon of faith itself goes back to an earlier, actually the earliest, Christian use of the term *kanon*. Paul brings Galatians to a conclusion with these words:

> But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule (*kanon*)....

The Christian community that for some reason waited until the fourth century and beyond to set the limits of its New Testament canon was not up to that point bereft of a canon. It had one from the moment God chose to call into being that community of people made new through the cross of Jesus Christ. It is here that the people of God found and find their *kanon* that gives the canon of sacred writings its normative character.

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[17]Metzger, *Canon*, Appendix I, 289-93, offers a helpful discussion of the history of the term *kanon*; the Amphilocius text is printed, with many other lists, in Appendix IV, 305-15.

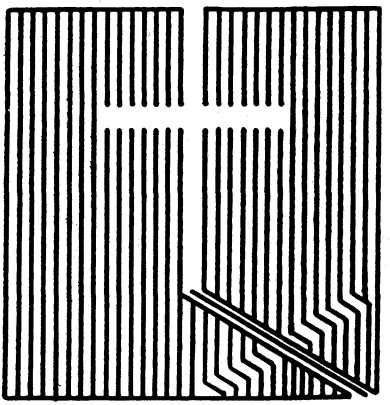
Observations on "the Son of Man" in the Gospel according to Luke

Jack Dean Kingsbury
Union Theological Seminary in Virginia

Of the various designations ascribed to Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels, "the Son of man" has generated more debate among New Testament scholars than any other. Indeed, the literature this debate has spawned is now so vast as to be virtually unmanageable. The chief purpose of this article is to discuss one aspect of this debate, namely, the meaning and function of "the Son of man" in Luke's Gospel. In taking up this topic, I do so in profound appreciation for the countless contributions that Frederick Danker has made in the course of his illustrious career not merely to Lukan studies but to New Testament scholarship in general. Whether as mentor, friend, colleague, or scholar, Frederick Danker has given unstintingly of his exegetical genius so as to enrich immeasurably both church and guild.

The Greek expression underlying "the Son of man" is *ho hyios tou anthropou*. To the Greco-Roman ear, this expression was strange if not barbarous. In searching for the origins of this expression, therefore, scholars early on cast aside the notion that it was to be derived from a Hellenic idiom and instead concentrated their attention on tracing it to a Semitic original. Although the suggestion has been made that this Semitic original was the Hebrew expression *ben adam*, scholars today identify it as the Aramaic expression *bar nash(a)*.[1]

[1]In commenting on the possibility of tracing the Greek expression underlying "the Son of man" to the Hebrew expression *ben adam*, J. A. Fitzmyer (*A Wandering Aramean* [SBLMS 25; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979], 147) opines: "When one surveys, then, the Hebrew material that might bear on the background of the Greek expression, one sees that it is meagre...and realizes why the Aramaic material usually commands more attention."



In their investigation of the range of meanings that *bar nash(a)* had at the time of Jesus, scholars have achieved agreement on some points but not on all. Thus, virtually all scholars acknowledge that *bar nash(a)* was used (a) as a noun to signify "a man" (i.e., "a human being") or "the man" (i.e., humankind") and (b) as a substitute for the indefinite pronoun "one" (i.e., "someone," "anyone").[2] What is as yet disputed is the contention that *bar nash(a)* was also used as a circumlocution for the personal pronoun "I" (or "me").[3]

By the time the Synoptic Gospels were written, the Greek expression *ho hyios tou anthropou* had already become current in Christian circles, superseding *bar nash(a)*. Literally, *ho hyios tou anthropou* denotes "the son of the man" or, more simply, "the man," or "the human being." Still, regardless of what this expression means literally, the meaning that one ascribes to it at the level of the Synoptic Gospels will hinge for the most part on whether one regards it as a title. Indeed, on this score many scholars belive that *ho hyios tou anthropou* differs radically from its Aramaic predecessor. For whereas *bar nash(a)*, say these scholars, did not function as a messianic title, *ho hyios tou anthropou* did.[4] Leaving aside for now the question of whether *bar nash(a)* functioned as a messianic title, the question of the titular use in the Synoptic Gospels of *ho hyios tou anthropou* is one that will be of central importance as we discuss the Gospel of Luke. In anticipation of this discussion, suffice it to say that depending on whether or not one takes *ho hyios tou anthropou* to be a title, it can theoretically be construed in any of several ways. Thus, one option is to construe it as a title, in which case one capitalizes it ("the Son of Man") and asks what it conveys as regards the person and significance of Jesus. A second option is not to construe it as title, in which case one leaves it uncapitalized ("the son of man") and asks each time it occurs what exactly it means ("humankind"? "one"? "I"? "one such as I"?). A third option is to ask whether it sometimes functions as a title and sometimes not, and a fourth is to ask whether it is perhaps less than a title but more than a common term, that is, whether it is not a technical term. In these latter two cases, one may choose to capitalize it in a hybrid fashion: "the Son of man."

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[2]See, e.g., G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), 162-63; C. Colpe, "*ho hyios tou anthropou*," *TDNT* 8 (1972): 403.

[3]Vermes (*Jesus the Jew*, 163-68) takes the position that *bar nash(a)* was indeed used at the time of Jesus as a substitute for the personal pronoun "I," whereas Fitzmyer (*A Wandering Aramean*, 152-54) vigorously contests this.

[4]On this point, see, e.g., Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean*, 153; B. Lindars, *Jesus Son of Man* (London: SPCK, 1983), 27-28; M. Müller, "The Expression 'the Son of Man' as Used by Jesus," *Studia Theologica* 38 (1984): 51.

I observed above that scholars are increasingly disinclined to regard *bar nash(a)*, the Aramaic expression for "the Son of man," as ever having functioned—at least down to, and including, the time of Jesus—as a messianic title. This change of view, which has been taking place gradually since the decade of the 70s,[5] has brought with it the near demise of the so-called myth of the Son of man. A brief word describing this development will round out our introductory remarks.

At heart, the myth of the Son of man[6] refers to the scholarly postulate, which virtually achieved the status of an axiom, that "the Son of man" was the title for a supernatural, messianic figure that Jesus' contemporaries anticipated would return at the consummation of the age. Allegedly, this myth had its source in the vision attributed in the Old Testament to Daniel, came to full flower with the appearance of that segment of 1 Enoch known as the Similitudes of Enoch (chaps. 37-71), and can be found again in 4 Ezra 13. Thus, at 7:13-14 Daniel, the seer, declares: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came *one like a son of man*..." (italics mine). In the Similitudes, Enoch, in divulging the heavenly secrets imparted to him, alludes to this humanlike figure from the book of Daniel, refers to him as "that (this) son of man," and later identifies him as the Messiah.[7] And in the sixth vision granted him, Ezra too sees the humanlike figure from Daniel ("something like the figure of a man") and is told that this figure is the son of God (i.e., the Messiah) whom God has kept hidden for many ages.[8] Taken together, these references demonstrate, scholars believed, that by the time of Jesus the myth of the Son of man was well known in Judaism.

On the assumption that one had firm reason to regard the existence of the myth of the Son of man as a secure historical datum, scholars necessarily asked how the earthly Jesus must have understood himself in relation to it. In answer to this question, scholars generally took one of four positions. Some held that Jesus envisaged himself as the one who would fulfill the eschatological functions ascribed to the transcendent Son of man.[9] Others took a broader position, claiming that Jesus not only thought of himself as the Son of man expected to appear in heavenly splendor but also as the Son of man who is presently active on earth and destined to suffer.[10] Still others insisted that Jesus, in speaking of the Son of man, referred to a transcendent, messianic being

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[5]Two articles that have, in retrospect, proved to be of particular importance in disputing the notion that either Jesus himself or Jews prior to his time ever used *bar nash(a)* as a messianic title are those by R. Leivestad ("Exit the Apocalyptic Son of Man," *New Testament Studies*, 18 [1971/72]:243-67) and G. Vermes ("The Use of Bar Nash/Bar Nasha in Jewish Aramaic," *Post-Biblical Jewish Studies* [Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquities; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975], 147-65).

[6]For a treatment of this "myth," see Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 169-86; Lindars, *Jesus Son of Man*, chap. 1.

[7]See 1 Enoch 46:1-4; 48:2-10; 52:4; 62:1-16; also R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), II, 214, XLVI, n. 2.

[8]See 4 Ezra 13:3,26,32,37,52.

[9]See, e.g., A. J. B. Higgins, *The Son of Man in the Teaching of Jesus* (Society of New Testament Studies Monograph Series 39 [Cambridge: University Press, 1980]), 1-2, 123-26 (esp. 126).

[10]See, e.g., F. H. Borsch, *The Son of Man in Myth and History* (London: SCM Press, 1967), 314.

As early as 1972... Danker took a giant step away from treating "the Son of man" as a title.

other than himself.[11] And yet others argued that Jesus did not associate himself in any fashion with the Jewish myth of the Son of man, the upshot being that all the Son-of-man sayings attributed to Jesus are inauthentic.[12]

If one asks why scholars have progressively been abandoning the myth of the Son of man, one can, of course, point to the exegetical arguments that have been marshalled against it.[13] But however trenchant these arguments may be, perhaps the single most important factor that has undermined this myth is the date that scholars now feel compelled to assign to the Similitudes of Enoch. Because each of the major sections of 1 Enoch, with the conspicuous exception of that of the Similitudes, has been discovered among the documents uncovered at Qumran, one can no longer assume that the Similitudes were well-known in pre-Christian Judaism. On the contrary, most scholars now adjudge the Similitudes to have originated in the latter part of the first century C.E. or even in the second century.[14] Since the Similitudes of Enoch constitute the lynchpin holding the myth of the Son of man together, the later one dates the Similitudes, the less influence they obviously could have had upon the thought of the evangelists, much less that of the earthly Jesus. So again, the threatened demise of the myth of the Son of man is as much the byproduct of the scholarly re-dating of the Similitudes of Enoch as of exegetical arguments mounted against it.

Surprisingly, the gradual fading of the myth of the Son of man, although it has resulted in a scholarly rethinking of Jesus' own use of "the Son of man," has not resulted in any appreciable rethinking of the way in which "the Son of man" is used in the Synoptic Gospels. Virtually without reexamination, scholars tend to take it for granted that "the Son of man" functions in the Synoptic Gospels as a title of majesty. Still, one scholar who has not uncritically hewed to this line is Frederick Danker. As early as 1972, in the first edition of his commentary on Luke's Gospel entitled *Jesus and the New Age*,[15] Danker took a giant step away

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[11]See, e.g., R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), I, 29; R. H. Fuller, *The Foundations of New Testament Christology* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1965), 122-24; H. E. Tödt, *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition* (London: SCM Press, 1965), 326-47.

[12]See, e.g., P. Vielhauer, "Jesus und der Menschensohn," *Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament* (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1965), 93; H. Conzelmann, *An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 131-37.

[13]See, e.g., Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*, 169-77; Lindars, *Jesus Son of Man*, chap. 1.

[14]See, e.g., J. J. Collins, "The Heavenly Representative: The 'Son of Man' in the Similitudes of Enoch," *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism*, ed. G. W. E. Nickelsburg and J. J. Collins (Septuagint and Cognate Studies 12 [Chicao, CA: Scholars Press, 1980]), 111, 127 n. 7.

[15]St. Louis: Clayton Publishing House. This commentary, completely revised and expanded, was republished in 1988 by Fortress Press.

from treating "the Son of man" as a title[16] and thus anticipated future developments. In what follows, I should briefly like to show why I believe that the evidence in Luke's Gospel proves that Danker, in taking this step, was correct.

To observe how "the Son of man" functions in Luke's Gospel, one way to begin is by comparing it with the manner in which the major messianic titles function. The latter are "Messiah," "Son of God," "Son of David," and "King of the Jews."

In function, "the Son of man" is both "like" and "unlike" these other titles. On the one hand, "the Son of man" is "like" these other titles because it, as they, applies to Jesus in a way in which it can be applied to no other human being. Thus, Jesus alone—except for the two angels who "quote" him (24:6-7)—makes use of "the Son of man" in Luke's Gospel, and when he does, he envisages only himself. Also, the ministry Jesus discharges in Luke is unique, and Jesus closely associates "the Son of man" with the peculiar aspects of his ministry. For example, Jesus declares, respectively, that the Son of man has come to seek and to save the lost (19:10); that the Son of man must suffer, be rejected, and be raised (9:22); that the Son of man will be exalted to the right hand of God (22:69); and that the Son of man will come again to usher in the consummated kingdom of God (21:27,31). Like the messianic titles, therefore, "the Son of man" marks Jesus out as a singularly significant figure.

On the other hand, "the Son of man" is "unlike" the major messianic titles because it does not divulge, either to the reader or to other characters within Luke's Gospel, the identity of Jesus ("who he is"). As one peruses Luke's Gospel, one discovers numerous questions or (conditional or unconditional) statements featuring messianic titles the purpose of which is to address precisely this central question of Jesus' identity. Examples of such questions or (conditional or unconditional) statements are the following: "He [Jesus] shall be called the Son of the Most High" (1:32); "...to you is born a Savior, who is Messiah the Lord" (2:11); "You are my beloved Son" (3:22; [9:35]); "If you are the Son of God, command..." (4:3; [4:9]); "You are the Son of God!" (4:41); "So then you are the Son of God?" (22:70); "He is the Messiah!" (4:41); "If you are the Messiah, tell us" (22:67); "How can they say that the Messiah is the Son of David?" (20:41); "Are you the King of the Jews?" (23:3); "This [is] the King of the Jews" (23:38); "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself"

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[16]Danker, *Jesus and the New Age*, 76. The thing to observe is that Danker, having paid lip service to the supposed myth of the Son of man, asserts that the term "the Son of man" expresses the thought that "Jesus is distinctively identified with the human race" (see also pp. 52-53). To understand "the Son of man" like this, however, was tantamount to breaking with the meaning that this term bore in the early 70s for virtually all Lukan scholars. In the minds of Lukan scholars in the 70s, "the Son of man" functioned in the Third Gospel to divulge both the identity and significance of Jesus: Jesus is the one who, though depicted as acting on earth and suffering, is the exalted and transcendent messianic being who, after an exceedingly long delay, will come to rescue his own and carry out the final Judgment. Not surprisingly, in the recently revised and expanded version of his commentary Danker omits from his treatment of this same section in Luke's Gospel all reference to the myth of the Son of man, translates "the Son of man" as "the Son of humanity," and explains that the Son of humanity is (simply) one who "identifies wholeheartedly with the human race" (see pp. 131-32).

(23:37). Contrariwise, conspicuously absent from Luke's Gospel are similar questions or statements highlighting "the Son of man." Never, for example, does the narrator or any character say, ask, or command: "You are (are you?) the Son of man"; or "He is (is he?) the Son of man"; or "If you are the Son of man, tell us."

To observe how remarkable this latter phenomenon is, consider how characters in Luke's Gospel regularly skirt "the Son of man" when dealing with the matter of Jesus' identity. Thus, supernatural beings such as God, angels, the devil, and demons all know who Jesus is. Still, when identifying him, they do not name him "the Son of man" but the "Son of God" or "Savior," "Messiah," and "Lord."[17] In the course of his ministry, Jesus openly designates himself, before both disciples[18] and the people,[19] as "the Son of man." Regardless, when these two groups weigh the question of Jesus' identity, neither one defines its understanding of him in terms of "the Son of man." On the contrary, the people decide that Jesus is a "prophet" of some stature (9:7-8,19) and Peter, on behalf of the disciples, confesses Jesus to be the "Messiah of God" (9:20). In similar fashion, although Pharisees, teachers of the law, and the entire Sanhedrin hear Jesus refer to himself as "the Son of man,"[20] the Sanhedrin does not ask him at his hearing whether he is "the Son of man" but whether he is the "Messiah" and the "Son of God" (22:67,70). When characters in Luke's Gospel concern themselves with the question of Jesus' identity, they do not draw on "the Son of man" to explicate who he is.

Even in the case of Jesus' Parousia sayings, "the Son of man" does not declare "who he is." In Luke's Gospel, the Jesus who will come again at the end of this age is the exalted Jesus.[21] At his hearing before the Sanhedrin, Jesus speaks of his exaltation in these words: "But from now on the Son of man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God" (22:69). Of significance is the response Jesus' statement elicits from the Sanhedrin. Although the members of the Sanhedrin have just heard Jesus refer to himself as "the Son of man," the immediate question they pose is whether his statement is not a claim to be "the Son of God" (22:70). By way of reply, Jesus answers them in the affirmative ("So you say that I am," 22:70). In short, what the reader learns from this exchange is that the exalted Jesus, who will one day come again in splendor (21:27), is, in identity, the Son of God.

If Jesus does not use "the Son of man" in Luke's Gospel to inform others of who he is, what does this self-designation mean? As we noted above, the Greek term underlying "the Son of man" denotes "the son of the man" or, more simply, "the man," or "the human being." Because this Greek term is always definite in form ("'the' Son of man") and consistently refers to one specific human ("Jesus"), it resists being deflated in meaning so that it becomes the mere equivalent of the pronoun "I" (or "me") or of such indefinite expressions as "a man" (i.e., "a human being") or "one." Nevertheless, for the interpreter simply to substitute in Luke "the man," or "the human being," each time he or she encounters "the Son of man" is not always sufficient. The

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[17]See, e.g., Luke 1:30-35; 2:10-11; 3:22; 4:3,9; 4:33,34,41; 9:35.

[18]Cf., e.g., Luke 6:22 with 6:20.

[19]Cf., e.g., Luke 6:22 with 7:1; 7:34 with 7:31,29,24.

[20]Cf. Luke 5:24 with 5:17; 6:5 with 6:2; 22:69 with 22:66.

[21]Cf. Luke 21:27 with 22:69; see also Acts 1:11; 3:21; 10:40-42.

reason is that although "the Son of man" invariably refers to Jesus, the expression "the man," or "the human being," taken by itself, still invites the question of "Which man?" or "Which human being?" Perhaps a glance at a particular passage will illustrate the problem. At 12:8, Jesus says, "And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before humans, 'the man' (some man, or human being, other than Jesus?) will also acknowledge him [that person] before the angels of God." To forestall any possibility of confusion or ambiguity in dealing with "the Son of man," one does well to render it in English as "this man," or "this human being." The expression "this man," or "this human being," is a dynamic equivalent of "the Son of man." If substituted for "the Son of man," it reveals at once that "the Son of man" does in fact refer directly to Jesus. Consider, for instance, these examples: "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but 'this man' has nowhere to lay his head" (9:58); "Let these words sink into your ears, for 'this man' is to be delivered into the hands of humans" (9:44); "And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before humans, 'this man' will also acknowledge him before the angels of God" (12:8); "And then they will see 'this man' coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (21:27).

Once one recognizes that "the Son of man" in Luke's Gospel means "the man," or "the human being" (dynamic equivalent: "this man," or "this human being"), one can easily make sense of the striking phenomenon we noted above: that Jesus can openly designate himself as "the Son of man" before the religious authorities, the people, and the disciples, and yet no one—neither supernatural being nor human being—ever asks him whether, or declares that, he is "the Son of man." The expression "the Son of man" does not function to explicate the

Characters in Luke's Gospel regularly skirt "the Son of man" when dealing with the matter of Jesus' identity.

identity of Jesus; it does not tell the reader or characters "who Jesus is." In identity, the Jesus of Luke's Gospel is the Davidic Messiah and Son of God, Lord and Savior.

To turn from Luke's Gospel to Acts, however, there is one passage that may or may not harmonize with the view of "the Son of man" just sketched. At Acts 7:56, Stephen exclaims, "Behold, I see the heavens open, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God." The question this passage raises is whether Stephen, in designating Jesus as "the Son of man," is not identifying him. If this is what Stephen is to be understood as doing, then Luke's use of "the Son of man" in Acts is completely different from that found in the Gospel. Instead of merely denoting "the man," or "the human being," "the Son of man" has now been transformed into a name, or title, explicating "who Jesus is." In this event, a clear development has taken place between the Gospel and Acts as regards the way in which the term "the Son of man" functions.

It is my firm belief, however, that such a development has not taken place and that the use of "the Son of man" in Acts tallies with that found in Luke's Gospel. In Acts 7:56, Stephen, gazing into heaven, speaks

of the exalted Jesus. Indeed, his words are a variation of the ones Jesus uttered in the Gospel at his hearing before the Sanhedrin: "But from now on," Jesus asserts, "the Son of man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God (22:69). In both Acts 7:56 and Luke 22:69, "the Son of man" may be taken to mean "the man," or "the human being." When so understood, it then becomes, in Stephen's saying, an alternate way of referring to "Jesus." Notice, for example, that immediately preceding Acts 7:56, Luke as narrator anticipates Stephen's words but makes mention of "Jesus" instead of "the Son of man": At Acts 7:55 Luke reports, "But he [Stephen]...gazed into heaven and saw...*Jesus* standing at the right hand of God." By the same token, the subsequent prayer Stephen makes in Acts 7:59 is also offered not to "the Son of man," but to "Jesus": Lord *Jesus*," Stephen cries out, "receive my spirit!" In sum, the thrust of this argument is that the sense of Stephen's use of "the Son of man" in Acts 7:56 may be captured as follows: "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and 'the man' [i.e., 'Jesus'] standing at the right hand of God." If this is correct, then Acts 7:56 can be seen to stand in a line with the way Paul describes Jesus in a passage like Acts 17:31: "... because [God] has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a *man* [i.e., Jesus] whom he has appointed...."

To return to the Gospel of Luke, the evidence here concerning the way "the Son of man" is used is clear. Viewed as a whole, this evidence strongly suggests that "the Son of man" does not function as a title of majesty but as a technical term. The purpose of a title of majesty is to set forth in some measure both the identity and the significance of Jesus. For its part, "the Son of man" proves not to be a title of majesty. Although it points to Jesus as a singularly significant figure, it does not explicate his identity (tell "who he is"). Instead, it refers to Jesus more modestly as "the man," or "the human being" ("this man," or "this human being").

Still, although "the Son of man" is not a title of majesty, it does stand out as a technical term. It is such because, like other technical terms, it bears a precise meaning within the world of Luke's Gospel (not "I" or "one" or "a human being" but always "the man," or "the human being," referring exclusively to "Jesus"). In the final analysis, therefore, "the Son of man" is of the same nature as such other key terms and expressions in Luke's Gospel as "the kingdom of God," "peace," "salvation," "today," and "it is necessary."

In light of our discussion of "the Son of man," what role does the latter play in Luke's Gospel? In designating himself as "the Son of man," Jesus refers to himself as "the man" ("the human being") who, though acting on divine authority, is repudiated by Israel and gentiles but vindicated and exalted by God (now in the resurrection and ascension; later at his Parousia). In Luke's Gospel, therefore, the designation "the Son of man" emphasizes the twin features of repudiation and vindication.

Biblical scholarship is a restless enterprise, constantly shifting and changing. As such, it is always in need of scholars who are blessed with the gift of vision and can point the way to the future. Frederick Danker has already shown himself to be a scholar of vision, and who knows, perhaps his most significant insights are still to come.

Christian Prophecy: Once Upon a Time?

Carolyn Osiek
Catholic Theological Union
Chicago, Illinois

There was a belief among some in the first centuries of the Christian era, especially among Jewish scholars of the time, that prophecy had ceased in Israel with the destruction of the First Temple at the hands of the Babylonians in 586/7 B.C.E. Those who thought so pointed to such texts as 1 Macc 4:46, 9:27, 14:41, and Ps 74:9. It is doubtful that people living in the exilic and Second Temple periods really thought this way themselves; indeed, there is ample evidence to the contrary, especially if we understand the rise of apocalyptic theology at this time as a continuation of prophecy, which its creators clearly did. In recent years the idea of the cessation of prophecy in postexilic Israel is seriously questioned. It is more likely a construct of early rabbinic (and perhaps Christian) scholars to fit their own historical perspectives.[1]

The continuation of prophecy in Israel well past the time of the "classical" prophets provides the backdrop for the belief of the earliest Christians that Jesus was the greatest of the prophets, and that the aftermath of his death and resurrection was the triumph of the Holy Spirit of prophecy (see even Rev 22:9,19). This is never so clear as in Luke-Acts (e.g., Luke 4:1,17-24; 9:19; 24:19). The Pentecost scene is cast as a revival of prophecy after the manner of Joel (Acts 2:17-18). Everything done in the early missionary movement as described by Acts is done in response to the prophetic Spirit (e.g., Acts 13:1-3). Two centuries later, the editor of the martyrdom account of Perpetua, Felicitas, and companions would once again evoke Joel 2:28 as quoted in Acts 2 to claim that the visions and revelations of the martyrs were new prophecies no less worthy than those of old for the upbuilding of the church.[2]

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[1]Frederick E. Greenspahn, "Why Prophecy Ceased," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108:1 (1989), 37-49. For an excellent full study of prophecy in New Testament times, see David E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983).

[2]Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas, 1; found in Herbert Musurillo, ed., *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford University: Clarendon, 1972), 107.

Yet the prevailing idea of historians of early Christianity from the turn of this century, only recently called into question, has been something quite similar to the idea of those who believed in the cessation of prophecy in postexilic Israel: that after the early years of the New Testament, the church saw a decline of prophecy and the valuing of spiritual gifts in favor of an increasing institutionalization. This view may keep things tidy and provide a rationale for longing for "the good old days," but like the rabbinic idea in regard to Israel, it does not really correspond to the evidence. Indeed, it can be argued that, though prophecy may take many different forms to meet changing circumstances, it has never ceased in the church.

With this possibility in mind, let us first take a look at the difference between Old Testament and New Testament prophecy, and then at what we know about the everyday functioning of prophecy in the New Testament church. Our best witness, of course, will be Paul.

Contrast between Old Testament and New Testament prophecy

The function of prophecy is, to borrow a line from Jeremiah, "to tear down and to build up" (Jer 1:10). New Testament prophecy, however, seems to do more building up than tearing down. Biblical scholars who seek to define the difference between New and Old Testament prophecy usually note this as a major area of contrast. The classical prophets in the Hebrew scriptures, although they often offered comfort, are best remembered for their "deconstructionism," for tearing down political and social constructs that were against God's ways. At least that is the popular image. But is Amos to have the last word over Second Isaiah? Or can we not say that each responded to the need of the time? In the time of the Israelite monarchy, the two social forces of prophecy and priesthood in a certain way provided a balance of tension vis-a-vis each other. Both prophet and priest lived at the boundary between the human and the divine, but they typically mediated between the two realms in different ways. The institution of the Temple priesthood largely provided social maintenance and stability; it regularized procedure for the divine-human encounter. It is understandable then that prophecy functioned more to push the limits of boundaries than to maintain and reinforce them; it constantly called into question established practices and assumptions in the name of covenant fidelity. With the collapse of Temple and nation, prophecy began to take on a more overtly encouraging stance (e.g., Second and Third Isaiah), and a more visionary character born of deeper and riskier hope of God's coming redemption of Israel from its present woes (e.g., Ezekiel, Daniel). In Jesus' day there was again a Temple priesthood, represented by the Sadducees. Clearly, Jesus did not belong to it, either by birth or by theological

Prophecy functioned more to push the limits of boundaries than to maintain and reinforce them.

and political inclination. Any attempt to pigeonhole Jesus into pre-established social categories will fail, but we can certainly say that, at least as portrayed in the Gospels, he identified heavily with the legacy of the prophets, and was in fact often called a prophet (e.g., Mt 21:11; Mk 8:28; Lk 1:76, 7:16; Jn 4:19, 9:17).

For the first Christians, once it became clear that the Jerusalem Temple would no longer serve their needs, there was no recognized group filling the social function of the priesthood, that is, maintaining stability and structure. There was no Christian religious institution whose practices and assumptions needed to be questioned in the name of covenant fidelity. Already in the earliest years Christian life outside of Jerusalem was community-centered, largely patterned on Jewish life in the Diaspora. Paul's famous remarks to the Romans about being themselves living sacrifices (Rom 12:1), presented to God through Paul's priestly ministering of the gospel (15:16), are to be understood in this context, for they precede and follow his concern about community unity and harmony. Into this context comes the exercise of prophecy.

1 Corinthians 14

Since 1 Corinthians 14 is the classic locus of Paul's teaching on prophecy, it can serve as our guide in looking at the various aspects of New Testament prophecy.

Paul says that prophecy effects three things: *oikodome, paraklesis*—related to the word from which we get "paraclete"—and *paramuthia* (1 Cor 14:3). The three meanings are so similar that one could question whether Paul really meant to say three different things; yet each has a slightly different nuance. *Oikodome* is "upbuilding" (RSV), or as some would adaptively translate, "edification." Paul talks often in this section of 1 Corinthians about *oikodome*, literally "building an *oikos*, a house," or in today's idiom, "being constructive." His second word is *paraklesis*, "encouragement" (RSV), which contains both the idea of comforting and exhortation. Here are both the tearing down and the building up, not tearing down in a destructive way but in the sense of seeing what needs to be gutted and remodeled. To borrow an expression from one of the advertisements in Garrison Keillor's *Prairie Home Companion*, it "makes shy people get up and do what needs to be done" (see how it works this way in Acts 13:1-3, or 15:32 through the ministry of the prophets Judas and Silas). It includes both these ideas. *Paramuthia* is "consolation" (RSV), or "comfort," the notion of holding things together in a loving way in a difficult time or a time of pain. The REB recasts the whole sentence actively: the prophet's "words have power to build; they stimulate and they encourage." The Christian prophet must be a multi-functional person!

The rest of the chapter goes on to give a very good picture of how prophecy is actually working in a Christian community, and the problems it poses. The description is of course from the perspective of Paul, who, although claiming that he speaks in tongues better than anyone else there (v. 18), does not claim to be a prophet. Though he probably repeats prophetic oracles in his teaching, he never claims to have uttered one. Paul is rather an apostle.

In this chapter, one side of Paul is revealed as he deals with this troublesome community: his conviction of the necessity of order. Here Paul is like a charioteer during the race whose hands are full of reins as he tries to guide too many horses dashing headlong down the track. It has been suggested that at least some in Corinth took his

radical sayings more seriously than he expected. The sweeping visionary statements of Galatians (3:27-28, 5:1,18) are noticeably absent here. In their place is a reminder of the need for moderation: "Everything is lawful, but not everything is helpful" (1 Cor 6:12, 10:23). It is a far less daring Paul who attempts to deal with the unruly Corinthians who are testing his principles to the limits.

Speaking in tongues.

Paul affirms the value of speaking in tongues as a special gift of the Spirit that he also shares, but at the same time he is aware of three drawbacks to the exercise of this gift: others are not built up unless there is interpretation because they do not understand the words (14:2,5,17); prayer in tongues is not prayer of the whole person because there is nothing going on in the mind (vv. 14-15,19); the manifestation of tongues does not sell well to outsiders (v. 23). By contrast, prophecy is intelligible speech that is constructive of community. The whole person, including spirit and mind, is involved in the exercise of prophetic speech. Prophecy, then, is a fully human activity, since the distinctive human sound is intelligible speech (vv. 7-11).

One of the effects of prophecy is conversion; this is part of *paraklesis*, for genuine conversion of any kind necessitates both tearing down of previous constructs and the building of new ones. An outsider coming into the *ekklesia*, the Christian assembly (this text implies a certain "open door" policy in practice), upon being confronted with prophecy will be struck to the heart, "called to account," and "the secrets of his heart are disclosed" (RSV) so that such a person will recognize the presence and identity of the true God (vv. 24-25). Certainly this is not to say that only outsiders or unbelievers are susceptible to such a response to prophecy. The context in the chapter is still contrast between prophecy and tongues; the intent is to enhance the value of prophecy, even for public relations. What the passage is really saying is that prophecy produces the effect of conversion, *even* in unbelievers who were not disposed for it to happen.

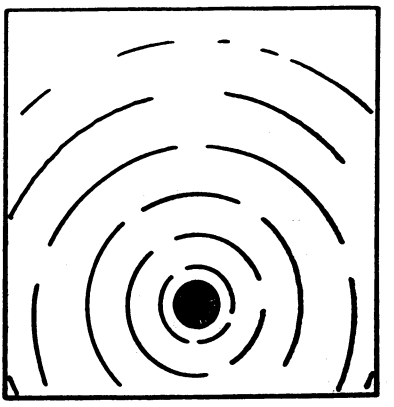
Order in prophesying.

From what we can gather in previous chapters about the shenanigans going on in Corinth, Paul has good reason to think that good ordering is a problem for this community. Hence his emphasis on order: those who have a communication to give in the form of song, teaching, interpretation of tongues, or prophecy should do so with full respect for others, "so that others might learn and *parakalontai*—receive *paraklesis*" (v. 31).

1 Corinthians 14:34-35.

Though they have to do less with prophecy than with ordering, these verses have been so troublesome in the contemporary church that they cannot be passed by in silence. They must be seen in the context of 1 Corinthians 11:5, where it is taken for granted that women do pray and prophesy publicly, and where the only issue is proper appearance while doing so. Many explanations have been offered for these difficult verses: (1) Paul is not forbidding women in the assembly to speak but only to interrupt by asking questions (Origen); (2) since the women are enjoined to ask their husbands at home, the prohibition refers only to married women, so that their domestic subordination to their husbands will not be compromised in public; (3) the passage so blatantly contradicts 1 Cor 11:5 that both cannot be from Paul, so this one must be an interpolation by a later writer, perhaps the author of 1 Tim 2:11-14; (4) as has come to be recog-

nized of 1 Cor 6:12 and 10:23,[3] Paul is here quoting an idea with which he disagreed, only to refute it in the next line: "What! Does the word of God begin or end with you?" (v. 36).[4] For our purposes, the point is that these verses do not contribute directly to our understanding of how prophecy works in the Pauline community, only to Paul's (or an interpolator's) concern to keep the ordering of the community patriarchal. In view not only of 1 Cor 11:5 but also of the entire early Christian prophetic tradition, we can assert that prophecy is the one ministry in which there has never been discrimination based on sex.



Conclusion of 1 Corinthians 14.

Paul concludes the chapter very solemnly: "Everyone who wants to be a prophet or charismatic person must recognize that what I write is a command from the Lord. Anyone who does not recognize this will not be recognized" (vv. 37-38). He uses this kind of language only when he intends to have the last say on a question. But we are uncertain just what is this command of the Lord that is to be recognized. Probably it is simply the need for a community ordering that will be respectful of the needs and rights of all, without which *oikodome* cannot take place. At the same time, he is careful to conclude the discussion by reiterating his appreciation of both prophecy and tongues (v. 39).

Even though 1 Cor 14 was written as an apologia for community order and not a description of how prophecy works, we can still learn from it quite a bit about the latter, which is our concern. Its formal context seems to be an assembly that is separate from the Lord's Supper. It is an assembly for prayer, song, and the reading of Scripture, probably something similar to a Pentecostal prayer meeting, with long periods of silence during which some are inspired to offer prophecy or other kinds of communication from God for the spiritual strengthening of those present, or even to recommend certain action steps. It is in such an assembly that we can locate the oracles of Agabus (Acts 11:28 and 21:10-11) or the call to the Western mission beginning from Antioch.

The characteristic of ecstatic speech, closely connected with some earlier Israelite forms of prophecy and often with prophecy contemporary to Paul in the Greco-Roman world, does not seem to figure here. For Paul, speaking in the spirit without full conscious involvement belongs rather to the exercise of tongues (1 Cor 14:14). His insistence that "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets" (1 Cor 14:32) and that there is therefore no excuse for disorder in the assembly, would suggest something far less dramatic.

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[3]Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "Corinthian Slogans in 1 Cor. 6:12-20," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 40 (1978): 391-96.

[4]David W. Odell-Scott, "Let the Women Speak in Church: An Egalitarian Interpretation of 1 Cor 14:33b-36," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 13 (1983): 90-93.

Paraklesis

We have in the passages just examined a recognizable form and context for the exercise of prophecy in a first-century context. Some churches continue with the same form today, through many do not. In many of our church contexts, such a prayer meeting with spontaneous spirit communication would not be acceptable, even less so bands of roaming ecstatic prophets harkening back to the Israelite period to trample suburban lawns, or dire figures like Jeremiah to interrupt the political process in bizarre ways. Does this mean that there is not prophecy exercised? I contend that it does not.

A key to understanding how prophecy really works may lie in the varied nuances of the word *paraklesis*, which does not appear only in contexts that can be undoubtedly connected with prophecy, but occurs in other contexts as well. A good example is in the opening prayer of thanksgiving in 2 Corinthians (1:3-7), where Paul plays on the word in several different ways. Here, translated as "comfort" (RSV), "consolation" (REB), and "encouragement" (NJB), it is contrasted with suffering and seems to take on the connotation of healing. In Luke 6:24, the rich are declared unhappy, because they have received their *paraklesis*, in contrast to the poor. In Romans 15:4-5, it is through the Scriptures that we have *paraklesis* to live in peace. In the Last Discourse of John's Gospel, as well as in the First Letter of John, Jesus the *parakletos* (the one called on to provide encouragement), gives the Holy Spirit as personal representative to carry on as principle of unity in Jesus' absence in the same way that Jesus himself did when present (John 14:16,26; 15:26; 1 John 2:1).

But Simeon in Luke 2:25 was looking for the *paraklesis* of Israel: the assurance that in spite of suffering, God is with us. He was filled with the Holy Spirit and he prophesied. In 1 Tim 4:13-14, leadership designated by laying on of hands is associated with the roles of reading (biblical instruction), *paraklesis*, and teaching.

In Acts 15, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch after the crucial Jerusalem meeting, taking with them the prophets Judas and Silas. When they assembled the congregation, the consensus document written in Jerusalem was read. The hearers rejoiced in the *paraklesis*. Judas and Silas by their speech encouraged the sisters and brothers (*parekalesan*) and strengthened the community. Here it seems that the *paraklesis* is definitely connected with prophecy: it gets the people not only to accept the agreement but to accept it with joy. It enables them to understand that this is, indeed, the working of God in their midst. The concrete solution to the problem will not last forever, but it is the accepted solution for now and the people are led to support it enthusiastically. The unified response is the effect of prophecy.

Effects of prophecy

What seems to be involved in all of these passages is that prophecy issues a call to conversion, initiative, or some other kind of change. *Paraklesis*, the effect of prophecy, can best be understood as the power of connectedness with life. It is what Jungians call "feeling," which is by no means the same as feelings or emotions, though these human functions can support the direction taken. It is the ability to *value* and to *be engaged* in the process of living. It is the passion that enables us to recognize truth and value it enough to pursue it: "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except in the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor 12:3).

Prophecy then is the living word that impels to constructive action, that rends out

hearts and pushes us to deeper connectedness with life, so that we dare to reach out to others with greater love and faith. If today in many of our contexts it does not take the same form as it did in the Pauline churches,

Whether it is from the pulpit, from the picket line, or from a two-year-old child, the prophetic word continues to be spoken.

that is only because the prophetic Spirit is sufficiently agile to adapt to changed cultural assumptions and behaviors. Whether it is from the pulpit, from the picket line, or from a two-year-old child, the prophetic word continues to be spoken.

For sure, not everything that looks like prophecy *is* prophecy. Paul admonishes not only not to quench and despise prophecy, but also to test all of it and retain only what is good (1 Thess 5:19-22). The question of discernment of prophecy would require another article. Not all action to which people are impelled, supposedly by the Spirit, is ultimately constructive. Only through the tests of time and enduring effect can we know.

In most of our church situations today, however, there is probably far greater danger of despising prophecy than of misusing it. Mark 3:28-30 refers to the unforgivable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit by not being able to distinguish God's Spirit in action from an evil spirit. In this regard, 1 Thess 5:19 is worth listening to: "Take every care not to quench the Spirit." A splendid choice of verb, like throwing cold water on a burning candle! "Do not quench the Spirit and do not despise prophecy." The unforgivable sin, it would seem, is hardening of the heart, the refusal to hear with an open heart, so that the effect of prophecy to which Paul alludes in 1 Cor 14:25, having the heart torn open, cannot happen. This is despising prophecy.

The thirteenth-century Pentecost hymn, *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, reads like a job description for the Holy Spirit. It contains the seemingly contradictory lines, "Melt the frozen, warm the chill" and "pleasant coolness in the heat." The work of the Spirit of prophecy is always to provide a complementarity to what is out of balance in human existence. In the midst of too much enthusiasm, the task is to order, direct, and pacify. But in rigidity and indifference, the task is to stir up, to warm, to incite to a passion that will lead to commitment. Both effects are comfort, consolation, encouragement, building up, depending on what is needed. Both are *paraklesis*, *oikodome*, and *paramuthia*. "Seek after the spiritual gifts, but especially that you might prophesy" (1 Cor 14:1).

Book Reviews

LIVING WITH CHRONIC ILLNESS: THE CHALLENGE OF ADJUSTMENT. By Stephen A. Schmidt. Edited by William E. Hulme. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1989. 128 pages. Paper. $7.95.

Steve Schmidt has Chron's disease. It is an inflammation of the digestive system that can cause intense pain and require periodic surgery. When it became acute about 12 years ago Steve reacted to it with frustration and a sense of the unfairness of it all. Why did it happen to him? He searched the past and present for answers but found there were no absolute answers. He could only be silent in the face of mystery.

But there are many things to be learned from chronic illness. Steve learned that the spiritual and the physical are related, that one is ultimately responsible for one's own health and well-being, that all relationships and activities are related to the health of one's body, and that chronic illness can be both bad and good. It can pull people into a downward spiral of despair and depression. But it can also make the sufferer a more compassionate person who thinks about God much more and is able to discover spiritual truths in the midst of suffering.

One of the spiritual truths Steve discovered is that the doubt caused by chronic illness is a part of the Christian experience. But doubt can be accepted and transcended. Then one can go on to prayer: not prayer as pleading or bargaining for release, but for patience and understanding. New understandings of old traditions came to Steve. He now understands Baptism as a way of sharing in suffering. He understands himself to be part of creation, fall, and re-creation. He shares in the goodness and the brokenness of creation. He has new insight into what Luther meant when he said that Christians are saints and sinners at the same time. And he understands anew the participation of God in human existence through the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The God who came in Jesus Christ is the God who is still with believers in the midst of their suffering and pain.

Other resources can help the chronic sufferer. The first is one's own body. Attention to it and to its signals is of primary importance. A second resource is family and friends. Medical help as a resource is important, but it has limits. Support groups are of immense help as Steve discovered in the group in his own parish. He lists some groups in the Appendix. Finally, publications and books can be of help.

Schmidt's is a moving book. He confesses that he finds it difficult at times to view his illness as opportunity, and he resents its side effects. But his illness has made him a more compassionate, disciplined, faithful person. He can even turn the "Why me?" question into "Why not me?" Persons with chronic illness, those who minister to the chronically ill, and those who teach pastoral care for the chronically ill will benefit immensely from this intense account.

Robert Conrad
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

CRY OF THE SPIRIT: WITNESSES TO FAITH IN THE SOVIET UNION. Edited by Tatiana Goricheva. Translated by Susan Cupitt (from the German translation of the Russian edition). New York: Crossroad, 1989. 157 pages. Cloth. $12.95.

It has been estimated that between 1917 and 1941, 80 to 85 per cent of the Russian Orthodox clergy—over 50,000 people—had been executed, exiled, or imprisoned in labor camps. The centerpiece of this collection is the letters of two bishops and two priests, written from internal exile and imprisonment between 1917 and 1939, to their congregations, their spiritual children, and their families.

These clergy are not indignant over the injustice done to them; they do not accuse the government which is oppressing them; nor do they describe in detail the physical hardships they endure. Rather, they express deep regret over their separation from the church and their community, and seek meaning in their suffering.

"I am your pastor, and am consumed with grief at this separation from you," writes one priest. On Easter, his thoughts again turn toward his congregation: "I sadly miss that office of pastor which I had the privilege of performing on this day.... Indeed, how can we not weep over each other on this day? ...Our fullness of being is that of a repenting family celebrating the divine service." Another priest says that the greatest privation he feels in the camp is the lack of an altar. The writers reveal themselves to be people deeply shaped by the drama and poetry of the liturgy and by the calendar of the church's festivals and commemorations.

They struggle to find meaning in their suffering, both for themselves and for the church. They find it in the call to share the suffering of Christ. "The Cross...is the foundation of our understanding of the world and of our faith. The view that suffering is punishment for personal sins is totally unChristian.... For according to our faith suffering is transformation...."

The closing of the churches means great privation, but also opportunity: "Today the visible churches are being destroyed, but in the grief of penitence there are others arising which have been created by God's hand... by enduring persecution they are opening up churches in their hearts.... There are fewer churches, so be one yourself.... Entry to many shrines has become difficult, so become a shrine and a living icon yourself."

This is not a history of the persecution of the Russian Orthodox Church from 1917-1939. It is a book of Russian spirituality, a peek into the souls of some who lived and died in a period of intense official persecution and personal suffering. Goricheva says, "My plea to the Western reader is: please do not read these texts without prayer."

Rev. Clarence Harms
Zion Lutheran Church, Wausau, Wisconsin

METAPHOR AND RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE. By Janet Martin Soskice. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985. x and 191 pages. Paper. $16.95.

Can believers speak of God in a way that respects both divine transcendence and the requirements of cognitivity? In *Metaphor and Religious Language,* Oxford theologian Janet Soskice argues that they can, and that the instrument suited for the job is the metaphor.

On the way to establishing that claim, Soskice provides an extensive study of metaphor that includes an overview of classical views on the subject, notes toward a definition of metaphor, a survey of several theories of metaphor, and a consideration of metaphor in relation to other figures of speech. Soskice defines metaphor as "that figure of speech whereby we speak about one thing in terms which are seen to be suggestive of another." In place of substitutionary, emotive, or incremental theories, she prefers an "interanimation" theory, in which sense comes from the whole utterance. Contrary to the logical positivists, she argues that irreducibility is not necessarily a flaw, and, in fact, constitutes the utility of metaphor for religious language (chapters 1-5).

Nevertheless, Soskice insists that metaphor serves the believer's intent to speak about a real God. It is just what the believer needs to avoid a crude realism that claims definitive knowledge about God. At the same time, it does not retreat to a non-cognitive emotivism. Metaphor serves a critical realism that claims to depict reality without describing it. By referring rather than defining, metaphor provides a way to talk about God that does not make God finite, yet allows the speaker to make legitimate metaphysical claims for God. Metaphorical language "denominates" the experience of believers, "and it is the theological realist's conviction that that to which it refers, the source of these experiences, is God who is the source and cause of all that is" (chapters 6-8).

This book is both a valuable study of metaphor in itself and an intriguing proposal for rehabilitating religious language. If there is any criticism, it is that the success of the latter

project, like so many efforts in the study of religious language, is made to turn on so fine a point of definitions (the difference between depiction and description), and so arbitrary a maneuver (a "conviction" that religious language is cognitive) that it hardly seems able to support its own ambitious intent.

Jerry K. Robbins
Lutheran Campus Center
Morgantown, West Virginia

THE HISTORY AND FUTURE OF FAITH: RELIGION PAST, PRESENT, AND TO COME. By Robert Ellwood. New York: Crossroad, 1988. viii and 184 pages. Cloth. $18.95.

Some of us who live and work with religion wonder if there is any future in it. In *The History and Future of Faith*, Robert Ellwood, of the University of Southern California, assures us that religion will be around for some time, even if in a greatly attenuated form. He supports this prognosis with a theory about the history of religion founded on "stages of spiritual mentalities." His book traces the transition of religion from an earlier period, when religion was expressed in timeless symbols, to the emergence of the Great Religions, beginning in the fifth century B.C.E. Centering around a sacred moment, person, and canon, these major religions developed, and are developing, through five stages: apostolic, wisdom, devotional, reformation, and folk.

Ellwood argues that Buddhism, Chinese religion, Christianity, and Hinduism are in the final or terminal stage, while Islam is in the fourth. Not to worry, however, since it is only the Great Tradition of these religions that is in retreat, rather than the Little Tradition. While the religious ideas, values, and practices of the elite may be undergoing secularization, the charismatic, experiential, and miraculous aspects of religion are very much alive in its ordinary believers, and can long outlive the demise of the Great Tradition.

The author concludes that while there is a possibility that religion will go into retirement, hastened by the "materialistic utilitarianism" of the day, it may also revive around a new founder religion or a revitalized Great Religion. Among the possibilities for the latter occurring, the author contends that Christianity holds out the best, perhaps the only, hope. Because it is a large, worldwide religion, inclusive, adaptable, and capable of self-correction, Christianity is the most likely candidate for the religious future.

While prognosticating is risky business, Ellwood supports his proposal with impressive scholarship and cogent theorizing. His synoptic vision incorporates a broad field of research, including the work of many contemporary experts on religion. A book of this scope can hardly avoid the imprecision of heady generalization, and Ellwood is no exception. Nevertheless, it is interesting fare, instructive, provocative, and yes, prophetic. Students of contemporary religion, participants in interreligious dialogue, skeptics, visionaries, and others who gaze into the "not-yet" will find it hard to put down.

Jerry K. Robbins

THEMES IN THEOLOGY: THE THREEFOLD CORD. By Donald M. MacKinnon. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, Ltd., 1987. Augsburg Fortress, 1988. 256 pages. Cloth. $34.95.

Donald MacKinnon is a retired professor of divinity who taught at Cambridge and Aberdeen. *Themes in Theology* is a collection of lectures, radio broadcasts, essays, and book reviews published over the last ten years. He makes commentary on such things as Kant's philosophy of religion, *The Myth of God Incarnate* symposium, Teilhard de Chardin's *Divine Milieu*, and Schillebeeckx's Christology. Although there is a feeble attempt to announce some sort of continuity around the theme of *via negativa*, in fact the chapters are connected by nothing more than MacKinnon's style of writing.

Among the few items which receive sufficient emphasis to be repeated is MacKinnon's thesis that we should take time seriously. He defines the heart of the Christological and Trinitarian problems, for example, as relating the

"times of Jesus" to the "eternity of God." Even though a disciple of Kant when it comes to the ineffability of the divine reality, MacKinnon makes an effort to show that for Kant temporality is not just a category of consciousness but belongs as a given to natural reality itself. More than this MacKinnon does not say. He could have appealed, for example, to the scientific work of Arthur Eddington or Ilya Prigogine to substantiate the claim that in nature time runs in only one direction, from the past toward the future. Or he could have appealed to the Trinitarian theology of Karl Barth or Robert Jenson to see how eternity might be impacted by the course of temporal events. But MacKinnon stops short with just a suggestion of which direction theology might go.

This is typical of the timid tenor of *Themes in Theology.*

Ted Peters
Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and GTU, Berkeley, California

THE JEWISH RECLAMATION OF JESUS. By Donald A. Hagner. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984. 341 pages. Paper. $15.95.

Jewish interest in Jesus has grown in recent decades. This book reviews a large number of Jewish authors who have devoted books or articles to the study of Jesus. From Klausner and Montefiore to Sandmel and Lapide, the major Jewish writers on this subject are represented. The bibliography identifies their works. Hagner does a good job of discussing in a systematic way, arranged by subject matter, the main contributions of these studies. This is not easy because they have different viewpoints. On the other hand, this method makes it difficult for the reader to see the specific contribution of each Jewish scholar.

Hagner states his own approach at the outset: "as an evangelical Christian, viz., as one who holds the basic doctrines of the Christian faith and the inspiration of the biblical writings." His conclusion also is stated in the preface: "my claim in the present book is this: the Jewish reclamation of Jesus has been possible only by being unfair to the Gospels." Several times, one can find a statement similar to this: "Jewish scholars are forced to select from the Gospels what seems to agree with their views and to reject everything that does not." He criticizes Jewish writers for their selectivity and states that "the conclusions of radical critical scholarship have been welcomed warmly by Jewish scholars." And yet he says, "Jewish scholars generally take a much more conservative stance toward the historicity of the Synoptic Gospels than does radical Protestant scholarship." This is the main problem with the book. Hagner rejects Gospel criticism; on this basis he criticizes Jewish authors when they attribute statements that do not agree with Jewish teachings to later changes by the evangelists; yet he also blames them for being conservative. Although he recognizes this as a paradox among the Jewish writers themselves, it does not provide a good principle for evaluating the studies. Jewish writers are mainly interested in the teachings of Jesus; the miracles find little discussion in this book. Hagner deliberately also does not deal with the passion narrative and resurrection of Jesus.

In general, Jewish scholars accept Jesus as a Jewish teacher, more or less related to the Pharisees, but reject any claim that he is the Messiah or that he has any special authority from God. Hagner, on the other hand, claims that Jesus' teachings cannot be separated from his person and authority. The book confirms, in regard both to the Jewish writers and to Hagner himself, the general thesis of A. Schweitzer that a writer on the life of Jesus finds the Jesus he or she is looking for.

It is interesting to note that the so-called 'New Quest of the Life of Jesus' has as one of its criteria that of *dissimilarity*, i.e., that one can accept as genuine in the first instance such sayings as disagree with Jewish teachings (and early Christian teachings), and that Jewish authors on the other hand accept as authentic precisely those materials which agree with Jewish teachings. On this basis, of course, they also (in general) deny Jesus' uniqueness and originality (as Hagner recognizes). These criteria of the new quest are not at all considered by Hagner.

The book can serve well as a source of information about Jewish writers on the life and especially the teachings of Jesus, but the conclusions are not in harmony with historical-critical scholarship. A welcome result is the more positive image of the Pharisees which Jewish writers present and of which Hagner in general approves. Also helpful is the distinction between racial anti-Semitism (not found in the New Testament) and religious anti-Judaism (present in the New Testament).

Wilhelm C. Linss
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

THE NEW TESTAMENT AND ITS MODERN INTERPRETERS. Edited by Eldon Jay Epp and George W. MacRae. Augsburg Fortress, 1987. 528 pages. Cloth. $34.95.

This book is one part of a trilogy, "The Bible and its Modern Interpreters," which is concerned with international research of the Hebrew Bible, Early Judaism, and the New Testament, with attention paid for the most part to studies made since World War II. The other two parts are: *The Hebrew Bible and its Modern Interpreters*, edited by Douglas A. Knight and Gene M. Tucker, and *Early Judaism and its Modern Interpreters*, edited by Robert A. Kraft and George W. Nickelsburg.

Eldon Epp's editorial preface is an enticing invitation to the bibliographic feast that follows. Each of the sub-divisions of the four parts consists of a description and assessment of developments, followed by full facts of publication for the works of the scholars cited.

Part one treats studies in Greco-Roman religion (A. Malherbe), Judaism (A. Saldarini), Qumran (J. O'Connor); part two, methods of NT scholarship, including textual criticism (E. Epp), philology (S. Brown), form and redaction criticism (E. McKnight), literary criticism (W. Beardslee); part three, the literature of the NT, with discussions of canon (H. Gamble), synoptic studies (H. Kee), Johannine studies (D. Moody Smith), Luke-Acts (C. Talbert), Pauline studies (V. Furnish), Hebrews (P. Hughes), James, Petrines, and Jude (B. Pearson), Revelation (E. Schüssler Fiorenza), NT apocrypha (R. Wilson), apostolic fathers (W. Schoedel); and part four concludes with J. Reumann's survey of Jesus and Christology and R. Fuller's on NT theology.

All who are engaged in serious study of the New Testament will soon discover that this book deserves the kind of response solicited by the advertisement for a well-known credit card.

Frederick W. Danker
St. Louis, Missouri

LUKE 1–9:20. Word Biblical Commentary 35a. By John Nolland. Dallas: Word Books, 1989. Cloth.

Nolland has three primary aims: (1) "...to synthesize the insights that are scattered through the specialist literature," (2) "to evaluate in connection with... a coherent understanding of the whole Lukan enterprise the competing suggestions... for the understanding of individual items," and (3) "to offer a fresh reading of each passage in the Gospel." With this demanding agenda, it comes as no surprise that the first volume of his commentary on Luke's Gospel covers only chapters 1–9:20.

Following the Word Commentary format, work on each pericope starts with the author's translation from the Greek and falls into four sections. "Notes" deals with text critical and translation questions. "Form/Structure/Setting" provides a condensed conversation with modern scholarship concerning those three elements. In this section Nolland's work is of great value as he struggles with the able and detailed work that has gone on since Luke was recognized as a "storm center of biblical scholarship" by Van Unnik in 1966. The third section, "Comment," presents the passage verse by verse. Here Nolland is attentive to the pericope in relation to LXX, the whole of Luke-Acts, and the synoptics. A summary of the work is presented in the fourth section, "Explanation."

Nolland's sensitive attention to positions and concerns other than his own, and his clarity about his own position is one strength of this

commentary. Also, through a wide-ranging, up-to-date bibliography the reader is given access to the arguments with which Nolland is involved as he makes his interpretations. Nolland's conclusions are clearly presented along with the reasoning behind them. Explanation sections sum up the same work developed at greater length in Notes and Comment, thus allowing the reader to move quickly back from the summary to a particular argument or concern that may have intrigued her.

Sarah S. Henrich
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

THE SOCIAL WORLD OF FORMATIVE CHRISTIANITY AND JUDAISM. Edited by Jacob Neusner, Peder Borgen, Ernest S. Frerichs, Richard Horsley. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1988. 384 pages. Cloth. $39.95.

The nineteen essays in this volume were presented as a tribute to Howard Clark Kee, who has authored a number of studies on the social setting of early Christianity.

Each of the three segments of this collection exhibits an area within which Kee has made his own contributions. The more general category, "Social Studies: Ancient Israel, Christianity, and Judaism," appropriately embraces the first seven studies, with essays, e.g., on banditry in Galilee and the depiction of Pharisees in Mark. The next seven studies deal with Paul. One of these, by Robert Jewett, bills Phoebe as Paul's patron; another, by J. Paul Sampley, justifies Paul's rhetoric in 2 Cor 10-13. The third segment embraces six studies on Jesus and the Gospels, including a presentation by David Tiede of the rationale in Luke's treatment of Israel.

An impressive list of Kee's publications attests the broad scope of his academic interests. Two indexes, of subjects and ancient sources, round out this handsomely executed volume, but one looks in vain for gracious acknowledgement of advance work in social analysis by the "Chicago School" in the 1920s.

The editors include a tribute to Dr. Harold Rast and his colleagues at Fortress Press, describing them as "an ornament to scholarly publishing and the academic study of religion as well as to the church that sustains that press."

Frederick W. Danker

THE FIRST COMING: HOW THE KINGDOM OF GOD BECAME CHRISTIANITY. By Thomas Sheehan. New York: Random House Vintage Editions, 1988. 287 pages. Paper. $9.95.

If you graduated from seminary in the last twenty years, you are familiar with most of the *data* that underlies Sheehan's vision of Jesus. But you have not heard the data compiled as Sheehan interprets it, nor are you likely to have come to quite the same conclusions. A studied unconsciousness, even among bright scholars, may prohibit us from drawing what others would see as obvious conclusions to research both in historical, sociocultural, and linguistic backgrounds to the Bible and in various forms of criticism—text, form, redaction, structuralist—which hold sway in the study of biblical texts.

Sheehan's reading of the data is this: Jesus was a prophet who proclaimed the immanence of the Kingdom of God, on the basis of his awareness of the presence of Abba/Father; he then collapsed the case for religion among his people by invoking the "present-future" of God and calling people to live this "present-future" in justice and mercy one to another. Subsequent to his death, his Aramaic-speaking Jewish followers expected his immanent return at which he would be declared the apocalyptic Son of Man; this is the first move in "how Jesus became God." It was also the first move, footed in the experience of Simon, that would lead to full-blown belief in the resurrection. According to Sheehan's understanding, the belief "God raised Jesus from the dead" is a secondary order statement which derives from the conviction among the early disciples that Jesus was declared Son of Man and that his proclamation of the Presence of God in justice and mercy was correct. Subsequently, however, the next wave of hellenistic Jewish followers shifted emphasis again. In the

first wave, Jesus remains a human about to be declared Son of Man, but in the second wave there is a functional identification of Jesus with God, which is seen in both the infancy narratives and the interpretation of his session "at the right hand of God in power" *now*. This is the beginning of "Christianity," in Sheehan's reading. The final wave is the full-fledged pre-existent Christ doctrine which emerges among Gentile converts.

So far, so good. Most of us are aware of this movement in New Testament texts, even if we did not compile the data this way, or if we have been blinded to the obvious conclusions. Sheehan takes away the blinders. His final contention: "Christianity," as we have come to know it, and the christological dogma thereof, may now be treated as one interpretation among many of the original proclamation of Jesus of Nazareth who called us to live the Kingdom here and now in justice and mercy. This interpretation may, itself, be "heretical" when compared with Jesus' proclamation. Thus we need to re-discover what Jesus was up to in his ministry, "without Christ and without Jesus." "Recovering the Kingdom 'without Christ'—that would mean getting to what Jesus *said*: the present-future, the incarnation. Recovering the kingdom 'without Jesus'—that would mean getting to what Jesus *was*: a hermeneut, a heretic, that is, a human being. The point in recovering the kingdom is to recover oneself as the place of the mystery of the present-future, and thus as one called to enact liberation" (p. 226).

The book is exceedingly well-written, worth reading in its entirety, is *not* a re-reading of the Harnackian thesis that there is a religion of Jesus and a religion of Paul, and has implications for ministry in the last decade of the twentieth century that need to be taken seriously in a parish setting.

Jay C. Rochelle
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

HOW KARL BARTH CHANGED MY MIND. Edited by Donald K. McKim. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986. xi and 186 pages. Paper. $9.95.

Here are reminiscences and testimonies from twenty-six people, some who studied with Barth, some who learned from his writings, and two from his sons Christoph and Markus. Herein emerges a portrait of an earthy, interested, searching, sensitive, alive human being with a single-minded adherence to the Reformed slant on "theos" as the aim of the Christian life and "logos" as the means to take aim. For younger students who do not know the writings of the man, this is a painless, entertaining, insightful introduction. One learns how thrilling it was to discover a theologian who "forces a fresh encounter with the Biblical texts" (Marty, p. 106), who "held out to us the Word in itself, in all its power, all its authority, all its transforming effectiveness" (Eliz. Achtemeier, p. 109), and beyond whom "no one ever had a more thorough and irresistible (inarguable-against) apprehension of the priority of God, of God's actions and so of all revelation and grace in all sound theology" (Gilkey, p. 153).

Jay C. Rochelle

A KARL BARTH READER. Edited by Rolk Joachin Erier and Reiner Marquand. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986. 117 pages. Paper. $6.95.

Karl Barth said he aimed to turn the rudder of evangelical theology 180 degrees. This book offers a sampling of the work by which he laid his hand to the tiller. It is good that so many sermons and addresses were included, since in our age of visual imagery it would be hard for new readers to understand the extraordinary appeal of Barth's written work; the sermons and addresses show Barth as the controversial master of a style that forces the hearer to take a stand.

In a religious age like this one the words of Barth come like surgical knives, to separate the faith from its attendant forms of piety. In one especially stinging section, he refers to pietists:

"They turned aside from God, and in very serious, worthy and devout forms they began to cultivate what we now [1934] see before us in full bloom: pious Christians."

For those of us who have questions about the contemporary detente with religion that has been engineered by the comparative study of religion, Barth always comes as sustenance. If you are interested in dumping something called Christianity into a basketful of religious choices, then stay away from this little book. If you think spirituality is the end of the search for faith and not the Holy One, don't pick this book up. Indeed, if you think there is a *thing* called "Christianity" which can be spoken about as if it were substantive, don't bother with Barth.

If, on the other hand, you are interested in the address of humanity by the Holy, an address which is always command and freedom, then perhaps Barth will speak to you. If you are willing to begin with the proclamation of God's mercy and judgment on all creation in the Christ, Barth will help you see to what conclusions such a beginning will lead. If you are interested in exploring the freedom of God, for a change, rather than the limits of your own supposed freedom, Barth will assist you. If you are beginning to sense the emptiness of most religiosity, Barth is for you.

Jay C. Rochelle

IMAGES OF THE FEMININE IN GNOSTICISM. Studies in Antiquity and Christianity. Edited by Karen L. King. Philadelphia: Augsburg Fortress, 1988. 464 pages. Cloth. $44.95.

Here at last is a book which seeks to understand in a careful, non-sensational way what the many "images of the feminine" may have meant to those who wrote and read/heard "gnostic" texts. This excellent collection of essays and responses by 31 contributors reveals the difficulties faced by able scholars who seek to develop some description of the role and involvement of women in connection with any ancient religious community revealed to us only by a text.

Contributors, all scholars of note, e.g., B. Pearson, B. Brooten, E. Clark, K. Rudolph, and E. Pagels, provide work which attempts "to address the many problems inherent in a description of gender imagery in Gnosticism." Two major methodological issues emerged from the process of preparation, presentation and response that occurred at a 1985 international research conference sponsored by the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, the Department of Religious Studies at Occidental College, and the Society of Biblical Literature:

1. How can we understand gnostic perspectives on gender?

2. How can we understand the relationship between mythology and social description?

These methodological questions beset all of us who would "understand" or interpret communities known to us through the writings of only a few persons whose own identities we do not know. Essays deal with other topics, e.g., the social description of Gnosticism, substantive topics in literary analysis, comparative historical analysis.

In discussing the use of gender imagery in Gnosticism (whose very existence as an -ism is questioned by some scholars), the editor, Karen King, says that this issue is "not a simple one. This is largely due to the complexity of the phenomenon of Gnosticism itself and to the lack of social information we have about it." One could handily substitute the words 'early Christianity' or 'baptism' or 'the canon' or 'Pauline missions' for Gnosticism and her words would still ring true.

What is particularly interesting about this volume, then, is that essayists work very self-consciously at issues of the gendered nature of language and the nature of metaphorical language in texts which are largely "apocalyptic, mythological, and semi-philosophical" as they attempt to answer questions similar to those of great interest to students of both Hebrew and Christian scriptures: Would women have been attracted to Gnosticism? What is a plausible social location for a text? Would certain themes have repelled women? Were women leaders? What role is played by social class?

Because of the variety of approaches and methods, the care taken in the framing of questions, and a pervasive honesty in evaluating

evidence that is spotty at best, and because the influence of gnostic conceptuality extended far beyond Gnosticism, I recommend this book for anyone interested in feminism, gnostic religious systems, or religions of the late Empire (including Christianity and Judaism). It includes an extensive bibliography of works cited.

Sarah S. Henrich

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF GANDHI: CONVERSATIONS WITH SPIRITUAL SOCIAL ACTIVISTS. By Catherine Ingram. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1990. xv and 284 pages. Paper. $15.00.

Interviews with the Dalai Lama, Desmond Tutu, Joan Baez, Joanna Macy, Gary Snyder, Nhat Hanh, and others. A book to browse in search of understanding about the spiritual undergirding for green politics and for peace movements, ultimately for the interconnectedness of all beings. Missing for this reviewer were interviews with Daniel Berrigan and David Dellinger, who surely fit the category "spiritual social activist." Overall a well-done collection of interviews, however, with Ms. Ingram asking especially pertinent questions and following closely the train of each person's thought. Mini-biographies and pictures of each interviewee enhance the book, since it is always helpful to know how people get to the peculiar positions they occupy in life, and to see what forces in our pasts lead to common commitments.

Jay C. Rochelle

DHARMA GAIA: A HARVEST OF ESSAYS IN BUDDHISM AND ECOLOGY. Edited by Allan Hunt Badiner. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1990. xxix and 265 pages. Paper. $15.00.

With a foreword by the Dalai Lama, here is a rich, fascinating collection of poems, musings, scholarly essays, and stories in what has come to be known in recent years as "engaged Buddhism," the direct application of Buddhism in social, political, and cultural settings. This book reckons the natural coalition between the Gaia hypothesis, contemporary physics and ecological studies, and concepts in Buddhist philosophy that undergird environmental consciousness. Thirty writers from all school and national backgrounds in Buddhism respond to the environmental crisis under these heads: green buddhism, experiencing extended mind, becoming sangha, meditations on earth as a sentient being, and a call to action. The underlying theme is co-dependent origination, *paticca samuppada*, the Buddhist teaching that all sentient beings proceed from emptiness into form through their interdependence one with another. Put another way, we learn herein that we *are* the environment, that we are not separate from other beings or our world. Thus joy arises from the quality of life and the depth of our relationships. The book concludes with a glossary of terms, a bibliography of resources in "Gaian buddhism," and a list of organizations and networks for environmentalists.

Jay C. Rochelle

THE GOSPEL IN DOSTOYEVSKY. Edited by the Hutterian Brethren. With illustrations by Fritz Eichenberg. Rifton, NY: Plough Publishing House, 1988. 260 pages. Paper. $9.50.

Here are many excerpts from Dostoyevsky's big three novels on the whole meaning of life and death, religion and faith: *The Idiot, Crime and Punishment,* and *The Brothers Karamazov*, with one section from *A Raw Youth*. The selections are organized under the headings "faith in God," "rebellion against God," "on the way to God," and "life in God." Each section receives brief comment from Eberhard Arnold and others. This is a translation of volume 20 in the German series, "Source Books of Christian Witnesses throughout the Centuries," edited by Karl Noetzel.

The strength of Dostoyevsky's ability to discern the inner heart of Christian faith is evident in all of these excerpts. In particular, the

discipleship which leads to "foolishness" in the eyes of the world is especially upheld as the Christian ideal. Here are dead souls (to use Gogol's term) who are raised to new life and wholeness by living, in simplicity, a nonviolent way. Dostoyevsky's saints have moved into a realm beyond vengeance and violence, where they are able to serve—as idiots in the eyes of the world. They are thus purged of false vision and ideals, able to live realistically and faithfully at the same time. This is at the heart of all the writings and is seen preeminently in the legend of the grand inquisitor, one of the greatest pieces in all of literature.

The woodcuts by Fritz Eichenberg enhance the book quite well, and the binding is superb. As usual, a bargain price from Plough.

Jay C. Rochelle

ZEN ESSENCE: THE SCIENCE OF FREEDOM. Translated and edited by Thomas Cleary. Boston: Shambhala Dragon Editions, 1989. xviii and 117 pages. Paper. $11.95.

Thomas Cleary, who has translated over twenty works from Chinese and Japanese, is the premier purveyor of Buddhist texts to the Western world in our time. The material in this book is from teachers whose work he has translated more completely elsewhere, especially in the well-known *Blue Cliff Record* and *Zen Lessons*. This work consists of brief writings arranged chronologically and by fifteen different Chinese Zen masters who wrote between the eighth and the fourteenth centuries. The book concludes with a bright thirty-six page afterword by the translator on the meaning of freedom in Zen Buddhist teaching.

There is a subtle but pronounced agenda for Cleary's presentation of the teachings of *Zen Essence*. He wants us to see that Zen is a moveable feast, a science of mind which is detachable from its cultural context. Many people continue to think of Zen Buddhism as a rigorous discipline of meditation usually learned in a monastic setting under masters whose style might be called, at best, authoritarian. A debate has raged for decades as to whether or not Zen can be detached from Buddhism in order to become an international philosophy. While not destroying or distorting the Asian context of the writings in this book, Cleary presents the essence of Zen to us as a science of freedom which can be detached from *all* of its trappings. He has thus chosen to present Zen as a way of thinking and perception which exceeds all the bounds of both religion and philosophy, and which offers us insights that enable us to live practically in any cultural context. The picture of Zen which emerges is thus beyond religiousness, beyond what one master called "the search for curios," which comes as a surprise to those who would like to consider Zen but one more gimmick or technique in the arsenal of the New Age. In fact, Cleary's presentation shows us that Zen is not for collectors, but for thinkers; it is not for the short term evanescent interest of the spiritual seeker, it is for the long haul of life.

Some of the writings are *funny*. The masters cited want you to *enjoy* coming to the freedom of the mind; in fact, they would agree with Teilhard de Chardin who said that laughter was an infallible sign of the presence of God—if only they believed in God! But no matter. The book is well worth the price of admission, when you have such gems as the following:

"Someone asked Yangqi, 'When the founder of Zen came from India to China, he sat facing a wall for nine years—what does this mean?'

"Yangqi said, 'As an Indian, he couldn't speak Chinese.'"

If you get this Zen joke, you'll enjoy the rest of the book.

Jay C. Rochelle

INNER LAND. By Eberhard Arnold. Rifton, NY: Plough Publishing House, 1975. Cloth. In five volumes (576 pages total, plus introductory notes) at $3.50 each, or one volume(588 pages) at $12.00. Also available in a cloth German edition for $8.00.

There is no way to "review" this masterwork by Arnold, father of the Hutterian Brethren. Roland Bainton said of this series, here are "devotional materials which, opened anywhere, prick the conscience and enkindle the spirit." I started with the idea that I would take notes on each of the five volumes from which to write a review, and I followed that pattern until the end. It soon became evident that, to write a review that would cover all the points that did "prick the conscience and enkindle the spirit" would take the length of a substantive article—fifteen to twenty pages.

Arnold wrote these volumes secretly during the early years of the Third Reich. He died in 1935, and the series was not completed at the time of his death. The manuscripts lay buried in metal boxes so that they could not be confiscated by the Nazis, who knew the radical community of faith the Hutterites raised up stood opposed to their totalitarianism. *Inner Land* is a sustained document which explores the meaning of submission to the rulership of God in one's life, but especially here in the disciplines needed to sustain the disciple, namely prayer, the inner life, Bible reading, the invocation of the Holy Spirit. The 1975 edition is the first translation into English.

The five books cover, in series, The Inner Life, The Struggle of the Conscience, The Experience of God and His Peace, Light and Fire and the Holy Spirit, and The Living Word. Volume five contains both an index of biblical references and an index of names, places, topics.

Arnold writes with a fire of faith that is rare these days. This is radical Christian literature at its sharpest, and yet there is a gentleness and a kindness that underlies that conviction. These are the notes of a spiritual father for his children in the faith. The call to conversion of heart is clear, the faith is one of discipleship in following the call of Jesus to renunciation and nonviolence, the role of the conscience is only clear when it is purged by faith, the Holy Spirit is essential to the ongoing daily action in Christ, and the Bible is the record of Christ, the Living Word, who is planted in the church by the Holy Spirit.

These are volumes to be read and re-read; the subtitle calls them "a guide into the heart and soul of the Bible." Although the language may seem quaint and old-fashioned to you, here is meat for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, and a way of life enjoined in the text that requires a hidden discipline at the end of the century.

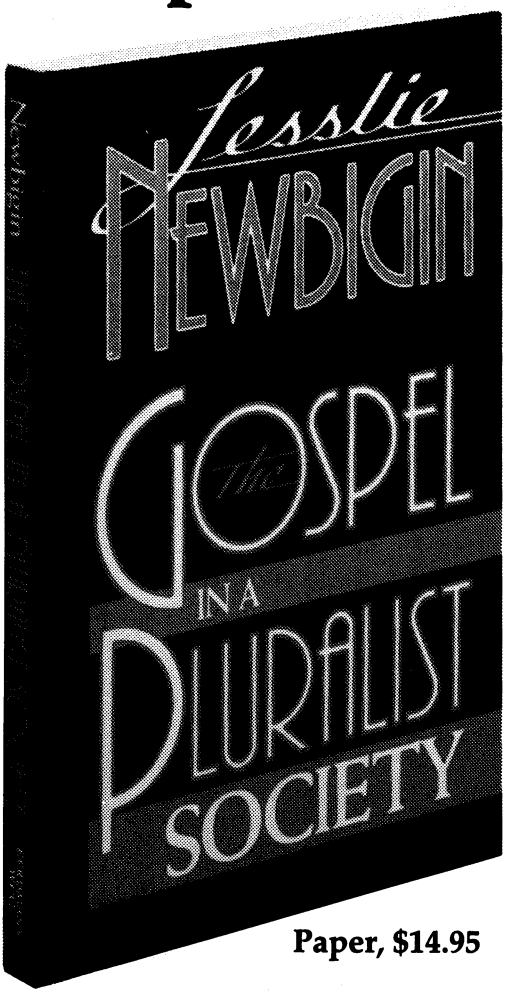
Jay C. Rochelle

SALT AND LIGHT. By Eberhard Arnold. Rifton, NY: Plough Publishing Co., 1986. xxix and 316 pages. Paper. $6.00.

This book contains talks and writings on the Sermon on the Mount by Arnold, the founder of the Hutterian Brethren (formerly known as the *Bruderhof*). There is a simple and direct power in Arnold's writing which came from years of immersion in the text and in prayer. This is not so much writing about the Sermon on the Mount as it is the sharing of one who lives from its deep heart with others who are also seeking to live the life Jesus called us to in that sermon. Arnold contrasts the Mammon spirit with the Spirit of God in his writings, and sharply delineates the distinction between the Christian life and a life that is merely religious or external; the Mammon spirit is an embracing term that includes an attitude of taking, a demand placed on life, which manifests itself in materialism, the search for comfort and pleasure, the urge toward profit and advantage. Much of the book is insights into following the way of the Cross into the life of the spirit, and Arnold writes with a passion that the church community (*Gemeinde*) might exhibit the marks of faith and life that are written in the Sermon, and which begin with that forgiveness through Christ which opens the possibility to see the sermon as life itself, not the promulgation of a new law.

Jay C. Rochelle

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TORCHES REKINDLED. THE BRUDERHOF'S STRUGGLE FOR RENEWAL. Told by Merrill Mow with forewords by Tom Sine and John Perkins. Rifton, NY: Plough Publishing House, 1989 and 1990. xv and 328 pages. Illustrated with photographs. Paper. $10.50.

The Bruderhof is a Hutterian community located in New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and England which originated with a movement in Germany in 1920. Chief architects for the movement were Eberhard and Emmi Arnold, convinced Christians who felt drawn to a life of complete community in goods as was known in the very early church and among the radical Reformation movement known as Hutterites, after their chief architect Jakob Hutter (1500-1536). When Eberhard Arnold died in 1935, the community was thrown into turmoil. To the outsider, it appeared there were those who wanted to jump into what they perceived as a power vacuum; others defended the originator and tried to hew their leadership to his design. Emmi Arnold, Eberhard's widow, later wrote *Torches Together*, which is the story of the early Bruderhof movement. From Germany the community moved to South America and from there to the United States; in 1974 a rapprochement was reached with other Hutterite communities whereby the Bruderhof was recognized as a legitimate expression of the Hutterian ideal. *Torches Rekindled* is a personal account, like a conversation with footnotes. Merrill Mow was an early baptizand of the American expression of the Bruderhof; he and wife Kathy entered in 1955, and the family continues in the common life, Merrill having died in 1987.

Community in all material things is at the heart of Hutterite anabaptist faith. The relinquishment necessary in order for this ideal to work is total. The problem is how to organize a community in which such relinquishment, such *Gelassenheit*, can function without succumbing to power plays and authoritarian spirit. This book is a narrative of the ups and downs, the successes and the failures, of the attempt to form a community on the basis of the gospel in which all things are held in common. The successes *and* the failures are good and important reading for those who seek new patterns of interaction and community in Christ.

Jay C. Rochelle

BROTHERLY COMMUNITY, THE HIGHEST COMMAND OF LOVE. By Andreas Ehrenpreis and Claus Felbinger. Rifton, NY: Plough Publishing Co., 1979. xi and 133 pages. Paper. $5.00.

This book contains two early Anabaptist documents, one from 1650 which gives it its title and the second, which is a confession of faith from 1560. The materials are introduced by the noted Mennonite historian and theologian Robert Friedmann. The theme of the confession is that wholeness and salvation come through submission in discipleship to Christ, which involves repentance and conversion of the heart. Faith leads one to a nonviolent life in Christ, with the seal of that faith offered in Baptism and celebrated communally in the Lord's Supper, which is for those to and in whom the Spirit has brought that *Gelassenheit* (letting-go) which enables us to bring forth fruit in patience. Ehrenpreis' writing, the longer of the two, contains much good meditation on the place of the Lord's Supper in a community of faith; the gospel invitation to community is interpreted, as we find throughout Hutterite writing, to include the sharing of all real property in common. The accompanying notes of order and discipline, required to enable the community to live in *Gelassenheit*, are also found in the writing.

Jay C. Rochelle

BROTHERLY FAITHFULNESS: EPISTLES FROM A TIME OF PERSECUTION. By Jacob Hutter. Rifton, NY: Plough Publishing Co., 1979. xviii and 233 pages. Paper. $6.00.

This book is of value to those interested in the background of radical Protestantism; it contains nine letters of Jakob Hutter, the founder of the movement still known today as the Hutter-

ites, which is a part of the Anabaptist movement of the Reformation period in history. Four appendices deal with Hutter's biography, the historical background to letter 2, the disputed authorship of letter 9 (the choice here is that it doesn't matter whether Hutter wrote the letter or Peter Rideman, another early leader), and the Hutterite teaching on marriage and divorce. The letters are meant for the encouragement of particular communities of faith and are filled with news of persecution and woe; their tone, however, is one of victory and mutual support. Letter 9 contains, in brief, the teaching of the Hutterite movement on shared community, relations with the state (approved unless clearly against the will of God, e.g., war taxes which contradict the nonviolent life), and basic faith in God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Hutter (or Rideman) in this letter offers a figure of 2000 in twenty communities for the Hutterite movement in 1545.

Jay C. Rochelle

JUSTICE, PEACE AND THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION RESOURCE MATERIALS. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1988- . $5.00 per issue.

Throughout history, the problems of the world have been analyzed in many different ways. Issues have been grouped into categories such as "justice" and "peace" and the "integrity of creation." Only more recently, however, have these three ideas been linked together as a kind of single framework for analysis. This interlinking has been helpful because it looks at the interrelatedness of the problems and can give us a multi-faceted approach to some answers. A formal expression of this kind of framework has recently been developed by the Word Council of Churches (WCC): the concept of "Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation" (JPIC). At its General Assembly in Vancouver, Canada, in 1983, the WCC approved a "priority area... to engage member churches in a conciliar process of mutual commitment (covenant) to justice, peace and the integrity of all creation" (*Gathered for Life: Official Report, VI Assembly, World Council of Churches, Vancouver, Canada, 24 July–10 August 1983*, edited by David M. Gill [Geneva: World Council of Churches, and Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983], 252-55). This proposal has come to life in the form of the program on JPIC, with an office in Geneva and a number of staff persons. This program has recently begun to produce resource material for churches and groups around the world. Our purpose here is to review the materials published to date.

In terms of actual content, the Resource Materials are quite varied. They cover such topics as covenant, Central America, "Conciliar Fellowship and Councils," injustice and interdependence, the arms race and nuclear weaponry and militarism, Namibia, "Orthodox Perspectives on Creation," Native American views on land, environment, development, Bible studies, and worship materials. The materials reprint works of the past by people such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Chief Seattle. They also publish works of the present by people such as D. Preman Niles, Yong Bock Kim, and George E. Tinker. The materials include formal statements and reports by organizations (e.g., World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Roman Catholic Church) as well as discussion papers, histories, bibliographies, worship materials, liturgies, music, program ideas, etc. More Resource Materials are planned for the future, and they are to include ideas for local churches and groups, among other things.

In terms of usefulness, the Resource Materials are similarly varied. As is the nature of this kind of publication project, the contents will be very useful for some people and less so for others. In many ways, through, this is precisely what was intended—flexibility and adaptability! The more varied the material, the more likely it is that people and groups from many different parts of the world can actually use it.

As we can see, the "Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation" emphasis and program deals with a wide range of world problems. The resources cover many basic issues and can help us to focus our analysis. Most importantly, the "JPIC concept" is a single framework which looks at many operative elements simultane-

ously (e.g., the inseparable relationship between justice and peace). Thus, hopefully, we can begin to see current concerns as issues of justice, and of peace, and of the integrity of creation—all together.

Raúl Fernández-Calienes
The Iliff School of Theology
University of Denver

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN: A BIOGRAPHY. By Ian Ker. London: Oxford University Press, 1989. xiii and 762 pages. Cloth. $88.00.

August 11 marks the 100th anniversary of the death of John Henry Newman, a writer of poetry, tracts, church history, a professional educator in England and Ireland, and a controversialist. But most of all, he was a churchman. First a clergyman of the Church of England, he led a church reform movement from 1833 until 1845. He then converted to the Roman Catholic Church, in which he became a priest and later a cardinal. As if getting others ready to appreciate more fully Newman and his influence, historian Ian Ker has written this splendid biography of the man, published in time for us to enjoy it during the centennial year.

Ker's aim is to provide us "a reasonably full personal life and also an intellectual and literary biography" of Newman. His study differs from previous efforts (notably W. Ward's and M. Trevor's) in the attention he devotes to Newman's Anglican years (317 pages) and his attention to Newman's thought. While the framework of the book is basically chronological, beginning with Newman's birth, ending with his death, and recounting successively the events in between, Ker addresses major topics as they occur within the course of his subject's life. For example, as the biographer's story develops toward 1845, when Newman wrote his important *Essay on the Development of Doctrine*, Ker has one chapter in which he treats not only events in Newman's life from 1842-45, but also Newman's theory of doctrinal development through the course of the church's history. The same technique is employed by Ker in the chapter entitled "The Idea of a University." Ker will draw from an event in Newman's later life to complete an idea or argument begun earlier; or, in the latter stages of the biography Ker will refer backward to earlier ideas and events. The effect is not at all one of "leaping to and fro'," but rather of comprehensiveness.

Ker's composition flows directly out of primary source material, i.e., the essays, sermons, letters, and diaries of Newman himself. Newman did a good job of keeping records, copies of correspondence, and writing comments in his diaries about his life and work. For example, over 14,000 letters written by him are collected in the 31 volumes of his *Letters and Diaries*. Ker, commendably, has drawn from these extensively as he incorporates within his own sentences Newman's own words. Ker does, indeed, "block quote" selections from his subject's works numerous times. Yet, on the other hand, Ker's own prose—his narrative—on every page (almost every paragraph) includes Newman's own words. The achieved effect of this approach (when one notices what Ker is doing, since he handles it so skillfully) is that the reader reads "Newman on Newman"; the reader gets to hear Newman's own voice, so to speak, as the narrative moves along.

The narrative does, indeed, move along (and in some places is even suspenseful), with the possible exception of those sections in which Ker provides for the reader an analysis of one of Newman's doctrines or the nuance of one of his ideas. These analyses, however, are not drawbacks, but one of the strengths of the book, and such attention to Newman's ideas can be expected in such an extensive biography. Furthermore, these instances of attention to an argument's detail are rarely more than 12 to 14 pages, and need not slow down the reader more interested in a narrative of the events of Newman's life. And for one who is interested in the treatment of one of the cardinal's ideas, this "intellectual biography" with its 17-page index is an excellent reference tool.

Two features not included in this volume would have been helpful: a more thorough table of contents, and an index specifically for people and places, with explanatory notes, such as in the 31 volumes of *Letters and Diaries*.

On the final page of his book Ker informs us that on Newman's "memorial-tablet were inscribed the words he had chosen—'*Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem.*' Out of unreality into Reality." For those who know little about this great 19th century figure, Ker's biography is a captivating, thorough introduction to the reality of John Henry Newman.

Andrew F. Weisner
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

JERUSALEM, THE HOLY CITY: A BIBLIOGRAPHY. By James D. Purvis. Metuchen and London: The Scarecrow Press, 1988. 513 pages. Cloth. $42.50.

This work is No. 20 in the "Bibliography Series" published by the American Theological Library Association. It lists 5,827 titles. Most are in English, but many are in French, German, and Italian, with a few in Spanish and Modern Hebrew. The bibliography grew out of a course the author offers at Boston University called "The Holy City: Jerusalem in Time, Space and Imagination."

After an initial section devoted to "General Studies in Jerusalem," including such matters as geography, water system, walls, and tombs, the book follows a chronological scheme. It offers works on (2) "Jerusalem During the Biblical Period, to 587 BC," (3) "the Second Temple Period," (4) "Roman Jerusalem," (5) "in Judaism," (6) "Christian Jerusalem," (7) "as a Muslim City," and (8) "in Modern Times," nineteenth century to the present.

Unlike some other volumes in the series, the bibliography is not annotated and the author does not open with an interpretive essay. That would be asking too much. It would have meant expanding the book (and increasing the price) unreasonably. This volume simply (!) offers a wonderfully comprehensive list of books and articles.

The book is user-friendly. The bibliography is made accessible by its arrangement in eight parts (as noted above) and subdivision into 40 sub-parts (carefully indicated in the table of contents); in addition, the author has provided 68 pages of author and subject indexes.

This is an indispensable work of reference for anyone with a serious interest in the history of Jerusalem.

Robert H. Smith
Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

JEREMIAH 2: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Chapters 26-52. By William Holladay. *Hermeneia.* Edited by Paul D. Hanson. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1989. 543 pages. Cloth. $44.95.

In 95 pages of introduction Holladay touches on most of the significant issues connected with the text and background of Jeremiah. Distinguishing the book as "Jer" and the prophet as "Jrm," Holladay discusses such topics as: disparity in size between the Massoretic and Septuagint texts; literary development of Jer; the scrolls in Jer; relations between Jer and other OT books including Deuteronomy, Psalms, and the earlier prophets; life and setting of Jrm; literary and theological impact of Jrm on his generation and those later. Holladay does not hesitate to choose sides or offer his own contributions toward clarifying existing problems.

As in *Jeremiah 1* so also in this volume, the format of the commentary section allows for a great deal of flexibility in usage and audience. If you were using drama or art to reconstruct the life of Jeremiah in a chancel drama or Bible class this would be one of the most useful commentaries to consult for background information. Holladay's clear prose makes the text and character come alive in a way I do not often see in a commentary. On the other hand, the documentation makes this volume a veritable doorway to current research on Jeremiah.

Holladay is best in reconstructing the history of the times in which Jeremiah lived. Information from the latest in archaeological findings lend fresh insight into terms, expressions, and scenes in the text. He weaves these into the fabric of his exposition, lending authority to his picture of the prophet. In this regard Holladay's

two volumes on Jeremiah can serve an important purpose for anyone seeking to present or reconstruct the theology of Jeremiah. If a theologian or other interpreter has glided too easily over a textual or translation difficulty to make a point, a quick comparison with Holladay's Jeremiah will warn of the problem.

If you already own volume 1 of Jeremiah you know that you will need volume two for the index. There are 60 pages of biblical and non-biblical literary references in three-column pages, followed by 14 four-column pages of author index and a brief subject index in the same format.

Stephen A. Knapp
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

THE JOHANNINE QUESTION. By Martin Hengel. Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1989. xvi and 240 pages. Cloth. $24.95.

The Johannine corpus is fascinatingly difficult to locate in historical context. Martin Hengel discusses the Johannine epistles and the Gospel in this fascinating volume. (He omits the Apocalypse as "an ever perplexing problem.") His thesis is that a single great theologian wrote the epistle and Gospel in Asia Minor. He thus discounts the idea of a school to account for this literature.

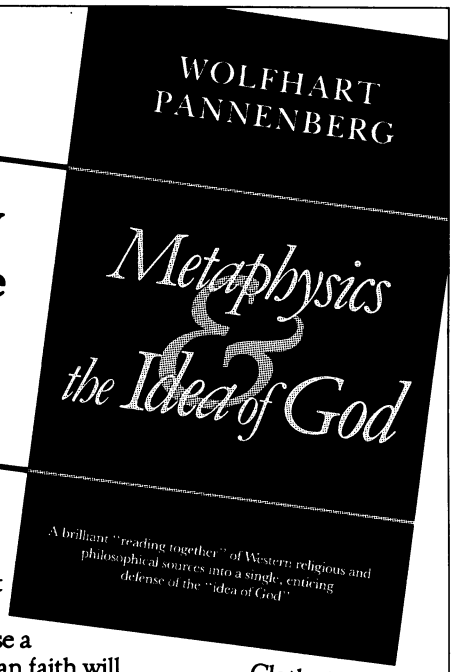
Hengel begins with the second century writers on John (Irenaeus, gnostic exegetes, Justin martyr, Ignatius, Polykarp, and Papias) to identify the "Elder John" as this key theologian. He writes 2 and 3 John as a recognized authority, though 3 John makes clear that he is more used to oral communication than written style. 3 John defends itinerant missionaries, while 2 John defends the person of Christ. 1 John makes the contours of the dispute over Christology clear, and points us to the Gospel as the basis for his defense. John 21, usually disregarded as a later addition, points us to a division in the school founded by John the elder. The school disintegrates; there is no towering figure who can succeed the one who was the last of the disciples of Jesus still living. The Gospel of John is a unity, written over a long period of time, by a towering, creative, though unschooled teacher. It is formally *sui generis*. Left unfinished at his death, his disciples edit and publish it.

In his last chapter Hengel locates the "elder John" within a Palestinian tradition, not a Hellenistic Gnostic environment. The earliest community left Jerusalem shortly after the death of James in 61 C.E. That is the origin of the controversy with the Jews reflected in John. John and his community had long ago parted company with Judaism; there is no longer any discussion of orthopraxy as there is in Paul. The Johannine tradition therefore postdates 70 C.E. and is directed primarily at Gentile Christians. It is possible that the editors of the Gospel combined the elder John with John the son of Zebedee. The elder John, who died about 100 C.E., was probably born about 15 C.E. in a family of the priestly aristocracy. He witnessed Jesus' fate at close quarters, was a member of the earliest community, left Jerusalem after 62 C.E., and came to Ephesus where he founded his school which flourished for about 35 years. Early tradition linked him with the son of Zebedee. His accomplishment was great; no wonder that within two centuries he was called, quite simply, "the theologian."

Hengel provides a sharply divergent view of the history of the Johannine school from that of Raymond Brown. It is a fascinating, against-the-stream interpretation of the Johannine corpus, certain to stir up discussion. Hengel documents his views in eighty pages of detailed notes, filled with citations of ancient texts and modern scholarship. Hengel's erudition assures it a long life. It will be fascinating to observe the debate that is certain to come. Read Hengel and you too will have food for thought and the need to reread John, even those odd little one-chapter letters. That's all to the good.

Edgar Krentz
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

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THE MELODY OF THEOLOGY: A PHILOSOPHICAL DICTIONARY. By Jaroslav Pelikan. Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 1988. 274 pages. Cloth. $20.00.

Note the title carefully: "A Philosophical Dictionary." This collection of "mini-essays," alphabetically arranged, is a "dictionary" wherein the author "waxes philosophical" about a number of topics and issues. As Pelikan himself observes (*Dictionary*, 55-57): "[Dictionaries] appear to be as objective as the multiplication tables, antiseptically preserving a strictly alphabetical order, but in fact they reflect a highly individual and personal, perhaps even arbitrary, method both of selecting and of defining."

He could just as accurately have entitled this, "Things I've Thought About Over The Years And Felt Were Worth Mentioning." Not a book one would write at the beginning of one's career, this is the product of a lifetime of reflecting upon, and wrestling with, various aspects and implications of church and dogma and history. Indeed, Pelikan calls it an "autobiographical" work. As such, it doesn't really belong on your reference shelf as a "first source" of data on a topic. It's more a resource for browsing, reflecting, and digesting.

An eminently and thoroughly enjoyable work, Pelikan's insights and reflections should prove valuable to practically every category of reader: inquiring layperson, parish pastor interested in exercising some grey-cells that have fallen into sad disuse, or "professional theologian" who wants some stimulating conversation with one of the major Lutheran thinkers of the current age.

Many, many authors are well-versed in the "words" of theology. Far more rare is the writer who, like Pelikan, also has a firm grasp—and love for—the "melody" of theology, as well.

Keith Killinger
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

AMONG THE GODS: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF ANCIENT GREEK RELIGION. By John Ferguson. London and New York: Routledge, 1989. xviii and 249 pages. Cloth. $55.00.

John Ferguson examines a narrow subject, ancient Greek religion, broadly in this volume. Chronologically he covers the period from Minoan religion to the Early Roman Empire, i.e., about two millennia. He presents religion as an all-embracing aspect of Greek life—as it was. He covers many facets in successive chapters: Ancient Crete (Minoan religion), gods and goddesses, worship centers (sanctuaries, temples, and altars), priesthood, games and festivals, oracles, healing sanctuaries, mysteries, death and burial, votive offerings, private cults, magic, politics and religion, island cults, and the religious life of Athens and Attica.

Scholars have treated all of this before, but Ferguson's book is not simply a retread of old topics. He discusses Greek religion via archaeological discoveries; each page is rich in references to sites, art, artifacts, and inscriptions (regularly cited in translation). He describes temples and installations in many places, some out of the way and rarely visited, related to different aspects of religion. Artifacts that illuminate religion, e.g., the dedications and inscriptions at healing cult centers (Epidaurus, Pergamum, and Corinth) or the implements of magic, justify his frequent references to them. Votive offerings in sanctuaries show what was important to ancient people.

The list of topics shows that religion was pervasive throughout life. I wish Ferguson had devoted a chapter to describing religious aspects of life from birth to grave for the average person (there is little discussion of religion in birth and marriage or religion and law). Students interested in the Bible will find much that illuminates the New Testament: the relation of power to deity, the use of the name in magic, ruler cult, healing cults, etc. Ferguson's text is well planned, weighted with massive amounts of data, balanced in presentation, carefully written.

Ferguson's book limps in two respects. It

desperately needs an atlas of site plans and illustrations of key archaeological finds. No verbal description, however good, of a bronze Sabazius hand (p. 156) makes it as clear as an illustration of the one in the British Museum or the St. Louis City Art Museum. Ferguson's *Religions of the Roman Empire* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1970) is enriched by many plates to which he makes frequent reference.

The book is also marred by a number of errors arising from misinterpreting the manuscript. The Temple of Zeus at Olympia did not have "eighty-four columns (six rows of thirteen)"; its hexastyle-peripteral colonnade totalled thirty-four columns in all (p. 55). Page 91 imprecisely describes a theater built in the courtyard of the healing sanctuary at Epidaurus. This can only refer to the Roman odeion or small theater-like brick structure in the building identified as a palaistra by P. Kavvadias (the excavator), as a banquet hall by R. A. Tomlinson (*Epidauros* [Austin: Texas, 1983] 78-84). The reference to "instructions in magic, recipes, and formulas" (p. 157) should probably read "instruction in magical recipes and formulas." Demetrius Poliorcetes' name is misspelled on p. 169, and calling him Demetrius the Besieger two paragraphs later may confuse the careless reader.

In spite of these small inaccuracies this is an exciting book. Read it in conjunction with Walter Burkert's *Greek Religion* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1985) and you will have a rich and accurate understanding of ancient Greek religion.

Edgar Krentz

Briefly Noted

NOAH: THE PERSON AND THE STORY IN HISTORY AND TRADITION. By Lloyd R. Bailey (University of South Carolina Press, $26.95 [cloth], $13.95 [paper]). B. devotes half the book to an investigation of historical questions: What do archaeology and geology show? Where did the biblical ark land? What about ancient and modern sightings? What about the movie "In Search of Noah's Ark?" His clear and orderly investigation refutes all the modern claims by "arkeologists," but without polemic or mockery. The rest of the book demonstrates the composite character of the biblical narrative and outlines in a fresh way the meaning of J and P. RWK

THE DWELLING OF GOD: THE TABERNACLE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, INTER-TESTAMENTAL JEWISH LITERATURE, AND THE NEW TESTAMENT. By Craig R. Koester (*Catholic Biblical Quarterly* Monograph Series, $9.00). In this revised dissertation from Union Theological Seminary, K. focuses primarily on the NT evidence. He finds that tabernacle imagery helped to establish continuity between Christianity and Israel's cultic heritage. The tabernacle was theologically attractive to early Christians because it recalled God's faithfulness to his covenant promises. RWK

ASHERAH AND THE CULT OF YAHWEH IN ISRAEL. By Saul M. Olyan (Scholars Press, $19.95). O. concludes that Asherah was once a consort of Yahweh and a legitimate symbol in Yahweh's cult. The frequent biblical association of Asherah with Baal is unattested in non-biblical accounts of Canaanite religion and is the

result of deuteronomistic polemic rather than of historical development. An inscription discovered in 1970 seems to say, "I bless you by Yahweh of Samaria and his asherah." RWK

THE HUMANITIES COMPUTING YEARBOOK 1988. By Ian Lancashire and Willard McCarty (Oxford, $69.00). This is the first in a series of annual guides to the use of computers in the all the humanities. In addition to the data on programming languages and other basic computer information, theologians will be interested in the chapters on biblical studies, Semitic languages (including Akkadian, Sumerian, Arabic, and Hebrew), and on new types of text analysis. RWK

HAGGAI: A COMMENTARY. By Hans Walter Wolff (Augsburg Fortress, $19.95). W's earlier commentaries on Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, and Jonah have been translated into English, and his treatment of Micah will appear shortly. All are careful and exhaustive treatments that are part of the famed Biblischer Kommentar in Germany. As W. sees it, Haggai exhorts his people to perceive anew the glory of God's house, rising above the rubble of the curse of judgment, and to see revolutionary events in the world of the nations in relation to the old and new people of God, and to its Messiah. RWK

A READER'S HEBREW-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Terry A. Armstrong, Douglas L. Busby, and Cyril F. Carr. (Zondervan). This book lists words that occur fifty or fewer times in the Old Testament verse by verse, permitting one to read the Hebrew Bible without having to look up dozens of words in each chapter. This handy tool was published earlier in four smaller volumes. RWK

THE CONCISE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ISLAM. By Cyril Glass (Harper & Row, $59.95). This reference work by an American Muslim covers almost 1,200 topics (from Aaron, brother of Moses, to Zurkhaneh, the name of Persian clubs that practice wrestling and the martial arts) relevant to the religion of some 800 million people in the world today. Islam is important to our Western well-being today, but there is no part of the world more hopelessly, systematically, and stubbornly misunderstood by us (Meg Greenfield). Islam is hard for Westerners to understand because of our separation of church and state and because of centuries of hostility and rivalry between Christianity and Islam. A third factor causing misunderstanding is the interplay in Islam between the outward form, or canonical law, by which the faithful live and the profound truths, which the forms of Islam enfold and protect. This encyclopedia will reward the reader over days of browsing, though at times one will be frustrated by a lack of critical distance in the text. RWK

HARPER'S BIBLE PRONUNCIATION GUIDE. Edited by William O. Walker, Jr. and others (Harper & Row, $15.95). This book continues a cooperative effort between Harper & Row and the Society of Biblical Literature to provide first-rate tools for understanding the Bible. A commentary and a Bible dictionary have previously been published, and an annotated version of the new RSV is planned. In this volume one can find a simple guide for the pronunciation of the more than 7,000 names that appear in the Bible, including the Apocrypha. Current English usage is preferred over scholarly convention (thus *bay'uhl* rather than *bah'ahl* for Baal). Have it available for lay readers—and for yourself. RWK

SECRETS OF THE TIMES: MYTH AND HISTORY IN BIBLICAL CHRONOLOGY. By Jeremy Hughes. (Sheffield Academic Press, $60; $45 for subscribers). By calling the biblical chronology mythical, H. means that the Bible uses historical fiction to express ideological beliefs, including the belief that there is a divine plan behind human history. He identifies a 480-year period from the Exodus to the founding of the first temple and an identical 480-year period from the foundation of the first to the foundation of the second temple. Hence the present chronology even in Kings is schematic, but one can reconstruct a non-schematic, or historical, chronology for Israel and Judah behind the present

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text (his suggested reconstruction is presented in a 74-page chapter). The chronology of the Masoretic Text places the Exodus two-thirds of the way through a 4,000-year world history and locates the rededication of the temple in 164 B.C.E. exactly 4,000 years from the creation of the world. H. surveys biblical chronologies from the Pentateuchal source P to Archbishop Ussher and notes that Luther associated the year 4,000 with the beginning of the Christian era (the first 2,000 years were void and the next 2,000 were the period of the law; then came the period of the Messiah). This is a revised version of an Oxford dissertation. RWK

GIBEAH: THE SEARCH FOR A BIBLICAL CITY. By Patrick M. Arnold, S. J. (Sheffield Academic Press, $43.50). A. concludes that the cities of Gibeah and Geba are the same, and he locates this site nine kilometers northeast of Jerusalem (not at Tell el-Ful, where the American archaeologist W. F. Albright thought he had discovered a fortress of Saul). Much of this Emory dissertation follows the literary accounts of this city in Judges 19 (where a Levite's concubine was brutally killed), in the stories of Saul and David, and in reports in Isaiah and Hosea dealing with the Syro-Ephraimitic war. During the last part of its history, Gibeah/Geba served as a border fortress and sanctuary. RWK

PSALMS 60-150. By Hans-Joachim Kraus (Augsburg, $39.95). The Kraus commentary, now in its fifth German edition, was first published in German in the 50s. It represents a very solid and comprehensive treatment of the Psalter and now the only modern, scholarly commentary available in English. While its bibliography has been updated to the late 70s, it still reflects the (excellent) scholarship of a generation ago. Psalms 1-59 appeared in 1988, while the author's Theology of the Psalms was published by Augsburg in 1986. RWK

THE STUDY COMPANION TO OLD TESTAMENT LITERATURE. By Antony F. Campbell (Michael Glazier, $19.95). This book gives attention to the present text and to the stages which can be recovered behind it. C. provides answers to such questions as: What shape do the texts have, and why? Why were they written and what situations did they respond to? What is the significance of all this for our own faith and theology today? Surprisingly, the book covers in detail only the Pentateuch, the Deuteronomistic History (Deuteronomy–2 Kings), the pre-exilic prophets, and Jonah and Job. Proverbs and Psalms were omitted because it is hard to deal with them as coherent literary works; the post-exilic literature is passed up because the author admits he does not yet know it well enough. These omissions should not detract from the fact that this is a wonderful introduction to the works treated. It will serve well in seminary classrooms and for private study by pastors. RWK

Richard John Neuhaus sent in the following response to the review of his book, *The Catholic Moment*, in the June 1990 issue:

"I would appreciate your remedying a major error in Pr. Robbins' otherwise fair and accurate summary of the argument of *The Catholic Moment* [*Currents* 17 (1990) 236-237].

"The problem is with the sentence beginning, 'Neuhaus sees Vatican II as a new ecclesiocentrism....' Contra Robbins, I most certainly do not blame the Second Vatican Council for the aberrations that he mentions. No doubt the Council might have used better language to avoid such aberrations, but the book clearly holds responsible for such aberrations the theologians and others who largely ignored the texts of the Council and advanced alien agendas in the name of "the spirit of Vatican II." *The Catholic Moment* argues that, in contending against the aberrations mentioned, figures such as Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger and John Paul II are acting in accord with the Council's intention."

Preaching Helps

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost—Christ the King, Series A

Righteously

He is the inventor of a small, folding bicycle. You can ride it to the train or bus stop, fold it up, and carry it on board with little more effort than it would take to tote a briefcase. Its maker described it in one interview as "a righteously small bike."

That was three or four years ago when folks were for some obscure reason tossing around the word "righteous" and "righteously" as synonyms for "great!" and "very." Derived from "right on"?

It was an odd use of the word, but perhaps the word is odd to start with. What is "righteousness" anyhow? It is a key concern of Matthew's Gospel. Jesus has come "to fulfill all righteousness" (3:15) and looks for disciples whose "righteousness will exceed" that of the traditional religious leaders (5:20). Righteousness is a kind of synonym of "kingdom of heaven" (6:33). When God's sovereignty breaks forth, there and then "righteousness" is established.

It seems to me that righteousness means a condition of "all rightness." And that condition is both God's gift in Jesus Christ and the high vocation of disciples according to Matthew's Gospel. God gives the healing gift of all-rightness in Jesus, and God calls us to lives of all-rightness as a new community.

"All-rightness" is one of the chief themes running through the Gospel readings as we make our way towards Christ the King. And I rejoice that we are aided on our way by "Pastoral Reflections" produced by Pastor Jane Buckley-Farlee and spouse Pastor Robert Buckley-Farlee. Jane is assistant pastor at Christ Memorial Lutheran Church, Plymouth, Minnesota. Bob is associate pastor and director of music at Christ Church Lutheran in Minneapolis.

Again Pastor Don Prange pens "Prophetic Voice" from his vantage point of ministry in the coal country of Appalachia. Don and Jane and Bob share with us their thoughts on these texts of the final Sundays of the Year of Matthew. They help us celebrate as we move together toward the climax of the Year, as we look forward to the New Heaven and the New Earth in which all-rightness will no longer be beleaguered but will be perfectly at home (2 Peter 3:13).

A righteously cordial greeting to all of you,

Robert H. Smith
Editor of Preaching Helps



Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
October 14, 1990

Psalm 25:1-9
Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32
Philippians 2:1-5 (6-11)
Matthew 21:28-32

FIRST READING

Picture yourself saying to an audience of church people, "One day Jesus said, 'A father had two sons.'" What do you think would happen if you then asked your hearers to complete the story? I imagine that they would finish the story by talking about the prodigal son and his older brother, the well-known parable of Luke 15.

Today's Gospel is like and yet strangely unlike Luke 15. In both, the story revolves around the relationship between a father and his two sons. But in Luke the focus is on the father and his astonishing generosity, the depth of his love for both sons, different as they are, his insistence that both the obedient and the disobedient are his dearly beloved, embraced by one and the same unalterable affection.

In Matthew's parable Jesus focuses on the response of the sons. The father gives them identical commands: "Go and work in the vineyard today." At first one says "No" and the other speaks a quick "Yes." But then each one changes his tune. The one who initially offered a negative response later "repented." (It is useful to note that Judas in 27:3 is described with exactly the same word.) So the first son, in spite of his word, went and worked in the vineyard. The second, the one characterized by the correct word, did not follow through on his word but instead failed to act.

Jesus asks his hearers a question which is almost straight out of the Lord's Prayer (Mt 6:10, not in Lk 11:2-4), "Which of the sons actually did the father's will?"

Not just his original hearers but we modern readers are compelled to contemplate the contrast between words and deeds. It is not enough to spout the right answer, the correct word. Jesus, especially in Matthew's Gospel, is forever teaching the importance of deeds, concrete actions of righteousness (*dikaiosyne*, 3:15; 5:6,20; 6:1,33). He continually warns against the tendency to hear his words and to give them mere lip service (7:24-27). It is "hypocrisy" to give the impression of being pious children of God, to wear the cloak of religiosity, to utter phrases dripping with sweetness and light, while the heart is far from God (15:6-7).

This is a hard parable, spoken in the temple (house of God) to "chief priests and elders" (substitute: "pastors and leaders of God's people"). John the Baptist came "in the way of righteousness," announcing the advent of the Christ who comes to make all things right with God and comes calling people to articulate their relationship with God in deeds. RHS

PASTORAL REFLECTIONS

A prologue about today's Gospel: it is worth noting—even *nota bene*-ing—that the parable is about two sons, two children. They are presented as being of differing obedience, but their status as children, and thus heirs, is never in doubt. This is a lesson about sanctification, not justification. We need to remember and to remind our hearers again and again that even the obedient child enters the kingdom only through the grace of God.

In this parable, Jesus confronts the hearers with a stark bad/good contrast. No shades of gray intervene. Either a child agrees to work, but doesn't, or refuses to work, but does. The latter, Jesus says, will be first into the kingdom of God. Well, fine, that's a nifty rhetorical device, but how many in our congregations fit neatly into one or the other of those molds? If they are filling a pew, that implies their assent to the father's call. So are all churchgoers to be identified with Jesus' opponents? Do we really want to say that our good, pious members will follow the Sunday slugabeds into heaven? Was Jesus attacking the chief priests and elders *because* of their piety?

No. But neither is piety alone a sufficient response to God's call. To say "I believe" is a necessary first step, but it is faithful action that validates that claim. We who make much of the Reformation's *solafide* need this reminder. Yes, it is faith that saves, and not our good works; but such faith always comes from the Holy Spirit bundled with actions—the two are inseparable.

So then, without unnecessarily downplaying the goodness of piety, the preacher is called to lead the hearers toward an action-filled response to God's call—one that begins with assent (since the dissenters are, presumably, filling the golf courses) and continues on to labor in the vineyard.

But if we think that such a response will be easy, Jesus invites us to look around at our co-workers. The old joke would seem to apply, in which St. Peter urges the new arrivals in heaven to tiptoe past the closed door because the Lutherans (or substitute your own denomination) inside think they're the only ones in heaven. We must be in the wrong place if *those* people are here! We judge by words, by appearances, and many of our fellow laborers don't seem to measure up. Whores! Chiselers! Or, in today's categories, Leftists! Reactionaries! Feminists! Sexists! and so forth.

But if we would look in the law's mirror, we would see that we appear equally unsavory. God didn't call us to work because we were so lovable, of such sterling reputation, or so pious. No, God calls us, through prophets such as Ezekiel, to recognize the depth of our iniquity, how thoroughly we have turned away from righteousness. Piety gets in the way of our relationship with God if it pretends to earn a special place near God. But if we do "repent and turn," then, oh, what good news! Not only are our sins forgotten, but we have a Christian-life tutor nonpareil: "Gracious and upright is the LORD; therefore he teaches sinners in his way. He guides the humble in doing right and teaches his way to the lowly" (Ps. 25:7-8). RBF

PROPHETIC VOICE

In contexts where power, possessions, and prestige seem to reign in the world, "theologies of liberation" for the "last" must be complemented by "theologies of conversion" for the "first." And since that is where authentic communities of justice begin, it is also the only basis for authentic life (cf. Ezek 18:32) and growth.

Communities of justice are not sustained on the 'certainties' (Mt 22:30) of systematic or institutional obedience, but on the basis of continually being converted (via on-going *metanoia*) to the "will" of God (Mt 22:31). The same attitude produces a "common purpose" and "common mind" (Ph 2:2) and a non-competitive spirit (Ph 2:3) ready to be last so that others might be first (Ph 2:4). It is a non-hierarchical spirit which stands on no prerogatives (Ph 2:6). The on-going process of a theology of conversion maintains the humility in which it begins—without any sights on greatness (cf. Mt 18:1, 20:20,21). It aims for a way of life in which its action of "love" and "truth" (Ps 25:10), not its confessions, proclaim "Jesus Christ as Lord" (Ph 2:11). DP

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
October 21, 1990

Psalm 80:7-14
Isaiah 5:1-7
Philippians 3:12-21
Matthew 21:33-43

FIRST READING

Here is another parable which speaks of obligations as plain as those of sons to a father. Once again Jesus condemns disobedience and commends self-examination.

Ever since Isaiah 5, the vine or vineyard was a symbol of the people of God (cf. John 15). God looks for "fruit," for an appropriate set of responses on the part of the people of God (Mt 3:8; 7:16-20; 12:33; 13:8; 21:19,34,41,43).

Like the preceding parable, this one harks back to Jesus' provocative actions of cleansing the temple and cursing the fruitless fig tree (21:1-22). It is a kind of commentary on those acts.

Jesus tells a shocking little story of breach of contract. Tenant farmers seize, beat, and kill a succession of servants sent by the owner as his agents for collecting his share of the crops. Their rebellion climaxes in the murder of the owner's son.

The central question is posed by Jesus: "When the owner of the vineyard comes (no doubt with powerful reinforcements), what will he do to those tenants?" Jesus' hearers, who started this whole conversation, know the answer: "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and he will then hand the vineyard over to other tenants who will presumably pay him his share of the fruits in their season."

It would be a terrible mistake to imagine that Jesus is condemning the Jews as old tenants and commending the church as the new tenants. That is far too easy and self-serving. Jesus is speaking through Matthew's gospel to Christian readers. We are being summoned to uncomfortable self-examination. How are we doing as God's vineyard, as God's planting? That the parable is a warning to the new community is even clearer in what follows (22:1-14). RHS

PASTORAL REFLECTIONS

If the Gospel sounds particularly familiar, it may be because last year, in Year C, Luke's version of this parable was the Gospel for the Fifth Sunday in Lent. That being the case, we may tend to leave it alone this time around, focusing instead on the Second Lesson. But we must be careful: in the flow of the Communion service, the sermon follows the Gospel, which on this Sunday concludes with some harsh words of judgment. Can we leave that ringing in people's ears with no effort at interpretation?

And yet, what does one do with the Gospel? It is so clearly an indictment of the Jewish religious leaders that any attempt to steer it in a different direction will be difficult. Perhaps instead of trying to reshape Jesus' parable, we should build on it with a parable of our own, just as Jesus built on Isaiah's original.

To wit: "And it came to pass that a new people received the lease to the vineyard...." (Of course, such an application can and must be made without suggesting that Americans are the new Chosen People of God.) This method of dealing with the text allows us to apply the imagery of the parable not to the Jewish people, but to today's hearers. How is our vineyard-management record—or, following Isaiah's original version, what sort of grapes are we offering in return for God's care?

Each version of the parable, in Isaiah and in Matthew, has its own message for us. (Note, by the way, that the Psalm provides yet another perspective on the same image.) Isaiah was speaking to people who had been given choice vines—the covenant with Yahweh—but who persisted in yielding wild grapes, worshiping instead the local Canaanite gods. We, too, have at our Baptism had the seed of God planted in us. God has cared for us, feeding us in the Eucharist. And yet, like Isaiah's audience, we have preferred the local gods, molding ourselves to suit society's tastes. And so...?

Or, in Jesus' version, the vineyard's occupants were at fault, refusing to return to the owner a fair share of the fruit resulting from the original labor. This version will be a natural if we are trying to work in a stewardship sermon. We have been recipients of God's abundant grace; we occupy the vineyard rent-free. But we want to have our cake and eat it too. By refusing to acknowledge God with our gifts, we deny any obligation on our part. We turn our backs on our benefactor. And so...?

This is the time to turn to the Second Lesson, which begins with Paul's admission that he is still en route to his goal of becoming like Christ. That's an important admission for us as well. We want to be faithful, we want to be perfect, but we just don't have what it takes. We are powerfully pulled toward those enemies of the cross whose god is the belly, who glory in shame. We are painfully aware of our past sins. And yet, we wrench ourselves back into the race, pressing

onward to make the prize our own "because Christ Jesus has made [us] his own." There's the gospel! That's the power to free us from being the latest ne'er-do-wells turned out of the vineyard on our ear. We are different—not tenant farmers, but children of the owner, claimed as sisters and brothers by the owner's Son. We share in Christ's own inheritance—that is assured. And that will affect how we approach our labor in the vineyard and our gifts of its fruits. We work for God's kingdom, yes, but that is also *our* dominion. The vineyard is God's; we are God's. In giving, we receive, and in receiving, God gives. RBF

PROPHETIC VOICE

The name "Christian" does not automatically link people to the Christ. The owner of the global vineyard looks for the fruits of "justice" and "integrity" (Is 5:7), and when the "tenants" (Mt 21:33) and custodians of the faith fail to produce, "other tenants" (21:41) come into play—those "who will produce its fruit" (21:43). Paul uses stronger words. He speaks of Christians "who are behaving as the enemies of the cross of Christ," who "make foods into their god and are proudest of something they ought to think shameful" (Ph 3:18,19).

Over-simplifications can be dangerous, but maybe not as dangerous as avoiding some issues by saying they're too complicated. In risking the first danger, we must admit the historical links between "Christendom," global colonial expansion, the rise of capitalism, and now its domination in the world economy. And given capitalism's contributions to a "first world" and a "third world" (or maybe "last world"?), and to a global ecological crisis, there may be nothing more urgent for Christians than a thoughtful re-reading of Matthew 21:33-44. Is it possibly time for some up-rooting and some re-planting (cf. Ps 80:8)? DP

Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost
October 28, 1990

Psalm 23
Isaiah 25:6-9
Philippians 4:4-13
Matthew 22:1-10 (11-14)

FIRST READING

Today's Gospel is the third in a series of parables. They have much in common, describing people set together into universally recognized relationships and the breaking of plain obligations by one of the parties. The first in the series poignantly and pointedly describes a father's relationship with his two sons (21:28-32). The second features the audience's own automatic pronouncement of the verdict on murderous tenant farmers (21:41), a verdict solemnly confirmed by Jesus (21:46). Now the third parable vividly portrays the carrying out of a terrible verdict on a whole city of people who act shamefully (22:7).

This third parable, like the two immediately preceding, could be read as a kind of allegory of the acts of ancient Israel: saying "yes" but doing "no," enjoying privileged status but yielding no fruit, called to the wedding but killing the servants (=the prophets) and rejecting the invitation to the wedding of the son (=Jesus). And finally suffering the consequences: status taken away and given to others (=Gentiles) while their city (=Jerusalem) is destroyed by troops (=the Romans in C.E. 70).

Too easy and too dangerous! Such readings may be sanctioned by long churchly tradition, but are they correct? Churches should not stop short at verse 10. It is not healthy to exercise the option of omitting verses 11-14. These final verses will certainly affect our use of this parable. But they may be even more significant. They have the power to alter our apprehension of the whole of Matthew's Gospel. If we take these final verses

seriously, as we ought to, then we may be shocked into understanding that Matthew's Gospel from beginning to end is not a document attacking the synagogue but is a book of Christian self-examination. Then we will be able to go back to the beginning and read the entire Gospel from a fresh and healthier perspective. RHS

PASTORAL REFLECTIONS

"The gospel is the last judgment leaked out ahead of time" (Robert W. Jenson, *Lutheran Partners* I.2).

This is one of those Sundays when we might well prefer the Old Testament reading to the Gospel. The lesson from Isaiah is pure promise—no holding back, nothing spare and lean here. We see God throwing a party to end all parties, serving fat things (fat things full of marrow) and wine on the lees (wine on the lees well refined—savor these Semitic constructions). This celebration does not, as do most of our parties, merely help us try to ignore the darker realities of life; rather, it destroys them: "He will swallow up death for ever." No one is turned away, not even those who have rejected God. No, "the reproach of his people [God] will take away from all the earth."

But in these already-but-not-yet times, we are recalled from reverie to the realization that while this eternal party awaits us outside time, we are not yet able to say honestly, "This is our God; we have waited for him." No, our impatient natures won't allow us to just wait. We are driven to be *doing* something, and usually that something has precious little to do with God. Sadly, as attractive as the Isaiah story may be, the reading from Matthew better reflects our present reality.

Here, too, God throws a party featuring fat calves, but the invitees have better things to do. The lesson nails the compulsive side of the work ethic: no time to party—there's work to be done. And if the king's messengers keep bothering us with those calls to celebrate, we'll kill the messengers. (An ironic twist here, killing those who bring not bad tidings, but good.) A historical interpretation, of course, would identify the messengers as the prophets, the "too busy" people as the Jewish leaders, and the subsequent guests as the common people of Jesus' ministry. But as Robert Farrar Capon reminds us, those who reject the invitation are really "all of us who live in the twin certainties that our good works will earn us the right to attend the Supper of the Lamb, and that God's good nature will absolve us from having to sit through it if we happen to have other plans." But this time, such absolution is not forthcoming; rather, God sends shock troops out to destroy those who would not come. Capon again: "Why the ferocity, then? Simply this: since neither they nor we could possibly be wronger about either of those two certainties, Jesus insists on displaying both of them as dead wrong. Salvation is not by works, and the heavenly banquet is not an option. We are saved only by our acceptance of a party already in progress, and God has paid for that party at the price of his own death. And since he counts only those two things—only faith and grace—nothing else counts. Outside of the party, there is no life at all" (*The Parables of Judgment* [Eerdmans, 1989], 122).

This Gospel reading, then, is a cautionary tale, for us as for Jesus' original audience. Yet in good *sola gratia* tradition, there is nothing we must *do* to avert being cast into the outer darkness. The invitation is ours, signed and stamped by Christ himself at our Baptism. All we need do is show up, dressed in the wedding clothes that Christ has also provided. So the unalloyed good news wins out after all. Have, therefore, no anxiety about anything. The peace of God will keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. RBF

PROPHETIC VOICE

"Second coming" theology has a tendency to spiritualize "kingdom of heaven" (Mt 22:2), so when its closeness (cf. Mt 3:2, 4:17) is proclaimed, or when the transcending owner is said to be "very near" (Ph 4:5), we tend to ignore the fundamental material content of the Good News on which the 'kingdom' is established. Many of us grew up with a piety which saw parables as "earthly stories with a heavenly meaning." But

just the opposite is true: they are heavenly (kingdom of heaven) stories with earthly meaning! "Heaven" is not the solution to the injustices experienced in the world, but the new politics of the "kingdom of heaven" is. So the visionary table of justice (Ps 23) held to by a peasantry marginalized and oppressed by the false shepherds, and the visionary messianic banquet (Is 25:6-9) which overcomes "Death" and "shame everywhere on earth" are the background for the content of the kingdom which Jesus and Paul were not just talking about as some future "pie in the sky." They were putting it into practice. The "poor" and "gentle" of the Beatitudes (Mt 5:3,4) and the "last" among the workers in the world (Mt 20:16) finally get what's coming to them in a heavenly story Jesus used about a wedding feast celebrating the marriage of heaven and earth. There's bad news in the story for the heretical politics of possessions, power, and prestige. Some real "weeping and grinding of teeth" (Mt 22:13), because participation in the celebration is by invitation only. But it's ultimately good news because the invitation is universal (22:10). It means happiness (Ph 4:4) for everyone—not just a privileged few. DP

Reformation Day
October 31, 1990

Psalm 46
Jeremiah 31:31-34
Romans 3:19-28
John 8:31-36

PASTORAL REFLECTIONS

With the improvement of relations between Lutheranism and Roman Catholicism since Vatican II, Reformation Day observances seem to have fallen on hard times. Oh, they're still held, but in many instances they lack the fervor that used to stem, in part, from the "us against them" mindset. And that, of course, is just as well. For finally, if Reformation Day is to have much real value, it needs to speak to the present, not the past. It's fine to haul out "A Mighty Fortress" and remember the courage of Martin Luther and his fellow reformers, but it is vital to keep in mind the dictum that the church must always be reforming itself. That, in turn, leads to the question of what cries out for reformation in today's church.

A number of possibilities might be suggested, including a need for confessional grounding; justice for all which is inspired by the gospel, not mandated by the law; or a renewed evangelical spirit. The preacher may well have others to substitute. I would propose that Alan Paton's comments be considered: "Christians often imagine that the danger to Christianity and true religion is communism or something of that nature. The greatest danger to Christianity... is pseudo-Christianity. And the marks of pseudo-Christianity are easy to recognize: it always prefers stability to change; it always prefers order to freedom; it always prefers law to justice; and it always prefers what it considers realism to love." Such pseudo-Christianity is indeed present within the church, and needs to be addressed; what better time than Reformation Day?

Start with the Gospel, with a twist: "We are descendants of Luther..." (non-Lutherans would, of course, substitute their own founder). Remember that in most cases, your audience will be church-goers who consider themselves Christians in good standing—possibly by virtue of their regular attendance. From what, then, do they [we] need to be freed? The answer remains the same, whether the indictment is worded by Jesus, by Paul, or by Paton: we need to be freed from reliance on our own resources, which the law reveals as being woefully inadequate.

The preacher could set up some attractive marks of "Christianity," based on the Paton quote above. For instance: We know that ours is the true church because its traditions date back hundreds of years; we can be certain of our fidelity to true Christianity because our actions are in accordance with the law of the land. If that kind of hypothesis were worded convincingly, it could

set up the hearers for an "aha" experience, in which they see that they too have relied on something other than the righteousness of God, and are therefore slaves to sin. The point could be sharpened by demonstrating that such pseudo-Christianity is particularly insidious, since its adherents think they are moving toward God when they are, in fact, moving away.

But always, after the law must come the gospel—the real thing, this time. If we let loose of our pseudo-Christianity, we are not cast adrift. Rather, we are cast upon the mercies of Christ, who has chosen to make us free not by virtue of anything we have done or any "correct" position we take, but because God justifies those who have faith in Jesus. Where we have done wrong, our sin is forgiven. Where we have done right (as we see it), our boasting is excluded. Now our concerns for justice, for freedom, for a confessional, evangelical church are given new life; now they issue not from a "gotta do it" mentality, but from a "get to do it" approach. We are justified no matter what we do, but how can we pass up the opportunity to show the fruit of God's love for us? RBF

PROPHETIC VOICE

Jesus is in dialogue with "the system" not because he and the oppressed with whom he identified felt burdened with individual guilt. That seems to be where Luther was coming from. But the peasants of ancient Palestine were overtaxed and over-burdened with debts, a condition deemed to be religious "sin" in the eyes of the Temple. The substance of God's covenant with Abraham and his descendants to be a blessing to the world in terms of an emphasis on justice had long been forgotten by the religious system, and that is the issue Jesus was raising. And that is the issue Paul was raising with "Rome" because some early followers of the Christ had so quickly reverted to practices which were ignoring the centrality of justice and were beginning to create an exclusive religious system.

The "new covenant" or better, the "re-newed covenant," centers around a great feast, a great table of equality and justice where there is bread enough so that no one goes hungry, and where systems of indebtedness (economic and political systems creating 'owning' and 'non-owning' classes around possessions, power, and prestige) are abolished. The only condition for participation is faith, a faith gathered around mercy and the spirit of generosity (cf. Mt 9:13, 12:7, 20:15, 22:11,12).

Faith alone? How 'Lutheran' can you get? But that only gets you in the door and around the table. If there is no connection between faith and the substance of justice in all its material realities symbolized by daily bread and the forgiveness of debts (Mt 6:11,12), then it is only another empty and meaningless religious experience which has failed to grasp the meaning of "the covenant."

Jesus is substantively part of a contemporary global dialogue in the voices of "the oppressed" around the world. They are calling us away from our captivity to religious systems. DP

Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost November 4, 1990

Psalm 96
Isaiah 45:1-7
1 Thessalonians 1:1-5a
Matthew 22:15-21

FIRST READING

As the teaching in Matthew's Gospel rushes towards its conclusion, and as the Church's Year nears its end, Matthew in a series of paragraphs contrasts the lure of the visible and the tangible with fidelity to the Maker of all things visible and invisible.

Once again, it is easy (and again it is dangerous to our spiritual health) to read the Gospel merely as a transaction between Jesus and contemporary leaders of his people. The text is a

transaction between Jesus and us readers. We may not seem to be people who have taken counsel how to entangle him in his speech (22:15), putting him to the test (v.18; cf. 4:7). But do we try to put him in a box, contain him and limit him, so that we may live more comfortably with him?

Coins then as now bore human (and animal) portraits and propagandistic slogans. The coins of Tiberius (C.E. 14-37) were inscribed with titles like "Son of the Divine Augustus" and "Highest Priest." Can it be that people really took such claims seriously? Can it be that we might ourselves imagine that some earthly person or object is "son" or "priest" putting us in touch with divinity, with true being? Whatever we fear or trust, wrote Martin Luther in the *Large Catechism*, is our god.

Jesus contemplates the coin produced by one of his audience. (He did not have one of his own!) And he says quite simply and without rancor, "Render (or "give back") to Caesar that which is Caesar's," that which bears his picture and his name. And he adds, and this is the hard part, "Render to God that which belongs to God!" What is it that belongs to God? What bears the image of God and the name of God? Human beings! (See Col 3:10 and Rev 3:12).

This exchange looks like further comment on the whole series of paragraphs going back to the parable of the two sons (21:28-32). What is the essence of a real "yes" to God? What does it mean to give God "fruit" (21:33-46), to honor God's invitation and to clothe oneself for the wedding celebration (22:1-14)? What does God want from us? A word? A tithe? A coin? Ourselves!

And if we, like Jesus' original hearers, are astounded and perhaps on the verge of being defeated, if not by the cleverness of the answer then by the awesome demand involved in it, it will be well for us to remember that One has in fact rendered unto God that which is God's. The saying is not only a demand. It is a revelation of Jesus' own program of servanthood by which he secures life for the many. RHS

PASTORAL REFLECTIONS

"Brothers and sisters loved by God... God has chosen you." Those who attend church regularly may frequently hear these words or something similar. Those who do not attend regularly may never hear this reality. The problem for both may be the difficulty in believing it.

Most things in our world tell us differently. Something is wrong with us if we don't own the right things, don't have the right physical shape or appearance, even if we don't think the right, acceptable thoughts. Ads, commercials, billboards bombard us daily with the worldly standards that will make us lovable. It is almost impossible not to rely on those remedies: cars, makeup, clothes, even beliefs. Eventually, though, the emptiness of these remedies reveals itself. They may work for a while, but not forever.

But God has chosen us. Not because of anything we do right or well, but out of a love that does not depend on what we do or don't do, say or don't say, have or don't have. God loves us and has chosen us; it's that simple.

Believing it is not simple. That is why the gospel comes with power, with the Holy Spirit and with conviction. In our world it takes power and conviction to go against the tide of society, and it takes the Holy Spirit to get the message through to us. All those ingredients are there—for us. Now, those who are loved and chosen need to let the Holy Spirit work so that belief can happen. JB-F

PROPHETIC VOICE

Traditional approaches to the concerns of the context of Matthew 22:15-21 often fall into the very trap Jesus avoided. Then obligations to "Caesar" (and how we understand the role and significance of governments) become a matter of religious devotion. The support of "state theologies" (see the kairos document) works out just fine for those benefitting from the system and the present arrangement of things, but Jesus, coming from another perspective, avoided this entrapment. He affirmed a principle Isaiah lifted up

centuries before, that of a transcending God with no rivals (Is 45:5,6). In practical terms he was affirming a transcending responsibility for "what belongs to God" (Mt 15:21), a transcending commitment to "justice" and "truth" (Ps 96:13).

Varieties of governments and ideologies, even those which may officially say there is no God, may still (see Cyrus in Is 45:1ff.) serve the purposes of God, and that is the transcending concern. Communities of justice committed to the Christ will resist complacent obedience to governments, even those claiming to be "under God," and will concentrate on a radical faith of "love" and "hope" rooted in the Good News of justice (1 Thess 1:3-5). DP

Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost November 11, 1990

Psalm 1
Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18
1 Thessalonians 1:5b-10
Matthew 22:34-40 (41-46)

FIRST READING

In plainer and more obvious fashion than last Sunday's Gospel, the words of Jesus for this Sunday summarize God's will for human life. The "great" commandment means the one that serves as foundation for the entire structure of right living, or the central one around which all the pieces of right acting and right thinking revolve like planets and asteroids around the central blazing sun.

Jesus' reply is complex rather than simple, because he will not permit any severing of heaven and earth, any sundering of God from humanity, any concentration on the vertical which ignores the horizontal, any quiet contemplation of God which would shut out the realities of our creaturely connections.

"Love God," he says, with the totality of your being, with every dimension and particle of your self (Deut 6:4-9). That would seem to be all inclusive, all consuming, and not to leave room for any other object of love. And yet he does not say "period" or "amen." Strange as it seems, he continues: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Asked about the one essential commandment, he pointed to two, and declared that these two are finally one and indivisible. One ancient educational scheme among the Jews spoke of 613 commandments, dividing them into 365 negative commands (Thou shalt not) and 268 positive commands (Thou shalt). One for every day of the year (365) and one for each bone in your body (268). Together they meant that the will of God covered all our time (365 days) and all our movements (268 bones in the body). Jesus says that love (agape) of God and love of neighbor should define the whole, the totality, of our time and action.

Again how daunting, how impossible. And yet One has in fact yielded up heart and mind and soul in love towards God and in love toward neighbors, loving to the nth degree (John 13:1).

The community founded by such love strives to make its life an answering love. RHS

PASTORAL REFLECTIONS

The first and greatest commandment certainly says it all. If our relationship with God is in order, then everything else will be in order, including the commands of the second greatest commandment, governing our relationship with our neighbor.

Perhaps an interesting way to approach this would be through the first lesson, particularly the words of the Lord to Moses, which he was then to tell the entire assembly: "Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy."

It is not unusual for people to think of God (all three persons) as holy. In addition, rituals or traditions are often considered holy. Even certain

areas in the sanctuary or items used during worship can take on the air of the "holy." But here God's people are told to be holy.

People may shy away from that thought. "Who, me? I'm not good enough to be holy!" might well be the response. It is interesting to note the first definition of the word *holy* in Webster's *New World Dictionary*: "Dedicated to religious use; belonging to or coming from God." The second part of that may help put the "Who, me?" syndrome into perspective.

Belonging to or coming from God—that's us. That's who we are. That's where we come from. That's who we belong to. All creation comes from God and therefore belongs to God. But we enjoy a dimension that Webster's Dictionary probably did not intend. Through Baptism we enjoy a new meaning to belonging to God. We are God's children and belong to God's family in a unique relationship. Not only are we holy as individuals, we belong to the holy catholic church.

Helping the listeners think of themselves as already holy may help them fulfill the commands in the lessons, not to avoid guilt or God's wrath, but because they already are somebody. JB-F

PROPHETIC VOICE

Because Matthew is giving attention to the dialogue between Jesus and the "scoffers" (Ps 1:1) of institutionalized religion, it seems appropriate to read right on to the end of Matthew 23 to get the full flavor of the context. The arguments of the religious institution (Mt 22:35) are only diversionary and have no substance. But all their reactionary resistance to the content of doing justice is exposed when Jesus says: "You have neglected the weightier matters of the Law, justice, mercy, good faith! These you should have practiced, without neglecting the others. You blind guides! Straining out gnats and swallowing camels!" (Mt 23:23,24).

Jesus is quite clear that "loving God" and "loving the neighbor" are *homoia*, "of the same nature" (22:39). That is why God cannot be served by merely cultic or confessional ritual. That kind of religion is empty and meaningless in the face of the neighbor's hunger or indebtedness caused by oppressive economic/political forces. "The Christ" (cf. 22:41-46) relates to something far deeper than royal succession in terms of political power. The true "servants of the real, living God" (1 Thess 1:9) are committed to the "holy" purpose of pursuing justice (Lev 19:2,15). That's the heart, soul, and mind of Christ communities. DP

Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost November 18, 1990

Psalm 63:1-8
Amos 5:18-24
1 Thessalonians 4:13-14 (15-18)
Matthew 25:1-13

FIRST READING

The only problem with the Gospel for this Sunday is that it does not tell us what watchfulness is. It says clearly enough that it is something we must have. We must be ready, we must be watchful, we must be wise. But as we wait for the Bridegroom, what is it that is required of us? And we could ask the same question of the paragraphs immediately preceding and following. All the pictures are graphic and memorable: people unconcerned in Noah's day, men farming and women baking without any recognition of the impending end, a householder sleeping when the thief breaks in, a careless servant carousing with his pals when the master returns, a servant too timid and too dim-witted even to bank the one talent he had received for fear that he would lose it and get a reprimand from his hard master.

All these pictures scream: "Be ready, watch, be wise!" Jesus will offer a classic definition of readiness and wisdom in the final paragraph of Matthew 25, the Gospel for next Sunday (Christ

the King). But those words of Jesus should be saved for next week and not used ahead of time. It might be better to use the prophecy of Amos to fill in the blanks. Amos is almost exclusively a complaint about people who think they are ready, who imagine that only others are unprepared or foolish, who suppose that the great and coming Day of the Lord will be "light" and no doubt "sweetness" as well, at least for themselves, while only others will experience it as "darkness" and "gloom with no brightness in it."

Amos in verses 21-23 speaks about traditional acts of readiness and spiritual wisdom: feasts, solemn assemblies, burnt offerings and cereal offerings, songs and the melody of harps. Instead of all that, the prophet says, "let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." "Justice" or "righteousness" is a central theme of Jesus' teaching in Matthew's Gospel (see 20th Sunday after Pentecost). Meditation on God in the sanctuary should teach us that God is "steadfast love" (Psalm 63:3), and therefore a life of love (or righteousness) is the appropriate preparation for the day of the Lord. RHS

PASTORAL REFLECTIONS

Be prepared, be ready for the return of the bridegroom. We know it is wise to be ready and foolish not to. The coming of the bridegroom will be sudden, after long years of waiting. For followers of Christ the outward appearance of readiness is not enough. Preparation is needed.

The question that logically follows is, how does one prepare? The virgins in the parable did so by having their lamps ready for use, trimmed and filled with oil. One way we can prepare is through a changing of our ways. Surely everyone has in his or her life some things that get in the way of receiving the bridegroom. This may be as good a time as any to look at those hindrances, the actions and the motives behind those actions, and then seriously attempt to change them.

The fact that more than one person is referred to concerning the need for preparing suggests that this is something which groups as well as individuals should do. Not only do persons need to look at their lives and attempt to change those things that need changing; so do groups and institutions, including the church. How are these institutions getting in the way of the justice and liberation which are a part of the kingdom of God in its fullness? How are these entities perpetuating the very values that cause others not to be prepared? As members of, participants in, and even beneficiaries of these institutions we need to look at the negative effects of these, with a willingness to change. That, too, is preparation.

Preparing for the bridegroom, for the return of Christ, is more than being ready to light a lamp. It is also looking for that which keeps the lamp dark, so that by its removal the lamp may shine more brightly. JB-F

PROPHETIC VOICE

Readiness ("Stay awake!" Mt 25:13), not speculation about what the future might hold, is what communities of justice are called to. There are reconnections with where we began in Advent and what it means to be "faithful and wise" (24:45) economists as we anticipate the future and the alternatives to which we are committed. That there might be anxieties is only natural, but we approach them in the context of visions which are positive and filled with hope (1 Thess 4:13). But, above all, because there is a "thirsting" and "longing" for God from those who are oppressed, from "a land parched, weary and waterless" (Ps 63:1), our worship and liturgies are filled with the content of a readiness to "let justice flow like water, and integrity like an unfailing stream" (Amos 5:24). It's very clear that the prophetic voices of the Bible are not saying, "Your liturgies and theologies are ok, but God wants a little justice too." God cries for justice! DP

Thanksgiving Day
November 22, 1990

Psalm 65
Deuteronomy 8:1-10
Philippians 4:6-20
or 1 Timothy 2:1-4
Luke 17:11-19

FIRST READING

In a series of stories, Luke prepares the reader for the extraverted movement of the good news beyond Jerusalem and Judaism towards the ends of the earth, graphically depicting the boundary-crossing generosity of God. Jesus is light of revelation to gentiles as well as glory of the people Israel (2:32). In his inaugural sermon Jesus provocatively spoke of God's ancient goodness to Phoenician Zarephath and to Syrian Naaman (4:26-27). Today's Gospel offers the lone Samaritan as model of thankfulness, and later Jesus speaks the parable of the Good Samaritan (10:29-37).

It is because he is convinced of the character of God as generous and unbounded Giver that Paul is able to say, "Have no anxiety about anything" (Phil 4:6). Worry is driven out by prayer and thanksgiving, not by one alone but by these two together. Thanks means always being mindful of gifts given and already at hand. And prayer as supplication looks to God to provide for present need as for past.

And at the same time that Paul fixes his eyes and those of his readers on God as giver, he is also mindful that God's divine care and generosity had reached him through the earthly ministrations of the Philippians.

Scripture looks more up to date and current all the time. Deuteronomy describes not only the Promised Land, but also this land stretching "from sea to shining sea." And not this land only but also this whole planet, Mother Earth, God's good creation provided for us as an abundant home: good land and brooks of water, fountains and springs, valleys and hills, wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, olives and honey, hills full of iron and copper, so that we might eat and be full.

What does our use and abuse of planet Earth say of us? Reveal about us? Because of abundance have we forgotten the Lord our God? (Deut) Is our greed and plundering and stockpiling of goods a sign of anxiety? (Phil) Do we think that material blessings are the same as being well? (Luke) Only faith will make us and our neighbors and our planet well. RHS

PASTORAL REFLECTIONS

Most of those who will be hearing the words of the preachers on this Thanksgiving Day have plenty to be thankful for. And most of those hearing the words already know to whom they should be thankful, and they know, at least on some level, that they're not thankful enough. Ah, blessed guilt!

But there is a different angle to approach this from. All ten of the men who had some kind of skin affliction were healed or cleansed. But only the one who returned to thank Jesus was made "well," or in the KJV, made "whole." Instead of using "guilt avoidance" as a motivator for giving thanks, perhaps discussing this fact will be informational, maybe even motivational, for preachers and hearers alike.

What is the difference between being healed or cleansed and being made well or whole? For all ten, being healed or cleansed meant being rid of their leprosy, or whatever their specific skin disease might have been. Their skin was cleared up, and whatever annoying sensations had been there were now gone. Being made well or whole, as the one was, implies a more complete change. Not only the outside, visible part of his body, but also the inside part, his heart, his soul, the part that made him him, was healed.

Perhaps the one who was made well, whole, had received a better understanding of who had created him in the first place. Maybe that basic understanding made him more open to being healed inside as well as outside. Perhaps that is why he was more able to give thanks.

We need to remember who created us and to keep our priorities in order so that we, too, might be more open to being made well in our whole beings, rather than being satisfied with simple "band-aid" outer healings. Then our hearts will be more open to wholeness and then, thankfulness. JB-F

Christ the King
November 25, 1990

Psalm 95:1-7a
Ezekiel 34:11-16, 23-24
1 Corinthians 15:20-28
Matthew 25:31-46

FIRST READING

The odd thing here is the way the action of God and of Christ on the one hand converges with the action of the new community on the other. The action of the community does not produce the new world of God. That new world is God's gift, pure and simple. And yet the community takes that new world with utmost seriousness, anticipates it in the here and now, aims at it, moves toward it, acts on the basis of its power and reality. And when all is going well, it does all that with a kind of naturalness and unself-consciousness ("When did we see you..?).

Paul describes the history of the world headed toward the end as a struggle of life with death, and death will finally be put down, along with all other enemies of life and of God, under the victorious feet of God. And then, says Paul, God will be everything to everyone, sovereign everywhere, honored by all. And the apostle leaves it to our imagination to picture what kind of world that will mean, where every creature moves in relation to every other on the basis of the sole sovereignty of God, without selfishness, without fear, without greed, without any holding back, without any begrudging, loving as we have been loved.

What kind of world will that be? What will it look like? It will be a world in which the promise God made through Ezekiel will be the one bedrock reality: "I, I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out." God will seek, rescue, gather, feed with good pasture, make them lie down, bind up the crippled, strengthen the weak, watch over the fat and the strong, and feed them all in justice.

God will do all that in the end, at the dawn of the new world. So then Jesus in Matthew 25 is saying that the new community is privileged to anticipate even now God's own final intervention in history. The actions which Jesus encourages (care of the hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick, and imprisoned) are the mirror image of the acts of God, the Good Shepherd. RHS

PASTORAL REFLECTIONS

The king referred to in the Gospel for this Christ the King Sunday does not fit our definition of a typical king. We have come to know Jesus Christ the King as one who rules a kingdom far greater and better than any kingdom on earth. In Christ's kingdom, riches and wealth do not define greatness, but helping those in need does. In this kingdom, we who live in it are asked to bring it to greater reality. How do we do that? We feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and visit those in prison.

Stewardship programs are either well underway or completed by now, and church budgets are being prepared. Tithing was no doubt a popular theme for many of the stewardship drives. But in the light of this Sunday's Gospel and the many needs that surround each of us every day, perhaps this is a good time to think not only about the one-tenth, but about the other nine-tenths.

How have people committed the other nine-tenths of their income? Are they mortgaged to the hilt so that all of their resources are used to finance their perhaps more-than-adequate housing? Are their charge cards charged to the limit so that all of their creative energy is used for staying 30 days ahead of the bill collector? Are their "toys" ones that hurt the earth or protect it? When money or

time is not used at its best, those in need suffer. When the distorted values of the world cloud our vision of what is truly needed, the hungry are not fed, the naked are not clothed, the sick are not cared for, those in prison are not visited.

On the other hand, when we let the Spirit of Christ free us from our bondage to society's demands, when we let the gospel show through us in simple acts of love, then we are privileged to help usher in the kingdom. JB-F

PROPHETIC VOICE

What the Matthew tradition continues to give those struggling with the meaning of following the Christ is a radical insistence on the material nature of the Kingdom of God. The material realities of the parable of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:35,42-44) are the very contexts in which we come face to face with the transcending spiritual reality we call "God." Economic, political, and social realities are, therefore, the only areas for authentic spiritual experience, just as justice is the only valid spiritual response to injustice and oppression. The biblical concept of shepherding (Ezek 34) is full of economic, political, and social realities. So in the ultimate worship envisioned in Psalm 95, the Christ is only "king" when "everything"—especially in the economic, political, social contexts—is subjected to him" (1 Cor 15:28). The authentic 'subjects' of Christ the King aren't necessarily those who know and use the right kind of "religious language" in narrow Christian terms. Not thoughts or language but concrete deeds in the material world caring for real people: such deeds have the approval of Christ. DP

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A New Current in Theology and Mission

William E. Lesher
President, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

I have just returned from the meeting of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) in Montreal, Canada. ATS is the accrediting association for seminaries and divinity schools in the U.S. and Canada, and every other year some 300 presidents and deans of member schools gather to review accrediting standards and to track the new currents in theology and mission.

This year's meeting was on the theme: "Ministerial Education in a Religiously and Culturally Diverse World." It was timely; seminaries across North America—like the church bodies they represent and the nations themselves—are experiencing the impact of pluralism and diversity as never before. Women now account for about 35% of the students in member schools. African American and Hispanic students have steadily increased in numbers through the 80s. Each group (called "under-represented constituencies" in ATS circles) brings a whole range of experiences, insights, questions, and convictions to the theological dialogue that are somewhat different from the concerns of traditional theologies. "The thing that is characteristic about all these new and diverse groups," observed one of the speakers at the ATS meeting, "is the fact that the starting point for their reflection about God is their context—the circumstances, the experiences, the particularity of their daily lives." This is a challenge to the traditional method of doing theology, which normally starts with what theologians have determined over the centuries to be universal truth claims about God and what God has done in Jesus Christ and what God has and is doing through the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church. These universal truths are claimed to be true for all believers everywhere, and believing them and applying them to one's own life is what makes a person an orthodox Christian.

But the new voices in seminaries and church bodies today are saying that they don't see how they are really represented in these universal truth claims, in the way they were formulated, and in many of the spiritual needs they address. So it is difficult, often irrelevant, to attempt to apply them to their daily lives. They start with their own life experience and, when they have come to understand themselves and their situation, then they reflect on how the God of Scripture is manifest in their context.

This, of course, opens a Pandora's Box. We all have many experiences, and when we begin to share them we often find that our experiences conflict with one another. When the starting point is particular experience, rather than universal absolutes, the theological discussion easily becomes confusing. This is a new current in theology

and mission. One speaker at the ATS meeting used the biblical image of the Tower of Babel for the status of the theological dialogue today. He also referred to Pentecost, but suggested that Pentecost was a temporary triumph, or better, an eschatological sign to signal the hope toward which we are moving in God's future. Another speaker reminded the meeting that the pathway from Babel to Pentecost leads through the Cross, and so our ongoing theological struggle to hear the mighty acts of God from one universal voice, each addressing us in our own language and speaking to our own experience, will be a painful passage.

Yet it would be a mistake to conclude that those who start their reflection about God with their particular experience are not interested in the universal nature of the gospel. An Asian theologian told the ATS gathering that those caught up in this new current of particularity and experience are also struggling for ways to hear the gospel message that speaks to all and includes all. He insisted that the vision of the interdependent Body of Christ, all dependent on its Head, is their vision. And he proposed that the way to this unusual Pentecost sign and promise is through the particularity of each culture and each person.

Speakers at the meeting called for new, serious conversations with one another. One revived Aristotle's thesis of the "common good" and the religious additions to this idea through the writings of Thomas Aquinas. He called for the creation of Rational Dialogues in seminaries and religious communities when pluralism is pressing for new methods. He quoted Aristotle's description of conversation as "sounds charged with intentionality," and said it is this kind of serious listening and speaking that we need to do with one another, for the sake of the "common good." A concluding speaker remembered Karl Barth's saying that we "should talk and listen to each other, gladly!" But, added the speaker, that "gladly" may not be easy to effect.

If this does not sound familiar, chances are it will as we all struggle our way from Babel to Pentecost by way of the Cross—a new current in theology and mission.

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