

Book Reviews

ZECHARIAH AND MALACHI John Calvin

Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh 1986 712pp. £8.95 ISBN 0 85151 476 6

In common with the other republished volumes in this series on the Minor Prophets (this is volume five) this book is essential reading for all preachers and serious students of the sacred scriptures. It consists of some fifty-eight lectures which first appeared in print (in Latin) just over four hundred and thirty years ago. This edition is a straight reprint of that produced by the Calvin Translation Society in 1848.

Despite their age these lectures have a timeless feel about them. This I suggest is because, as Arminius said long ago, Calvin 'is incomparable in interpreting scripture and, . . . his commentaries of more value than all that the library of the Fathers transmits to us.'

A very short introductory essay precedes each book. These are followed with verse by verse comments. In the main these are highly instructive. At times the lecture style obtrudes (*e.g.* pp. 49f.) but this is a trivial distraction when one considers the immense help that the commentator gives to the original hearer and reader alike. Although one may not agree with every comment made, the value of these lectures lies primarily in the coherent and faithful overview of the prophecies that they provide. And that, after all, is essential if one is to reach the heart of the prophets' messages and apply them to both church and nation at the close of the twentieth century.

If you do not yet possess this volume then I urge you to purchase and peruse it as soon as possible. You will find it of great devotional and homiletical use.

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GEORGE CURRY

GRADED HOLINESS: A Key to the Priestly Conception of the World

P.P. Jenson

Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield 1992 281pp. £35.00 ISBN 1 85075 360 1

The J.S.O.T.S. series continues on its marvellously useful way, garnering the ripest fruits of current Old Testament scholarship. The present contribution is a revision of a doctoral dissertation (Cambridge) presented in 1988, but the revision has not 'warned' the aseptic tone of the original. To be sure Jenson succeeds in his aim of showing the richness of the priestly theology and the breadth of the priestly vision in the Old Testament but it is more reminiscent of a well-stocked deep-freeze than of the cholesterol-laden window of a confectioner's. But there, a deep-freeze is a marvellously useful thing to have, unlike too much cholesterol, and Jenson and the Sheffield Academic Press have alike put us in their debt.

Jenson uses the terminology of Wellhausen and his swarming brood of children without committing himself necessarily to a 'documentary' view of Pentateuchal origins. He notes that the Priestly Writings offer a good 'theological fit' in different historical periods and that 'P' cannot readily be locked into the development of

Israelite religion. This, he urges, is evidence of the richness of priestly thought. His aim, rather, is to provide a 'systematic theology of the cult' starting with the final form of the text, classifying and understanding rather than dating and contextualizing. 'P' has its own 'narrative logic', dealing with 'where?' (the Tabernacle), who? (the priests), what? (the rituals) and when? (the calendar feasts). The individual study of these four aspects of the priestly content of the Pentateuch is preceded by identification of the texts, an enquiry into concepts of holiness and purity and a seminal and fundamental chapter 'the Holiness Spectrum' identifying and justifying the four 'dimensions' of 'holiness' indicated above. The book abounds in lexical and exegetical enquiry and is a goldmine for the study of the Exodus-Leviticus complex, but the last chapter which opens up a relation between priestly thought and wider Old Testament theology does justice to neither and comes tantalizingly short of allowing P-thought to contribute its richness to Old Testament thought as a whole. Jenson's brilliant thesis is a prolegomenon and if one knew that he was engaged either on a large-scale commentary on the priestly writing or on a theology of the Old Testament—or even on a P-theology—one would wait for it with bated breath.

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ALEC MOTYER

**ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO THE OLD TESTAMENT:
Issues in Religion and Theology, No 8 Edited by Bernhard Lang.**

Fortress/S.P.C.K., London 1985 175pp. No price. ISBN 0 281 04172 3

Those who are temperamentally inclined to hilarity at the sight of egg on the face of the mighty should start reading this book at Essay 3, 'The Hebrew Concept of Corporate Personality, A Re-examination', by John Rogerson. The result of this enquiry is that there is no such thing; that the (in other ways deservedly) great H.W. Robinson sent us all off on a wrong track. In fairness to the thrust of the book—to see whether 'encounter with a non-Western culture, especially one that reminds us of biblical times, can really help us to understand the Bible'—Rogerson does take extra-biblical evidence into account, but the real worth of his essay is its penetrating probing of the mind of the Old Testament. Of the remaining nine essays, I. Schapera enquires whether scattered pieces of evidence that fratricide was thought to belong to a different category from other acts of homicide can help in understanding 'The Sin of Cain'; T.W. Overholt assembles evidence for prophetism as a phenomenon much wider than the Israelite experience and adduces points not irrelevant to prophetic and predictive claims today; two essays on Leviticus (Mary Douglas, 'The Abominations of Leviticus', and M.P. Carroll, 'Leviticus Revisited') take second place only to Rogerson in interest and importance. Both authors consider that 'uncleanliness' is associated with some sort of invasion or disruption of the due order—the invasion of the world of culture by the world of nature (as when mildew shows itself in a garment or house). It is a delight to share such devoted attention to the minutiae of Leviticus. Leviticus also figures in D. Davis, 'An Interpretation of Sacrifice in Leviticus', in which he attempts an anthropological approach in which sacrifice is 'an institutional way in which the social and religious life of the nation was ordered'. But his treatment lacks persuasiveness, as indeed does M.P. Carroll's 'Genesis restructured' where there seems

to be an over-fine line drawn between finding structures and imposing patterns. E. Leach ('The Logic of Sacrifice') fails to establish a settled exegetical frame for the Old Testament evidence. F. Steiner ('Enslavement and the early Hebrew Lineage') claims more enlightenment from anthropology than he manages to share in respect of Genesis 47,48. Bernhard Lang contributes a wonderfully illuminating introduction to the whole collection, but his essay on 'Peasant Poverty' is less successful. A most stimulating collection of essays which should not be missed.

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ALEC MOTYER

THE BOOK OF REVELATION Philip Edgcumbe Hughes
Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester 1990 242pp. £12.95 ISBN 0 85111 748 1

This, the last great work of the gifted Dr. Hughes (one-time editor of *Churchman*), is in the author's words a 'popular' as opposed to technical commentary on the last book of the bible. He purposely sets out to keep it 'free from academic technicalities, linguistic annotations, and critical discussions of terms and theories' (p. 10). The verse by verse commentary follows the author's own translation of the Greek text and is set out in an easy-to-read style that makes it accessible to both scholar and layman alike. However it is a pity that from time to time the author uses old English (e.g. pp. 75 & 122).

The strength and usefulness of this volume lies in two areas. First, the author strives to let the text speak for itself. Secondly he endeavours to explain the rich symbolism of the book of Revelation by means of scripture itself. That is, during his exposition Dr. Hughes takes us to other passages and texts in both the Old and New Testaments that shed light on the vivid vision that John experienced and received so long ago on the island of Patmos. This gives the exposition an authoritative and compelling feel. It also leads the reader to bow before the throne of God in adoration, praise and wonder.

Unfortunately 'renewal' is spelt incorrectly on p. 110. All in all, though, we have here an extremely useful work for which many ministers, preachers and new testament scholars will be grateful. I warmly commend it.

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GEORGE CURRY

THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD B.B. Warfield
The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh 1991 (reprint 1916) 270pp. £6.95
ISBN 0 85151 593 2

In clear emotive language the author of this book presents the reader with two foundation truths of the Christian faith, the person of Jesus Christ, and the world he came to save. Preached to students of Princeton University in its chapel by the Professor of Systematic Theology, they are so profound that most theologians would find in them intellectual satisfaction and a recent convert, heart-searching delight. Warfield's freshness of approach in every sermon opens out new interpretations of biblical text. For example, he sees in the parable of the Prodigal Son an attack on spiritual pride, and in the jealousy of the elder brother a pattern of the

Pharisees in their attitude to Jesus alongside the love of God for the worst of sinners. From that latter standpoint the sermons set forth Jesus as the only Saviour for sinful men. There can be no compromise therefore between Christianity and other forms of religion.

With regard to the term 'world' Warfield applies God's love as set upon every person born into it and not to the elect only. He yet claims that while Jesus is the potential Saviour of all he becomes the actual Saviour of those only who find salvation in him. This, he believes, was Paul's gospel. To that end are his excellent chapters on the glorified and risen Jesus. He gives a fine exposition of the Son's descent from the Father in the Incarnation, and an ascent to him by the resurrection body, between both of which he places Christ's saving work on the cross in fulfilment of the Father's will. The sermon on the covenant of salvation between the Father and the Son, and that on 'Imitating the Incarnation' are alone worth studying.

This book is a supreme devotional work that speaks to the heart and maps out the way to live a truly Christ-like life.

5 Green Lane, Clapham, Bedford

ARTHUR BENNETT

JESUS, ARAMAIC AND GREEK G.R. Selby

Brynmill Press, 1990 120 pp. £12.00

SBN 0 907839 40 1

In this relatively short, but interesting book, the author discusses very seriously the question of what languages Jesus of Nazareth spoke. That Jesus spoke Aramaic as his mother-tongue is not in doubt. What is in doubt is whether he was also fluent in koine Greek. This is a more important question than might appear at first sight. If Jesus' teaching was given only in Aramaic, then what is written in the Gospels is a translation into English from Greek, which in turn, was translated from the original Aramaic. The *ipsissima verba* of Jesus become less accessible to the non-technical reader.

Yet, this is not a technical work of complex language study. Rather, it is a non-technical work which the majority of those with a reasonable understanding of the New Testament might follow based on sound logic and good arguments in which, in the author's words, the 'balance of probability' is against the widely held view of scholars that Jesus spoke only Aramaic, which Dr. Selby entitles aptly, the Aramaic hypothesis.

And there is a still more important aspect which underlies this study in these days of 'multi-faith' pressure. Was Jesus an illiterate peasant, or was he one whose mind was steeped in the Scriptures of the Old Testament so that he was able to speak freely and fluently in a cosmopolitan culture to the educated and ignorant, Jew and Gentile alike? Dr. Selby is in no doubt, as a bilingual speaker himself, that the balance of probability lies here. And his arguments are convincing.

But there is further value in this book for those responsible for preaching or teaching. Any further light on the background of the New Testament is always welcome and the fact that certain assumptions which have held sway for considerable time are challenged can only serve the cause of truth.

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DAVID STREATER

THE BIBLE AND CHRISTIAN LIVING David Field

Scripture Union, London 1992 124pp. £2.95

ISBN 0 86201 471 9

During the war years I was the victim of a confidence trick called Training for the Ministry. Would that I could say it was the exigencies of wartime that made it so! Unfortunately, it was a pretty standard handout. I was taught Old Testament by a world authority on Eusebius, Doctrine by one whom ordinary civility only permits me to call a 'chancer' and Ethics by no one at all. How very blessed are those who train at Oak Hill today! In the words of the wise, they do not know they are born. Well, enough of the occupational disease of the elderly (the sentence beginning 'I remember'), David Field has again proved his mastery of the ethical scene, his delicious ability to pack a great deal into a brief span and his thorough-going bibliocism. Three chapters set the scene regarding God ('Beginning with God'), man ('Made in God's image') and the world ('Living in God's world'). Three chapters follow, sorting out Law and Love ('Obeying God's rules'; 'Embraced by God's Love'; 'Challenged by God's Love') and the remaining three chapters deal with the practicalities of living the life of Christ today ('Subjects in God's kingdom'; 'Powered by God's Spirit'; 'Using God's Word'). It is no exaggeration to say that much could be quoted with advantage from each chapter; it is a pardonable exaggeration to say that there is something worth quoting on each page. This book would make an excellent nine-week course for Home Groups; it is expert enough to satisfy and inform those who are well read in Christian Ethics already and simple enough for new Christians struggling to live the new life in a world they are beginning to see through new eyes. Oh yes, well done David and thank you!

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ALEC MOTYER

BIBLE AND BELIEF J.L. Houlden

S.P.C.K., London 1991 171pp. £10.99pb.

ISBN 0 281 04546 1

Prof. Houlden, who holds the chair of Theology at King's College, London, takes a very liberal and negative view of the worth of the Gospels as historical records. In this little book twelve of his most important studies on the New Testament are brought together with a view to throwing light on current debates about Christian doctrine and practice. The first seven chapters 'worry at the vexed and urgent question of the place of the Bible . . . in relation to the general theological enterprise'. 'Frontiers of Honesty', 'The Limits of Theological Freedom', 'Daring to Study the Bible', 'Trying to be a New Testament Theologian', 'The Status of Origins in Christianity', 'A Future for New Testament Studies' and 'The Development of Meaning' are the chapter headings. I cannot say I found the treatment either very lucid or very persuasive. I remember long ago reading a comment in a leading newspaper criticising Stanley Baldwin for saying too often 'I am an honest man'; it should not have been necessary. This thought often recurs to me when I read the claims to 'intellectual integrity', 'open-minded humility' or even 'fearsomely relentless historical honesty' made by liberal scholars and theologians, as here. They may be true; but they are surely better left unsaid. They are liable to be counter-productive, for the qualities of honesty, integrity and especially humility

are not quite so easily come by as those who claim them seem to think. That no doubt goes for all of us, but it is surprising to find them issuing in a statement so pretentious in its inadequacy as this: 'Christianity is a mode of responding to God by way of the phenomenon of Jesus as his agent for human well-being'. But there is an inevitable logic in this. It is the author's only possible offer after he has ('almost', he says):

conjured up a spectre of a Christianity as like a bus with no visible driver, careering through history; . . . with no clear permanent identity, capable of assuming all kinds of colour and shape, even in its mainstream manifestations. . . .

The last five chapters develop the liberal approach to Scripture by applying it to several doctrinal and practical problems. 'Jesus Christ and "The Word of God"'; 'New Liturgies: Worship, Bible and Belief'; 'Doctrine Sociologized'; 'Toleration and the New Testament'; and 'In a Biblical Perspective' are the headings. Prof. Houlden has a few interesting things to say here, but the underlying thrust continues highly destructive of almost all that ordinary men and women have held the faith of Christ to be. Like many liberal scholars (to use Bunyan's phrase) he 'lies at the catch' a little too readily, and sometimes his eagerness to fault Scripture leaves him unguarded. For instance, it is hardly fair comment to imply that Paul advised (1 Cor. 7.12-16) 'that if the worst came to the worst, they [converted wives] could legitimately separate from their marriage partners'. It was rather the other way round, surely. However, my main complaint concerns a more fundamental matter one on which scholars and theologians can always be challenged: his presuppositions. For every study has to be based on presuppositions, and by their very nature these (while they must be carefully examined) cannot be *proved*. They have to be *chosen*. And someone else can always reject them and substitute others. Prof. Houlden relies much on cultural change to relativize New Testament thought to his entire satisfaction. But the rôle of cultural change is clearly limited; we can appreciate today as feelingly as ever the story of Helen of Troy, or the abject terror of Saul before the witch of Endor. The liberal's appeal to change already seems greatly exaggerated to many; but in any case, it is a reasonable presupposition that *concerning the deep things which men in every age need to know*, God ('Who also is wise') will have acted in history to limit it to enable truth once given (*cf.* 'it is written') to remain significant and comprehensible to later generations. This is a thoroughly biblical position but one which the author strongly repudiates. 'New Testament theology', he writes,

has suffered much from the attribution to theological ideas in the New Testament of a kind of timelessness and the bestowing on texts, originally transient in their significance, of eternal seriousness.

There seems little doubt that he is referring to much more than the veils of Corinthian women. We ought 'to abandon the belief', he implies, 'that in any fairly strong sense, Scripture was written for *our* learning' (his italics). The liberal argument against providential action in history is doubtless that it cannot be reconciled with the world-view of science. If that is so, it suggests another presupposition of liberalism, that the proper method for theology is the *scientific method*; but this again is challengeable, and with full intellectual integrity; and it is of course quite contrary to the biblical emphasis on revelation (see for example, Matt. 16.17; 1

Churchman

Cor. 1.21).

What then are we to conclude about this series of essays? It reminded me as few other books have of Ian Ramsay's comment in his *Models for Divine Activity* (1973):

As everyone knows, theology is at present in turmoil; and if I were asked to characterise our present discontents I think I would select two features as basic—First, there is the loss of a sense of God's presence; and secondly, there is a growing inability to see the point of theological discourse. We have become . . . insensitive to God, and theology . . . has died on us.

Certainly, God is hardly anywhere to be seen at work in Prof. Houlden's scheme of things. Scholarship to him is a quite autonomous activity, and God must fit in where he can.

There are brief notes at the end of each chapter and a general Index of two pages.

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DOUGLAS SPANNER

RECOVERING BIBLICAL MANHOOD AND WOMANHOOD

A response to evangelical feminism Edd. John Piper and Wayne Grudem

Crossway Books, Wheaton, Illinois 1991 566pp. No price ISBN 0 89107 586 0

There can be little doubt that anybody interested in the current debate among evangelicals over the rôles of men and women will want to read this excellent volume of papers produced for a conference on the subject of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood. These papers do not intend to offer a response to feminism as such, but to 'evangelical feminism'. That is, they respond to people such as Leatha Scanzoni and Nancy Hardesty, Gilbert Bilezikian, Gretchen Gaebelein Hull and Katherine Kroeger and Berkeley and Alvera Micklesen, among others. These particular feminists still hold to the evangelical faith and to a belief in scripture as truthful and authoritative. On the whole their position has arisen from giving new interpretations of the Bible to support claims often rejecting a unique leadership rôle for men in marriage and in the church.

While it may be said that the papers offered in this 'response' are traditional, that is hardly an adequate description of the book's contents. The authors recognize that traditional positions have not always been satisfactory because they have not fully answered these recent positions offered by evangelical feminists. They also recognize that the traditional patterns of how men and women relate to each other have often been abused through the sin of individuals.

The book is sponsored by the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood. In case readers are prepared to write off the book as an American debate concerned with American issues, it is worth remembering that the authors are largely interacting with the American Chapter of 'Men, Women and God International' which is closely associated with the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity or, as it is now called, 'Christian Impact'. This institute is now headed by Mrs. Elaine Storkey, another evangelical feminist and author of *What's Right with Feminism?* (S.P.C.K., London, 1985). There is no doubt, therefore that it is important that the

issues be discussed in England just as much as they are in the United States.

The book is well set out, allowing readers to gain an overview of the procedure and arguments by reading the first two chapters (Section One). Of particular use is Chapter 2 'an overview of central concerns'. This consists of a series of fifty-one questions about the positions held by those writing in this work. The answers given are a very useful summary of their positions. Section Two offers twelve detailed exegetical and theological studies of key biblical texts relating to the subject. Section Three adds a very important dimension to these papers by offering five 'studies from related disciplines'. Section Four provides six papers examining the 'Applications and Implications' of what has been said earlier. The final section is written by the editors and is entitled 'Conclusion and Prospect' and offers a paper entitled 'Charity, Clarity, and Hope: The Controversy and the Cause of Christ (including a response to the statement by Christians for Biblical Equality)'. Two appendices follow, the first of which will be of enormous interest to those who have encountered the arguments put forward by Grudem in the mid 1980s concerning the meaning of *Kephale*. (Grudem argued that the Greek word *Kephale* never meant 'source' or 'origin' as so many writers have suggested recently (cf. Storkey, *supra*, p. 180) but that it always means 'head'.). Eight years on it is interesting to see Grudem responding to those who have questioned his findings. Perhaps it is of particular note also to see how much he has been supported by people of a variety of traditions and how few have actually challenged him. He interacts at some length with the arguments of all those who have questioned his findings in an erenic but thoroughly scholarly way.

In such a detailed volume it is impossible to discuss all the good or bad points. Apart from drawing attention to the most important work on this subject produced thus far by conservative scholars, I wish to interact with a few specific issues raised by some of the different authors.

It is the Biblical material which is most impressive. Whether or not the conclusions are always convincing, the detail of the work is worth close examination. S.L. Johnson's examination of 'Role Distinctions in the Church, Galatians 3:28' is one example. This chapter takes as its starting point a verse to which feminists continually refer for biblical support of their position. Gal. 3:26-29 is examined in close exegetical detail. He argues that the context is Paul's exposition of the purpose of the law—to point to maturity and sonship. Verse 26, 'For you are all sons ...' makes Paul's point that, through union with Christ, all have a spiritual privilege of sonship in the present age. Verse 27 explains how such sonship came into being.

Verse 28 then deals with three fundamental distinctions in ancient society: race, social rank and sex. In some sense these are nullified 'in Christ'. The problem then is to ask 'In what sense?' The Jewish Greek antithesis is declared invalid by Paul and Johnson argues that this should be regarded, primarily, in a religious sense. In Christ both Jew and Greek are heirs of the blessings but clearly the national distinction remains 'both in the world (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:32) and in the believing community (cf. Romans 9:1-11:36; Galatians 6:16).' (p. 159). The second antithesis involves slavery in which clearly slaves too can inherit the blessings. But slaves also continued to exist within the church (cf. 1 Corinthians 7:17-24). While Philemon in principle provides just grounds for the abolition of slavery, the institution of slavery is clearly irrelevant 'for status and relationship within the church'. The third antithesis again shows that 'the distinction in sex has no relevance to the

status of believers in Christ Jesus'. Johnson's point is that the text abolishes inequality of religious status 'in Christ', but does not abolish their distinctiveness as God's creatures.

After debating with and examining the exegesis of Paul Jewett and Klyne Snodgrass, Johnson concludes that Galatians 3:28 'does plainly teach an egalitarianism of privilege in the covenantal union of believers in Christ . . . Questions of roles and functions in that body can only be answered by a consideration of other and later New Testament teaching'.

The next chapter seeks to do just that with an article by George Knight looking at Eph. 5:21–33 and Col. 3:18–19. Again the depth of study and careful exegetical work is impressive even if the conclusions are not shared. In tackling the tricky question of what Eph. 5:21 refers to, Knight, rightly in my view, argues that 'Submit yourselves one to another' stands at the head of what follows. The rôles of women, men, slaves and masters are then discussed under that general heading. Knight concludes that while mutual submission is the basis of the passage it is not mutual to the exclusion of specific types of submission that are then outlined by Paul. In other words, a wife's submission is to be seen in a different way from that of the husband to the wife; a slave's submission to his master in a different way from the master's to the slave and so on. Rôles remain within mutual submission. There follows a discussion about the meaning of the words 'submit' and 'head'.

Other passages examined include 1 Tim. 2:11–15 and 1 Peter 3:1–17.

While being largely convinced of the exegesis of the passages examined, I was less convinced by some of the other articles from other disciplines and where exegesis was less in evidence. Unfortunately the tone of the whole book is set in just such an article by John Piper (ch. 1). In this opening discussion Piper seeks to communicate their 'vision of manhood and womanhood' in a way that 'satisfies the heart as well as the head' and shows their vision and understanding as providing 'a deeply satisfying gift of grace from a loving God' (p. 33). On the basis of some biblical exegesis that is developed later in the book, he seeks to offer a 'partial definition of manhood and womanhood'. These are his definitions of masculinity and femininity: 'At the heart of mature masculinity is a sense of benevolent responsibility to lead, provide for and protect women in ways appropriate to a man's differing relationships'. 'At the heart of mature femininity is a freeing disposition to affirm, receive and nurture strength and leadership from worthy men in ways appropriate to a woman's differing relationships' (pp. 35–36). These two statements, which have been exceedingly carefully put together, are then very carefully analysed phrase by phrase. Only a reading of the full article can hope to do justice to what is being said.

However, what does disturb me is the way in which passages of Scripture are used rather too easily to apply to relationships between all men and women, passages which appear to me to be somewhat circumvented in Scripture. For example, some passages that refer primarily to a marriage relationship such as Eph. 5 seem to be used to provide at least guiding principles for all male-female relationships.

Piper is undoubtedly aware of this problem and covers it somewhat in his use of the phrase 'differing relationships'. In other words, it would be appropriate for a man to relate to any woman (other than the one to whom he was married) in ways that the Bible shows are appropriate only to marriage, and *vice versa*. But there is a distinct blurring of the edges here. There is an assumption of male leadership as inherent in masculinity which may be true from observation or experience in some

quarters but I doubt is clearly expressed in Scriptures in terms of *all* men in all their relationships with women.

To my mind the strength of the positions espoused in the book is most impressive where the exegetical sections clearly discuss the context within which rôle differentiation and rôle relationships are expressed. Where some of these ideas are broadened out of that context the biblical work becomes at best less clear. Having said this, many feminists would be more than satisfied to meet a man who fulfilled the type of rôle that Piper outlines for him. The concept of leadership and 'protection' is very rigorously and biblically defined. It is seen in particular forms of service and care for the woman 'appropriate to their differing relationships', that is, the ways of expressing a mature masculinity between husband and wife will be different from that expressed between men and women in business, and so on. Piper also clearly states that in following these God-given rôles, as he sees them, women and men are both freed to be who they are in the deepest understanding of their being. Their sexuality is a fundamental and unchangeable part of that being.

Other interesting articles deserve careful study, specially by those working in the areas of discipline from which they are written. Gregg Johnson's chapter on 'The Biological Basis for Gender-Specific Behaviour' (ch. 16) is just such a case. He writes as a biology professor, pointing to specific biological differences in, for example, the peripheral nervous system, the limbic system and in cerebral organization. I am quite unqualified to offer an opinion on the correctness of his findings but his conclusions make interesting reading for he suggests that 'some fundamental physiological and neural differences that are present at birth . . . predispose us towards certain behaviours dependent on gender'. He argues that there is a correspondence between these biological observations and the rôle differentiation that we find spelled out in Scripture.

This is a book that all who are interested in the debate about the rôle of men and women would do well to read. It is by far the most thorough collective statement from those in the more conservative camp. Perhaps even those who whole-heartedly disagree with the book's conclusions will, in the reading, realize that their opponents need not be 'bigots' or 'male chauvinists' but rather people concerned for the truth of Scripture and for the practice of a biblical Christianity in a modern and very secular society. The chapters written by women in this book are of great significance in this regard.

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PAUL GARDNER

ORDINATION AND VOCATION, YESTERDAY AND TODAY

H.J.M. Turner

Churchman Publishing, Worthing 1990 109pp. £4.95 ISBN 1 85093 210 7

Here is a book whose importance is out of all proportion to its size and format, worthy of the closest attention for what it observes (about the Church of England today), what it suggests (by way of solution to one very clamant problem) and what it reveals of catholic attitudes and doctrines regarding the Ministry and the Lord's Supper.

Whether it has always been so or not, the post-war twentieth century Church of England has been notable for rushing to solutions before it has taken time to

analyse problems or establish principles. The present doleful example of this is the 'team ministry' and who can disagree with Turner's contention that this fashion is set to expedite the death of the church in rural England? Here, he says, there was every need to be led by empirical reality to theological reflection *before* resorting to 'practical solutions', the implications of which have not been thought out. Even small communities need their own minister. Too often the 'Team Vicar' is (implicitly or explicitly) thought of as Vicar of the parish/village where the vicarage is, but no more than a taker-of-services elsewhere in the 'Team'. To reply that it is no longer possible for each community to have a 'vicar' is to beg the question, for while we must not be cavalier about what history has bequeathed to us neither must inherited paradigms be viewed as sacrosanct. Is it essential today to think in inherited 'vicar' terms?

Much of Turner's book is devoted to examining the 'attraction' theory of vocation, that is to say, the view that holds the interior call of the candidate—his or her inner sense of the voice of God—to be the determinative factor. As long as this is held to be the case, the church has only the reactive rôle of deciding whether the candidate's self-awareness is valid, and presently it is the candidate who comes to hold or claim the whip hand in the decision-process by urging that no one has authority to override the voice of God. I would suggest that what Turner says under this heading cannot be gainsaid. Reports on candidates written by Bishops' Selectors bear out the impossibility of arguing a case whether candidate X is or is not 'called by God' and, specially in the cases of candidates not recommended it is clear that over and over again there is no more to it than that a candidate's 'gut-reaction' of having been called by God has been negated by the selectors' gut-reaction that he/she has not!

No, says Turner, we need to return to a practice well-established in Church History (where his knowledge is wide and his reading impressive) that it is up to the (local) church to observe gifts and act as the 'calling agent'. No would-be ministers have the right to demand to minister. In selection it is not a matter of discerning the heart of the candidate but of defining the needs of the church and the abilities already present or potentially observable in its present members. Were the men of the Acts 6 or Paul's elders appointed because they 'felt called'? Today the church should examine, choose and invite those who are 'devout Christians, respected in the locality' and give them such (brief) preparation as would enable them to use their observed gifts in leading services and eucharistic presidency. To complete his picture: in addition to this local and focal person (in Turner's book, always a man) the local grouping of parishes would be serviced by male and female deacons performing liturgical duties and a caring ministry, maybe under the ultimate leadership of a man with a fuller theological and pastoral training and competency. Turner is (as will have been seen) far from espousing a 'Tom, Dick and Harry' ministry. But, very sensibly, he notes that what is actually required in presidency involves little natural ability and does not need extensive and expensive training.

The last paragraph will have indicated that Turner believes the diaconate to be a permanent, distinctive and honourable ministry in its own right. Sadly, however, his book fails (where so many fail) to spell out the details of its distinctiveness. Deacons are servants in the likeness of the Servant Christ—but what do they do? The diaconate is the ideal ministry for women—but why? and for what? It is pathetically inadequate to suggest a 'mother in Israel' rôle and leave it at that. But

an even more serious failure becomes apparent when he discusses what he calls 'the priesthood'—a failure distinctive of catholic theology. Under this heading parallels between Turner and the A.R.C.I.C. reports abound. First, both give two cheers for the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, proceeding at once to urge that 'God's own people' needs an order of 'priests' to minister to it. Secondly, the validity of such an order (which, as all recognize, cannot be found in Scripture) is based on an erroneous parallel between the fact that it took some centuries to establish an authoritative Canon of Scripture and about the same time to come to the conclusion that the threefold order of ministry was a God-given essential. But there is no basis of comparison between something present in principle and practice from the start (the authoritative, written Scripture) and something wholly innovative and contradictory of foundational principles! Thirdly, both adhere to a 'representational' definition of ministry. The Lord Jesus 'served', so we can have a diaconate to reflect his servanthood, but he also presided at table at the Supper and the 'priest' is an 'ikon' of Christ. In Orthodox spirituality an 'ikon' 'makes present' the spiritual reality it signifies—and this is 'the awe-inspiring nature of priesthood. This is what the priest does when he repeats the words and actions of Christ.' But where is this 'ikon' doctrine of ministry (whether of deacon or presbyter) found in Scripture? At the Supper, the Lord Jesus commanded us to obey him, not to imitate him. The one privileged to preside at the Table does not 'represent' Christ (in any sense other than that it is the duty of every believer to be like the Saviour). Rather he acts as the representative of the assembled people of God, lending them his voice and hands in order that they may obey what Jesus commanded.

The time has come not only for Evangelicals in the Church of England to challenge the assumptions and practices of catholic theology and tradition but themselves to cease arguing and acting on catholic presuppositions. A good place to start would be Turner's central truth of a locally recruited and recognized ministry.

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ALEC MOTYER

THE POWER AND THE GLORY Esmond Jefferies

Arthur James, London 1991 198pp. £7.99

ISBN 0 85305 303 0

According to the cover, this book is the story of the miracles of healing that take place regularly at Pin Mill in Suffolk. Jesus we are told is the healer and Esmond Jefferies the channel of his power. The ministry at Pin Mill is supported by doctors and consultants in the area who have seen the miracle.

The theology of Pin Mill is predictable. Christ commanded us to preach the gospel and heal the sick. Healing the sick is therefore the second part of the great commission, a central and essential part of the Christian faith. It is God's will that people are healed and his power knows no limits. It is the same truth we are asked to believe today as it was when Jesus walked among the sick at Capernaum. He has promised that we shall do the things he did, and even greater things. Furthermore, Christ has given Pin Mill the most positive proof that he lives and heals among us today just as he did two thousand years ago (page 1).

In the light of these statements, the methodology of Mr. Jefferies is more surprising as he makes regular use of hypnotism and visualization, while laying his

hands on the part of the body which is diseased. Furthermore he recommends a course of treatments, perhaps on alternate days, and continuing for weeks. Something like an electric current passes through his hands, and a tingling feeling is a sign that God's power is being channelled.

Relaxation is important, hence a visit to the bathroom before therapy. The patient is asked to lie on a couch, arms flopped, hands limp, palms upward until they become limp like a rag doll. Hypnosis is employed to aid the relaxation so that the patient is able to absorb the prayers and receive the healing so much more effectively.

Visualization assists the destruction, for instance, of cancer cells. The patient may be asked to visualize the build-up of white cells around the spleen and the area held between the two hands. When they have visualized a sufficient build-up, they can then be realised to hunt down and destroy the cancer cells.

All this seems a far cry from the healings of Jesus which were usually done instantaneously, completely, at a word of command, without the laying-on of hands, and often in the hustle and bustle of a crowd. Incidentally, there is no mention in this book about raising the dead.

What then of the claimed medical evidence? As a G.P. myself I have focused my enquiries on Sharon and Ken who are the two dominant figures who recur in the story. They are presented as the two best cases.

Ken, we are told, had a large, incurable, malignant tumour of his right forearm, which was healed *instantly* (p. 75). Having had a report now from his consultant and made enquiries about the histology, I can report that Ken had a highly unusual disease, a so-called 'clear-cell sarcoma'. In this disease, remissions with treatment and subsequent recurrences are common, the disease recurring even thirty years after the original diagnosis. In Ken's case, he had had high doses of radiotherapy as well as prolonged courses of multiple chemotherapy. He was offered amputation, which would presumably have been curative, but declined.

He attended Pin Mill five months after a course of radiotherapy. His arm at that time was apparently still swollen and painful. The pain was relieved during the first session of 'healing'; within three weeks it is claimed the swelling had gone down also. The consultant wrote,

There is no doubt that there was a sudden resolution of his pain . . . This I find difficult to explain unless it was merely the resolution of an acute post irradiation reaction. As far as the clinical course of this disease is otherwise, it would appear to be within that described for this particular type of cancer.

The arm, however, remains severely fibrosed from radiotherapy.

Sharon claims to have been deaf in one ear and instantaneously healed at Pin Mill. She claims that she subsequently returned to her E.N.T. specialist who performed an audiogram and discharged her from his care. She invited me to write to her G.P. for confirmation, but the doctor replied that she had no idea that Sharon has been healed and has received no letter to that effect from the hospital. For more than eighteen months subsequently, Sharon has persistently refused the requests of Mr. Jefferies and myself to allow me to write to her consultant for the result of that test, or to have the test repeated by an independent specialist. The failure to produce this evidence has not however hindered the publication of her story in the book.

A third case has been previously described in Rex Gardner's book *Healing*

Miracles (case 2.2) and concerns an unexplained temporary blindness induced by exposure to a photocopier flash. It responded to treatment from Mr. Jefferies on a second attempt. This story has significantly grown in the telling. Dr. Gardner wrote in 1986 that the brain scan was normal and that no conclusive diagnosis was reached. Now we are told by Mr. Jefferies that the brain scan showed that the optic nerves and the receptor cells at the back of the brain had been damaged and nothing could be done to repair them!

Most of the examples described in this book are the usual range of psychosomatic illnesses and fluctuating diseases that enable so many alternative therapists to make a living. Migraines, back-aches, nausea, phobias, and eczemas bear little resemblance to the sort of incurable physical diseases reported in the gospels to have been miraculously healed by Christ. Whence then the power, or the glory?

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PETER MAY

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Other Books Received

- Abingdon Press** D.E. Messer, *A Conspiracy of Goodness: Contemporary Issues of Christian Mission* 1992, \$14.95; Z.W. Holmes, Jr., *Encountering Jesus*, 1992, £4.95; H. Odum, *The Vital Singles Ministry*, 1992, No Price
- Burns & Oates** A. Cooper, *The Cloud of Unknowing: Reflections on Selected Texts*, 1991, £6.95
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- Yale University Press** M. P. Battin, *Ethics in the Sanctuary: Examining the Practices of Organized Religion*, 1990, £9.95

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