Volume XI Number 1

Spring 1988

KING'S Theological Review

BOOK REVIEWS

Genesis 37-50. A Commentary

Claus Westermann. SPCK, 1987. Pp. 269. £30.00

Principal Robert Rainy of New College, Edinburgh, is reputed on one occasion to have said to his students regarding a particular book, "Sell your bed and buy it!". Few, if any of them, can have taken this advice literally, or ever have thought that they might be called upon to make such a self-denying choice. However this third volume of the English translation of the magnificent Genesis commentary by Claus Westermann means that the total cover price for the three volumes now comes to only a little short of £100.00 so that the threat of near monastic poverty may be thought to face the prospective buyer. Such a purchaser, whether a librarian or a private scholar, is therefore entitled to some reassurance that a commentary on this scale, and in such a format, really is worth the cost.

Certainly it is not difficult to give such an assurance on the grounds that it replaces all other available commentaries on Genesis in English and that it offers a remarkably comprehensive treatment of the book. This must undoubtedly be among the very "best buys" of current writings on the books of the Old Testament. Not least is this so because of the unique importance of the book of Genesis within the biblical canon. Fundamental aspects of the doctrine of creation, of man, as well as of the origin and destiny of Israel, are all to be found here. The format of the series is now well established comprising a fresh translation, backed up by extensive textual and philological comment, and a full treatment of the text in regard to literary, historical and theological questions. The bibliographical coverage is remarkably full, both for primary and secondary literature, and is set out in separate sections, thereby avoiding any one over-long listing. This helps in general tidiness, but does mean that some care is needed to ensure that one is looking in the right place to find a particular work.

This third volume of Genesis deals with the Joseph story of chapters 37-50 which has become the subject of several separate studies having a bearing on Pentateuchal criticism generally. These relate to the issue of whether the series of stories contain sufficient historical details to show how it was that Israel's ancestors came to find themselves in Egypt and who the historical Joseph might have been. Nineteenth century scholarship was very attracted to the hypothesis that Joseph was in some way connected with the Hyskos dynasty of Egyptian kings, and now very recently the claim has been made in a book by Ahmed Osman that the very mummy of Joseph has been identified in a Cairo musuem in the figure of Yuya.

Westermann is rightly sceptical about all such historicising efforts to fix the basis of the stories. Although they concern actual historical figures, they are akin to a family novel and he would class them as "belles lettres". From a source-critical perspective Westermann fully upholds the claims of critics, such as W. Rudolph (whose name is misspelt as W. Rudolf on pp. 19 and 20, although elsewhere it is correct), that the cycle of Joseph stories falls wholly outside the J, E and P source documents. Such an assessment must assuredly be correct and further strengthens the contention that this sequence of stories of independent origin has been woven onto the end of the saga of the patriarchs in order to fashion a bridge to the story of exodus. The evidence of the P author's fitting in of the Joseph material is to be found in chapters 37 and 46-50.

Westermann is also able to give substantial attention to the claim initiated by G. von Rad that the Joseph story-cycle was deeply imbued with wisdom characters and themes. He accepts some elements of this claim, but, as is characteristic of his generally guarded critical approach, recognizes that it has often been rashly exaggerated. There is much that is uncharacteristic of wisdom also present in the stories and such a feature as Joseph's skill in dream intepretation is more a popular folk-motif than a fundamental goal of the wise.

Overall there is so much that is good in this three-volume commentary that its worth is hard to over-state. It should undoubtedly last for a very long time as a standard work. It inevitably invites some comparison with the pioneering commentary on Genesis by Hermann Gunkel of 1901. Certainly Westermann's work is a worthy successor to the earlier one. Having said this, however, it is necessary to recognize the very different character of the two commentaries, which reflects the very different situation in which biblical scholarship is placed in 1988 from where it was in 1901. It is in many respects this difference which accounts for the far greater length of Westermann's work and the different approach adopted. Gunkel's commentary was pioneering, sometimes idiosyncratic, and little concerned to summarise and evaluate the work of other scholars. Westermann's is comprehensive and deeply involved in the debates that other scholars have raised at almost every section of the book. It offers a balanced critique, a concern to draw together and combine different insights and approaches, and a determined effort to single out the most convincing results of a century of critical work on Genesis. If it is less original that Gunkel's work was in its day, it is more convincing and better able to establish a kind of scholarly plateau on which future studies can proceed. It certainly deserves a very high rating indeed as a contribution to Old Testament research. Even allowing that Principal Rainy could be guilty of hyperbole, this is undoubtedly the kind of book he had in mind. It should certainly last for more than a generation of students. Nor should the immense labours in translation of all three volumes by Fr. John Scullion S.J. of Newman College, Melbourne, be overlooked. The translator has an almost thankless task since the best he can hope for is to come very close to the original from which he has worked. Certainly the translation reads very fluently and gives every confidence as to its accuracy and clarity. This is a commentary that deserves to be read, and ought not to be left to gather dust on library shelves.

Ronald E. Clements

Backward into Light. The Passion and Resurrection of Jesus according to Matthew and Mark

J. L. Houlden. SCM, 1987. Pp. x + 84. £3.95

Would that there were more Lenten reading and Passiontide meditation of this kind, recognising the connections between spiritual and intellectual stimulus! The relationship is established not only in the manner and methods of the book, but also forms part of the substance of the discussion (in the perception of God's movement towards us, the perception of faith as suggestion, and the nature of post-critical spirituality). The book began as Holy Week lectures in a theological college, and those who know Professor Houlden will not be surprised at the amount of food for thought which he can offer in so small a compass. A whole course of study on modern methods of approaching the Bible, and the way of maintaining a judicious balance between them, is outlined in these pages.

As the sub-title indicates, the basis of the book is a comparison between Mark's and Matthew's accounts of Jesus' Passion and Resurrection. On the working assumption that Matthew used Mark, attention is drawn both to small variations and to special material in Matthew, which can be related to Matthew's overall tendencies in his gospel. Matthew's changes are not so trivial as might appear. He clarifies Mark's account, offering detail and explanation; he makes the story more spectacular and stupendous. He introduces the principle of requital ("the Son of man . . . will repay every man for what he has done" – 16.27) and shows it in action in the case of Judas (27.3-10). And by the episode of the soldiers who secure the tomb and then have to be bribed to cover up the truth, Matthew offers a proof and demonstration of the Resurrection that only falls short of the account in the apocryphal gospel of Peter.

This is not simply an exercise in redaction criticism. For the modern reader of the narrative can see Matthew embodying opposite theological tendencies to Mark. And through the ensuing Christian traditions, we find ourselves caught in the tensions between them: "The perception of God's movement towards us . . . in terms not of 'gift' . . . but of 'assault' by spectacular force; the perception of the ultimate morality of the universe in terms not of the power-weakness of a loving . . . God, but of deserts to be enforced by sanctions; and the perception of faith in terms not of gracious suggestion . . . but of sealed and impregnable demonstration." These comparisons work to Matthew's discredit, even though such developments can be justified historically within the life of the church.

There is a real tension in the general argument here, not just between historical and literary (structural) methods of reading the texts, but also between the reconstruction of historical contexts (which are local and particular) and the drawing of general morals (which are issues of theological and ethical principle). Furthermore Professor Houlden has a tendency to make a virtue out of the fact of inconsistencies in Mark's narrative, while construing inconsistencies in Matthew as a vice. Matthew stands accused of a readiness to settle for what is less than the best. But as the author acknowledges, other interpretations of the intentions could well be different, because they are based on different value judgements.

I must confess to a particular puzzlement about Matthew's use of apocalyptic images. By editorial rearrangement Mt 24 is made consistently supernatural in reference, compared with Mk 13. And in many ways throughout the gospel he could be said to heighten the supernatural element. But the cause of this is apparently not an urgent eschatological concern within an apocalyptic community (although the notion of eternal punishment, introduced with the principle of requital, sounds like the desire for vengeance typical of such a community). Instead the apocalyptic ideas function, like literary devices, to intensify and compel belief, within a community which has a clearer sense of its own long-term purpose and historical perspective. Surely it is oversimplifying to compare this "church-realism" of Matthew with Mark's "purity of eschatology", if Mark's concern is with discipleship in the new crisis of Nero's persecution or the Jewish revolt.

But it is less appropriate to engage in minute academic debate, if the purpose of this book is to suggest how the evangelists contribute to the wider process of faith today. Professor Houlden speaks of a frontier between prayer and theology, but encourages more traffic across the frontier. To adapt another poem by Edwin Muir (who is quoted in the title) about another border:

> What shall avail me/When I reach the border?
> Strange I shall hale me/To that strange land.

We are less ill-prepared, with books like this to show us the way across.

John M. Court

Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts. The Social and Political Motivations of Lucan Theology

Philip F. Esler. CUP, 1987. SNTS Monograph Series 57. Pp. xv + 270. £25.00 (hb)

As is well known, sociology is a bogus science taught by leftie academics to long-haired students unwilling to undertake work like learning Hebrew; its concepts are ill-defined and its theories reductionist, being based either on vague diachronic likenesses, or on questionnaires telling us things we already knew. Yet here is Dr. Philip Esler, an Australian barrister with an Oxford D.Phil. in Theology, suggesting that sociology is the key to understanding Luke-Acts; and a very interesting book he has written too.

First century Christianity, he says, was a sect separating itself from a church, Judaism; and a consistent feature of such separations is the need to *legitimate*, to provide a universe of meaning to life which can compete with that of the rejected church. Luke's books were written for his own community of Christians around 90, and that community contained a good number of Jews,

some of whom are always converted in Acts. To these Jews it was the habit of a lifetime not to eat with Gentiles, for reasons of purity; so an important theme of Acts is the legitimation of table-fellowship – Peter, the leading Jewish Christian, went and ate with Cornelius, and Paul stayed with Lydia and Titius Justus, and ate with his ex-gaoler. To such Jews the Law was God's Law: so Luke legitimates the Church's attitude to the Law. Luke was conservative and consistent about it: it was valid, and everyone decent kept it through Gospel and Acts, especially Paul – only it was not enough for salvation, the awaited redemption through the Messiah Jesus. Jews, and especially Diaspora Jews, loved their Temple; so Luke legitimates a positive attitude to the Temple too. The whole Gospel story started there, and Jesus went there for cleansing after his birth and before his death; and Peter and Paul alike honoured it. Only Stephen drew attention to its limitations, being man-made (like idols in LXX); and this line will have appealed to Gentile Christians who had been excluded from its inner courts, and who might not grieve at its destruction. Luke's congregation also contained middle-class well-heeled members, and beggars (*ptōchoi*); and his Gospel draws from this the force of its demand that the first should sell their property for the needs of the second. It contained Roman officials too, centurions and the like, and the stress on Roman toleration of Jesus and Paul arises from the need to legitimate the Church to these church-members, not to outsiders. The book has some other interesting suggestions too. It looks as if Peter is given the credit for bringing the first Gentile into the Church so as to reassure Jewish church-members – very likely the offence of the Hellenists, which is being so assiduously covered over in the story of the widows' neglect, was that the first Gentiles were admitted by them.

Some of all this must be right, and even if we were conscious of it before, the sociological angle certainly sharpens it, and reproves our patronising and neglect of the subject till yesterday. Especially the sections on the Temple and the "Roman" church-members seemed to me convincing. Other parts raise questions. Table-fellowship was surely a hot potato in the 40s and 50s; but, as was observed in "Yes, Prime Minister", with time a hot potato becomes a cold potato. Were people still agonising about it two generations later? No doubt there were Jews in Luke's church at its foundation, but had any more come in since? Furthermore, at one point (p. 107) Esler sees Luke as justifying matters to his Christian contemporaries more widely – if so, could we not do without the dubious arguments for a considerable Jewish element in his own community? I do not think Luke is consistent over the Law, though he tries hard. At Lk. 16.17 it is eternally valid, but in Acts 15 Jews have found its yoke unsupportable, and it is revoked almost in its entirety for Gentiles.

I do not think the section on rich and poor is in focus. The poor in the Great Supper parable represent the Jewish church, and the Jerusalem church was poor; hence the great Collection. The later Ebionites derived their name and poverty from the communal living of Acts 2-4 (Epiphanius, Pan. 30.17.2), and Luke's comments on poverty should be read in this context rather than that of his own church. As for the rich, Luke adopts the tactic of bidding up the price of salvation: it costs all you have at 14.33, half with Zacchaeus, but generous alms suffice at 11.41. Also it does not help the argument for Esler to keep implying that exegetes who disagree with him do so because of their middle class origins!

Esler can be faulted in other ways. He sometimes forces a weak argument – *kairoi ethnōn* does not mean "the ages of the Gentiles"; a priest and Levite in the Good Samaritan would be poor symbols of the synagogue in Luke's day; the attempted lynching of Jesus in Lk. 4 is hardly a reflection of Luke's own day. He is sometimes rather superior to other scholars. But none of this should distract from the fact that he has written a creative thesis, and one that should be widely read.

Michael Goulder

Psychological Aspects of Pauline Theology

Gerd Theissen. T. & T. Clark, 1987. Pp. xiii + 433. £19.95

While the leadership of New Testament studies, held, apparently unassailably, by the Germans since the advent of historical scholarship, has now passed to North America, the work of Gerd Theissen indicates that the great German tradition is capable of renewal from within. After his initial studies in Hebrews and the gospel tradition, Theissen made his name with penetrating sociological studies of the Jesus tradition and of early Pauline Christianity. These works are marked by a combination of the rigorous use of historical-critical methods and the judicious application of sociological models, underpinned by a wide knowledge of the ancient world, both Jewish and Graeco-Roman. In addition, for the discerning reader, he has not turned his back on the question of the theological relevance of early Christian texts. The hints in his exegetical work on how he relates his critical studies to his theology (including the question of the challenge of pyschology to faith) can be followed up in *On Having a Critical Faith* (SCM, 1979) and *Biblical Faith. An Evolutionary Approach* (SCM, 1984). Most recently he has produced a brilliant narrative account of the impact of the historical Jesus (*The Shadow of the Galilean*, SCM, 1987), which manages to be a "good read", an introduction to Josephus, and an account of the place of Jesus within Palestinian Judaism. (Most regrettably the dismissive review of this book in the *Church Times* failed to come to terms with the book's subtlety and consequently missed a major opportunity for educating the clergy.) Against such a background one approaches John P. Galvin's translation of Theissen's large-scale monograph on Paul, published in German in 1983, with considerable expectation. With this book Theissen announces his move into another "new" approach to the New Testament.

The author is fully aware of the scorn usually heaped on psychological interpretations of the New Testament, particularly within the German-speaking world: "Every exegete has learned that psychological exegesis is poor exegesis." (1) This legacy of dialectical/kerygmatic theology's rejection of supposedly "liberal" methods is dealt with in two ways. Firstly, Theissen limits his attention to the Pauline texts and their theology, and does not analyse Paul himself. By this astute move he avoids all

the problems associated with the attempt to reconstruct Paul's personality or life story from our fragmentary sources. Secondly, he sets out his theoretical position at length in the first part of the book. However, it is here that the major problem with the book is all too evident. While his earlier studies were careful to introduce potentially new pieces of theory in manageable sections, one is here confronted with 50 dense pages of very wide-ranging psychological and hermeneutical considerations. This part will only make sense to the expert; for the reader who is primarily interested in the New Testament it cries out for some illustration of the psychological theories discussed. However, the complexity of this section merely reflects its content: Theissen draws on three types of psychological explanation (learning theory, psychodynamic and cognitive approaches) and integrates them into a wider hermeneutical model, along the lines of Hans Thomae's synthetical approach to psychological theory.

Turning to Paul, the motif of the "secrets of the heart" (1 Cor. 4:1-5; Rom. 2:16; 1 Cor. 14:20-25) is discussed to demonstrate the prima-facie case for a psychological approach to the Pauline texts. This is followed by detailed treatments of the themes of "the veil" (of Moses, 2 Cor. 3:4ff.; on the head of women, 1 Cor. 11:3ff.), law and sin in the classic passage in Rom. 7:7ff., glossolalia (1 Cor. 12 and 14, with further reference to Rom. 8:18-30), and wisdom for the perfect (1 Cor. 2:6-16). As can be seen from this list, Theissen has not attempted a comprehensive Pauline theology from a psychological perspective; on the other hand, he has tackled some of the most puzzling parts of Paul's epistles, and he wisely uses this self-limitation in order to discuss the textual, historical and psychological problems of his selected themes in great depth.

The interpretation itself is marked by an important methodological innovation. As already noted Theissen is not interested in naïve romanticizing about Paul's personality; nor does he simply interrogate the text. Each exegetical section contains a thorough analysis of the history of tradition of the theme under discussion, because historical traditions are the conditions for the possibilities of human experience and behaviour. These sections are extremely valuable pieces of historical research and many will find them more illuminating than the psychological analyses which follow them. They then act as a springboard for the psychological analyses of Paul's text within its historical context. In this way the historical and psychological approaches are integrated and the approach as a whole is akin to studies from the standpoint of the sociology of knowledge.

The centre-piece of the book is the discussion of Rom. 7:7ff. Theissen argues in detail against Kümmel's widely-received view that this passage is not biographical; rather the text has at least a biographical background; in vv. 7-13 conflict with the law before Paul's conversion is depicted, in vv. 14-24 a postdecisional conflict is presented. In overview, Christ is a vicariously acting and suffering model; God condemns him but then revises his judgement. Believers constantly re-enact this event within themselves and thus learn to approach the demanding God without anxiety. In psychodynamic terms Christ is the catalyst of an inner transformation, taking on one's negative identity, and thus allowing unconscious aggression against the demanding God to be brought to consciousness and be dealt with. In addition Paul's gospel offers a change in roles in which a realistic, yet unconditionally positive, self-image can be achieved. Theissen agrees with Kümmel that Paul's assessment of the past is retrospective: the pride in the law evident in Phil. 3 is the result of repressed unconscious conflict with the law; by contrast, Rom. 7 is the result of a long, retrospective, bringing-to-consciousness of this conflict. (242) It is regrettable that, despite Theissen's openness to a more positive evaluation of Judaism and the law than has been usual within German Lutheranism (e.g. 158), he does not debate with the new view of the law put forward in the late 70s by E. P. Sanders, H. Räisänen and others.

This book is undoubtedly a profound and substantial contribution to the understanding of Paul's thought and the task of interpreting New Testament texts. The exegetical and historical sections, which make up nearly two-thirds of the main text, are exemplary, and the psychological questioning brings out the complexities and contradictions of Paul's thought, often the casualties of interpretations based exclusively on historical or theological models. One can only wish that the psychological sections were more accessible to non-specialists. The English translation, a difficult and thankless task, is workmanlike but stilted, and in places the German is thinly disguised ("nonsalvation" for "Unheil", "foundation" for "Begründung" etc.). English translations of German works are noted in the bibliography, but the page numbers of German editions are given in the footnotes.

David Way

Arius: Heresy and Tradition

Rowan Williams. DLT, London, 1987. Pp. 348. £19.95

This major new study of the famous arch-heretic introduces the complex political, theological and philosophical worlds of the fourth century to the reading public in a way which makes sense of the many competing forces which were at work then, and the different presuppositions which have governed modern studies of the subject. It will certainly be possible to question Professor Williams' judgement in some places, and there is no doubt that parts of this book will eventually be superseded by future scholarly research, but the solid achievement of these pages will remain and will constitute an essential point of reference for the ongoing debate about the origins of early Christian orthodoxy.

The first section of the book consists of a short introduction to the history of Arian studies. Great attention is paid to the theses of John Henry Newman and of Adolf Harnack, both of whom tried to relate Arius to the Antiochene tradition of theology associated with the name of Paul of Samosata. More recent studies, particularly that of Gregg and Groh, are also considered, though perhaps not at such a deep level. It is clear that Williams will be trying to overturn the classical scholarly

view of the subject and propose an essentially new interpretation of the career and theology of Arius.

The rest of the book is divided into three parts, with a concluding theological postscript and an appendix which gives the main credal documents of the period. The first part deals with the career of Arius, in so far as this is known, and concentrates on the events surrounding the Council of Nicaea. The picture drawn is of a church which was informally divided into two strands – the "Catholic", with its emphasis on episcopal collegiality and communion, and the "Academic", which consisted of schools of thought gathered round a favourite teacher. Williams contends that Arius represented the latter at a time when the former was gaining the upper hand, and that had he lived earlier, before the legalisation of the Church, he might have met a kinder fate.

Historical might-have-beens are obviously impossible to assess, and Part I is probably the weakest section of this book. This is not to deny that much of the author's argument is valid in itself, but somehow he fails to get to grips with the question of why it was that so apparently obscure a person should have lent his name (at least) to a heresy which was to have strong political implications down to the end of the sixth century. Origen, or even Apollinarius or Nestorius could have served as a rallying point for political forces of different types, but Arius stands in a unique position in this respect. We may never know why, but the main contribution of this book is to provide a starting-point for the future research which will be needed in this sphere.

More satisfactory is the second part, which examines the theology of Arius in great detail. The author demonstrates that Arius was a committed theological conservative in the Alexandrian mould whose originality consisted of the fact that he reorganised traditional doctrines according to a new philosophical system which he got from the Neoplatonism of Plotinus and Porphyry. He rejects the contention that Arius owed anything very much to the Antiochene school of thought, and places him firmly in the same mental universe as his great opponent Athanasius. The reasons for his ultimate eclipse are very judiciously summarised in the conclusion as follows (p. 178):

> "He is not a theologian of consensus, but a notably individual intellect. Yet because his concerns are shared by a large number of bishops and teachers outside Egypt, he can, albeit briefly, be the figurehead for a consensus of sorts. For many of his contemporaries, Arius' conception of orthodoxy at least ruled out what they wished to see ruled out; but relatively few would have endorsed, or perhaps even grasped, the theology of the *Thalia* in its full distinctiveness."

This assertion is backed up by Part III, which deals with Arius' philosophical background. Williams concludes that Arius was not a philosopher himself, but that he managed to borrow a radically different ontology from the one to which most of his contemporaries were accustomed, and in so doing shook the foundations of their belief.

The overall conclusion of the book is that Arius saw the need for the Church to sort out its rather woolly systematic theology, but that his own attempt to do this failed to carry conviction. The pro-Nicene opposition however had to do what he intended, and succeeded in the end because it was able to find a more coherent set of links between the philosophical and the spiritual demands of Christian teaching. Arius thus appears as a pioneer who failed, rather than as an arch-heretic out to destroy the faith of the Church.

There can be no doubt that the historical portrait of Arius is exaggerated and unfair to him – the same, after all, can be said of every ancient heretic. In focussing our attention on the relevant details, Professor Williams has done an excellent job of reassessing Arius as a theologian. If he does not quite rehabilitate him, he at least shows that he should be taken much more seriously as a Christian thinker than traditional polemic has allowed.

If the book can be said to have a real weakness, it is that it concentrates so narrowly on Arius as an individual (in spite of the very wide ranging chapters on contemporary theological and philosophical thought) that it neglects the significance of Arianism. It may well be true that a conscious school of thought with that name did not exist, and that the term was an invention of the pro-Nicene party, but the designation could not have stuck if there were no element of truth in it. It may be possible to reduce the historical significance of Arius himself, or at least reinterpret it in such a way as to leave the traditional picture unrecognisable, but Arianism has a more public face which will not so easily be altered. However, that is another subject, and could profitably form the basis of a subsequent volume to examine it in its turn.

Gerald Bray

Commentaries on Romans 1532-1542

T. H. L. Parker. T. & T. Clark, 1986. Pp. xii + 226. £14.95 (hb)

This book surveys all the commentaries which were written on the *Epistle to the Romans* between the years 1532-42. It may come as a surprise to learn that no fewer than 35 appeared in that turbulent decade, even if a few of them were only parts of a larger NT commentary. Still more surprising, if the commentaries were restricted to a specific commentary on *Romans* purely and simply, five of the commentaries were written by Romanists, and only one by a Reformer. What does this mean? What was urging these Catholic scholars to comment on *Romans*? Who was reading these commentaries? Why did these publishers find it worth their while to print so many within a span of 10 years?

Not that the author pursues these and other fascinating questions which emerge from his investigations. He confines himself strictly to a survey of the respective authors and their books, namely, Melanchthon, Cajetan and Titelmann (1532); Bullinger

and Cagney (1533); Sadoleto (1535); Bucer, Maresche (1536); Pellican (1539); Calvin (1540); Grimani and Guilliaud (1542). The question arises, can we even begin to imagine the theological taste of an age when its scholars produced such a spate of weighty commentaries on *Romans* within 10 years, and to realise that these authors enjoyed immense popularity?

In Part Two of the book the author confines himself to a comparative study of the manner in which these scholars interpreted the three early key passages of Rom. 1. 18-23, 2. 13-16 and 3. 20-28. Here the reader sees how the authors, with the same text before them, agree or disagree in their interpretations, whether of details such as the meaning of a word, or more broadly, their understanding of a passage. What strikes the reader is the remarkable diversity of the authors, (among whom were scholars, cardinals, professors, pastors, chaplains), all with a common concern for *Romans*, and further, how each maintains his own individuality. Secondly, how palpably clear the Epistle was to the Reformers, how difficult for the Romanists: the Reformers saw it as expressing the entire Gospel, and that their interpretation was faithful to earlier and purer times; the Romanists half assenting to this, yet arguing that only Mother Church had the authority to interpret it. The difference was not merely a matter of terminology, more a matter of authority. No single harmonious interpretation and no two clearly opposed harmonious interpretations emerge from this study. The Reformers, with their single-minded interpretation, argued that the Epistle was the genuine Gospel of God's Word, and that they alone were faithful to the earlier centuries and the true tradition. The Romanists argued, either by opposing the teaching of the Bible by the teaching of the Church, or by trying to show, (Cajetan, in particular), that Scripture was really on the side of the Church. It is worth noting how close both sides are in the central truths of justification by faith, even if the Catholics introduce certain modifications. What is still more important, both sides appeal to the final court of appeal of Holy Scripture, even if the Catholics maintain that it can only be properly expounded by the Church under the Pope; nevertheless, the ultimate authority remains the Word of God.

Apart from the intrinsic value of the study of these commentaries in this memorable decade, two truths emerge of special significance for the ecumenical debate. First, to recall how, in the period before Trent, that both sides were very close on the central truths of the Faith, viz., Law and Gospel, grace and mercy, faith and works, righteousness and justification. Even when Catholics bring in modifications to the stark evangelical thinking, it is still the truth of the Evangel they are arguing. Secondly, how close both sides are on the supremacy of Scripture. Even when the Catholics modify this supremacy by arguing that Scripture is to be interpreted within the Church under the Pope, nevertheless, it is still the same Scripture which both sides are discussing.

On this point may the reviewer say that he has spent years of his life reminding the Church that Luther (and following him, all the Reformers) both gave and could continue to restore the Christological corrective to the entire Church Catholic, Protestant and Catholic alike. Parker's book illustrates the vigour and vitality of biblical and doctrinal argument before Trent engaged in by Romanists and Reformers alike. The reviewer begs humbly to observe that Parker's book is more than the simple (and valuable) analytical work of a Reformation scholar, for which we are grateful, but decisively carries encouragement and hope for the pursuance of ecumenical debate, hardly at the level of intensity of the decade 1532-42, nevertheless, at the depth such a significant debate demands. It is at such a level, and this level only, that the debate may eventually emerge into unity in truth.

James Atkinson

Images of Eternity. Concepts of God in five religious traditions

Keith Ward. DLT, 1987. Pp. viii + 197. £8.95

Keith Ward sets himself an admirable, difficult and interesting task: to examine selected philosophers from the five major world religions and to discern whether there is a common underlying notion of the divine, or a common thematic concern which unites the religions. He employs what he calls "a phenomenological method"; not allowing his own beliefs to "intrude judgementally upon the traditions" considered (vii). His line up is formidable: Śankara, Rāmānuja, Buddhaghosa, Asvaghosa, Maimonides, Al-Ghazzālī, Aquinas – and a chapter on the Hebrew Bible.

In the 19th century search for the historical Jesus, apparently using neutral methods, the Jesus of history often ended up looking like the researcher. Ward's search and its outcome has certain parallels. His discovery that a "dual-aspect doctrine of God" is to be found within all five traditions is intriguing. This doctrine is bimodial. God is seen in one aspect, as wholly beyond change, unlimited pure being – while at the same time, in another aspect, involved in creation and temporality "ever realizing new values in time" (p. 155). Both aspects must be held together. On closer examination this dual aspect doctrine is remarkably similar to the doctrine of God in Ward's book, *Rational Theology and the Creativity of God*, Blackwell, 1984. (Ward acknowledges this in chapter eight.) One of course cannot rule out coincidence or/and a certain visionary insight, but such a conclusion should put us on our guard. Ward's argument stands or falls in his depiction and analysis of the representative thinkers.

Ward is scrupulously honest and diligently lucid in his exposition of the various thinkers. Fair, although not indisputable portrayals are given. The problems emerge when it comes to Ward's consequent construal of the implications of the philosophies of thinkers like Śankara and Buddhaghosa. After outlining Śankara's non-dual Advaita and highlighting the problem of the relation of Brahman to the finite world, Ward confesses that he finds Śankara "incoherent" (20)! He therefore tries to resolve the problem of Śankara frankly acknowledging: "I am certainly qualifying Śankara's terminology in a fairly radical way" and that his use of Śankara's terms are "very stretched" (26-7). Ward's resolution is to question the ultimate identity of Ātman and Brahman; and suggests a "unity" instead, emphasising identity, yet difference.

This allows him to hold together equally, rather than ultimately relegate saguna Brahman (with attributes) to nirguna Brahman (without attributes) – as does Śankara. Śankara's thought is admittedly criticised in a similar vein by other Vedāntins. But to resolve Śankara's problems in a fashion hardly befitting an apparently neutral phenomenological method and then to argue that this resolution gives us in Śankara a dual aspect doctrine of God is deeply problematic.

With Buddhagosa, Ward is equally agile in construing an-atta (the doctrine of no-self) as an injunction to act selflessly, rather than allowing its full metaphysical import. The latter he calls a paradox and says he "can see no way of resolving it" (p.62). Similarly, Buddhagosa's view of nirvāna is rendered into a theism, but with a "minimalist view of the creative action of God" (p. 64)! This is hardly a straightforward phenomenological presentation but a very creative interpretation of quite *different* views so that they can be construed to point towards a similar underlying concept of God. (Ward is not unaware of the theistic implications of the term God.)

Ward also argues that there is a similarity of structure within the major religions: a vision/revelation of something beyond the finite; a response and a way of life that follows from this response; and a consequent transformation in those who undertake such a response. While Ward acknowledges a difference between structure and content (p. 48), there is a tendency to conflate the two, so as to allow the former to interpret the latter. Hence, while acknowledging that "Vedantins speak of the goal of life as union with the Self, whereas Jews speak of an obedient love of God" he argues for a significant "similarity of structure; of a turning from selfish pursuits to an obedient union with a higher personal being" (p. 46). This may well be – but at what level of significance?

In highlighting these difficulties in Ward's argument, I do not wish to register a complaint at its basic intentions, but rather at the methods employed. At a high level of generality Ward's thesis is partially convincing, but whether Śankara or Buddhaghosa would have accepted it is another question. Ward's contribution to the debate about the relation between religions is provocative, thoughtful and original. It will be of immense interest to see how philosophers from the various traditions respond to his suggestions.

Gavin D'Costa

The Way of the Black Messiah. The Hermeneutical Challenge of Black Theology as a Theology of Liberation

Theo Witzvliet. SCM, 1987. Pp. xiv + 332. £12.50

Witzvliet sees black theology as a liberation theology and he defines it thus: "Liberation theology is a criticism of any theology which in its method strives to be universally applicable and in so doing 'forgets' that any reflection is always already part of a particular historical context" (p. xi). "Black theology criticizes the theological traditions (of the West) because of their benign neglect (C. Eric Lincoln) of black history and experience" (p. xiii). It "criticizes the norms of the established schools" (William R. Jones) (p. 5). American history and American theology can thus no longer claim bona fide scholarship when it constantly overlooks black culture, religion and achievements. It is revealing, says James Cone, "to note that during my nearly six years of residence at Garrett-Northwestern, not one text written by a black person was ever used as a required reading for a class" (p. 312).

These are severe criticisms of our theological traditions not just in America but also in Europe and in a great part of Third World theological establishments. Are they justified? All depends on what we understand by theology. If by theology we understand a theoretical discipline which operates in a lofty stratosphere, unspoiled both by the theologian's own social and biographical background and by the social context in which he operates, then of course we can benignly ignore the criticism of black theologians. But who would dare to put forward such a gnostic understanding of theology! Both, evangelical (e.g. Charles Kraft) and catholic theologians (e.g. Walter Bühlmann) have said farewell to such a theology. And in fact we could have learned this already from the historical critical school of biblical interpretation which taught us that all biblical texts have their social, political and cultural *Sitz im Leben*.

But what about Karl Barth, one might interject. Didn't he teach us that the word of God is unspoiled by its context? Well, he didn't! Barth's theology has a clear *Sitz im Leben*, not only in his fight against fascism but also in his stance in Switzerland. Think of his statement that the moral test of a nation is the way it treats its prisoners. For many years he preached in the prison of Basel, and only in the prison. He made it a custom when visiting another country to ask for permission to visit the prisons in order to assess that country's civilisation. "Black theology describes white theology as the theology which passes over the victims of oppression. In this sense Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Karl Barth are not white theologians" (p. 6). And when Barth is thoughtlessly quoted without taking into account his development and the front against which he addressed his theology, then "what in one context is liberating theological insight can become the opposite in another" (p. 7). "It is not illegitimate to suppose that in Cone's black theology perhaps for the first time in American theology Karl Barth is really accepted and incorporated" (Klauspeter Blaser). Cone was angry with the Barthians who used him "to justify doing nothing about the struggle for justice". Cone always thought that Barth was closer to him than to them (p. 166).

Whether black theology is a true incorporation of Barth or not will probably remain controversial. I believe that Cone has the evidence on his side. In the case of Bonhoeffer the situation is even clearer. Forty years before any black theology appeared, he wrote in his reports from America about the deep insights he got from the black Christians and that – in his opinion – if one wanted to hear the Gospel one had to listen to their songs, their prayers, their preaching and not to the mainline American churches.

But what about the weaknesses of black theology? Witvliet acknowledges them on the basis of admissions made by black theologians themselves. For instance, black missionaries in Africa have been just as paternalistic as white missionaries (p. 236). There is an increasing gulf between the black middle classes and the hopeless situation of the black underclass (p. xiii). "We are no longer preaching on Sunday mornings to a group of poor, oppressed Black people who may not have had a decent meal on Saturday" (p. 245). Therefore black theology has also a critical function in relation to black religion (p. 216).

And what about the relation of black American theology to African theology? Here I must disagree with Witvliet who sees in African forms of theology a nostalgia for the intact culture of the past (p. 43). It is exactly in these African forms of theology that we might find the clue to some of the questions which Witvliet asks but cannot answer, e.g.: "Is it possible within the framework of what is called 'theology' to do justice to the unique character of black religion?" (p. 214). "How can a discipline like systematic theology or dogmatics in which the written word is uppermost, give expression to the specifically oral tradition of black culture and religion?" (p. 217). The Africans have shown us how. They also have protested against the rigidity of Latin American liberation theology which is sometimes more interested in producing Marxist theory than in listening to their own women's groups (p. 238).

How such an African theology would look is not the concern of this review. But there are alternatives. Witvliet believes that they lie in a pneumatology following a little-known but important Dutch tradition which does not restrict the Spirit of God to the Christian church. And here I can only agree with Witvliet.

In the end, however, we have to ask ourselves what all this means for our own country, the UK. Where and how will the many black Christians in our mainline churches, and in several hundred black-led churches, develop a black theology which helps us to recognise the cultural imprisonment of our Western theology and helps them to become part of an ecumenical theology which will never be uniform but which will listen to other voices. I wonder which theological college, which university, will first take up the challenge. It is high time.

In addition to these fundamental issues, Witvliet gives us a good insight into the history of black theology in America, he discusses Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, the Spirituals and black preaching, and the different strands of black theology in America. This is a good thought-provoking book writen in the best Dutch tradition of scholarship and ecumenical openness.

Walter J. Hollenweger

Theology in Turmoil. The Roots, Course and Significance of the Conservative-Liberal Debate in Modern Theology

Alan P. F. Sell. Baker, 1986. Pp. 199. $9.95

Histories of modern theology conform for the most part to the conception of history as an account of the doings and influence of the great, and it is indeed true that the tone of much contemporary theology is set by those we have come to consider great. One of the debts which we owe to Professor Sell in this and earlier writings is his demonstration that all kinds of other influences have been at work. His is a view that more goes on than is to be witnessed in establishments, whether academic or ecclesiastical, and that if we are to gain a full picture of our background we must be aware of what is going on in all kinds of places. A strength of this book is that it takes into its compass many strands of theological thought, particularly dissenting and American, which are often absent from the standard histories.

In the course of a fairly short book – too short to do justice to all three of the features announced in the sub-title – the author presents a panoramic view of a debate between "conservative" and "liberal" which is with us still. He begins with a chapter on the "immanentism" which was introduced by the three great influences of recent times, Kant, Schleiermacher and Hegel, and then moves on to accounts of the effect of biblical criticism and evolutionary science. Both of the latter, he observes, tend to take their impulse from and further contribute to the immanentism of the age. But he also observes that the matter was by no means straightforward: for many thoughtful theologians in the 19th century, evolution theory lacked the terrors which we tend to assume it had for all.

There are other interesting ways in which, by looking at the broad picture, Dr. Sell is able to undermine fashionable theories. For example, we tend to believe that until the First World War evolutionary optimism was all-conquering, while with the crisis it suddenly disappeared. This book shows that many had not succumbed to optimism before the war, while others continued to be optimistic after it. Similarly, although he shows that there were clear theological differences between conservative and liberal, he is also careful to point out the vast range of variations and overlaps to be found, and, indeed, the ambiguities inherent in the terms themselves.

The debate, as the author rightly comments, is about where the heart of the Christian gospel is to be found. Yet, despite an avowed intent to suggest that modern immanentism vitiates the gospel, he is even-handed in criticism, and the final chapter shows the weaknesses on both sides of the debate. In fact, the historical strength of the book is that, coming from a "conservative" author, it is yet fully aware of the rigidities of many conservative positions, most of them still very much with us, which made liberalism inevitable. Nevertheless, the theological aim is never far away, and by the use of the word *immanentism* the author indicates where the heart of the matter lies, for he believes that the whole tendency of modern thought is to blur the fundamental distinction

between the Creator and the creation, and so to become idealistic rather than religious, anthropocentric rather than theocentric. The footmarks of the great Forsyth are everywhere to be seen in the argument, and it is to be hoped that we shall later receive from this author some more systematic account of the central theological categories that inform his subtle and detailed historical criticism.

Colin Gunton

Tradition and Authority in Science and Theology, with Reference to the Thought of Michael Polanyi

Alexander Thomson. Scottish Academic Press, 1987. Pp. xi + 116. £10.50

Knowledge of God. Calvin, Einstein and Polanyi

Iain Paul. Scottish Academic Press, 1987. Pp. x + 155. £10.50

The realisation that the development and assumptions of modern science are not in every way hostile to Christian belief is spawing an ever growing literature. One of the sources of enlightenment is the work of the scientist and philosopher, Michael Polanyi. Although there is a danger, not always avoided in these books, that Polanyi will be overused or used uncritically, there is no doubt that he has much to give to theology, particularly to those who would explore the relationship between Christianity and modernity. Both of the authors whose work is under review here are Church of Scotland ministers with qualifications in science, and both argue in different ways that attention to Polanyi and others offers a third way between conservative authoritarianism and modernist liberalism.

Alexander Thomson's book is the more directly Polanyian, and develops with the philosopher's help a conception of authority and tradition in the church which can be seen to operate in a similar way to that in the sciences. It is also very much a work in the Reformed tradition, and its two other presiding spirits are Karl Barth and the major British theologian of the second half of our century, T. F. Torrance.

The book begins with a demonstration with the help of Polanyi that the popular view of the scientist – as enshrined in the thought of Bertrand Russell, for example – as a totally free and autonomous individual is completely false. Science is a communal ("convivial", to use Polanyi's expression) activity, requiring both the acceptance of traditional authority – in particular the work of established figures in science – and the necessity of shared standards if there is to be any meaningful dialogue and advance. Authority, of course, does not here mean unquestioned authority, but a common acceptance of where one must begin if one is to do real science. The scientific community operates as a "competent but not supreme authority". Advance can only come by living in a tradition of thought and activity.

After a long chapter on Polanyi, occupying about one-third of the book, come a series of shorter chapters on the authority of the Bible and in the church, on differences between Roman Catholic and Reformed concepts of tradition and authority, and finally on the development of tradition. The movement is towards a theology of authority and tradition that is open, dynamic and non-authoritarian. Thus the author rightly refuses to accept the choice that conservative Catholic critics of Reformed theology hold to be necessary, between an all-competent magisterium and subjective individual judgement. Using a Polanyian distinction, Dr. Thomson asserts that, "The interpretation of Holy Scripture that Luther or Calvin taught is not subjective . . . It is personal" (p. 95).

The title of the second book is a little misleading, for the main argument is for the modernness and importance of the theology of John Calvin. Einstein and Polanyi appear largely as foils, parallels and sources for the development of an approach to the Bible and theology. Dr. Paul's chief concern is to develop the distinction between Calvin's knowledge of the heart – what he calls cordial knowledge – and mere intellectual knowledge. Here there is a real parallel with Polanyi, whose conception of personal knowledge, which serves as a corrective to ideas of knowledge as merely and objectively intellectual, provides the author with an opportunity for a development, perhaps over-development, of Calvin's notion. And yet there is clearly something there to be developed. Recent studies of Jonathan Edwards, for example, have shown that Edwards took from Calvin the germ of a distinctive aesthetic, surely the same kind of enterprise that is being attempted here.

The main thesis of the book is that intellectual knowledge can be itself only within a framework of personal knowledge – of the knowledge of the heart. That is not to deny the objectivity of truth, but to attend to the way in which knowledge is obtained, in whatever mode. It is here that Einstein is called in support. Relativity theory is not, as the author rightly affirms, epistemologically relativistic; on the contrary, it is about the invariance of cosmic laws. Similarly, it is rather speculatively argued, Scripture refers to the invariance of the ways of the God to whom Scripture witnesses.

It is in the light of the personal knowledge of God given through Scripture that Dr. Paul attacks intellectualist approaches to the Scriptures, literalist and what he calls liberalist alike. Merely intellectualizing approaches to the Bible miss its prime function, which is to bring to God. On the way to his conclusion, he has to engage – and does so on the whole without special pleading – with the question of whether Calvin himself was a literalist, as he is widely believed to have been. After an examination of the evidence, in what is in some ways the most interesting and convincing part of the book, the author concludes that the principles of Calvin's theology do nothing for modern literalisms like creationism.

There are, then, good things to be found in both of these books, though they are marred by too determined attempts to establish the relevance to and compatibility with theology of the various scientific authorities. But they are none the less to be welcomed as two more contributions to the campaign to heal the immense wounds, many of them self-inflicted, which the church has suffered as a result of the ways of modern science.

Colin Gunton

Transcendence and Providence: Reflections of a Physicist and Priest

William G. Pollard. Theology and Science at the Frontiers of Knowledge, Number 6. Scottish Academic Press, 1987. Pp. xi + 269. £12.50 (hb)

William Pollard's contribution to this important series consists of a collection of papers the bulk of which are at least 20 years old. Apart from an introductory chapter which is essentially autobiographical, the book has been arranged into four main sections. These deal in turn with the recovery of our Judaeo-Christian heritage in the context of a culture dominated by science; certain similarities between science and religion; dogmatic belief in the inevitability of human evolution; and, dogmatic rejection of transcendence.

The main theme of the first section is Pollard's conviction that post-Enlightenment thought (which, in his view, is closely related with our Hellenistic heritage and the scientific world-view) has rendered western culture incapable of responding positively to its Judaeo-Christian heritage. He traces the history of this development by drawing some rather crude comparisons between the rise of Christianity and that of science (e.g. he speaks of the foundation of the Royal Society as a second pentecost!). He argues that Christianity and science are, in reality, complementary and that a renaissance can be achieved in our century only by way of an adequate synthesis of these two cultures.

He claims to pursue the complementarity of science and religion further in the second section. However, the first paper is essentially an attack on the triumphalism of the scientific community. The second paper returns to the theme, presenting science as a community of knowledge and drawing parallels between that and the Christian community.

Section three is a "refutation" of belief in the inevitability of human evolution. It consists of papers on the wonder of life; the improbability of earth-like planets; and Monod's work "Chance and Necessity". The most significant part of this section is his assertion that the statistical form of modern physics precludes explanations couched solely in terms of natural causation. In other words, science has given up any pretension to completeness in its explanations of natural phenomena.

His concluding section (and the longest part of the book) is devoted to showing that a scientific culture cannot neglect transcendent (or supernatural) reality. Recurring themes in these papers include the notion of the natural order as embedded in transcendent reality (drawing on a metaphor from geometry), and the suggestion that Rudolf Otto's analysis of religious experience offers an adequate way of evading the limits placed upon knowledge by Kant. Thus he admits the impossibility of forming concepts of transcendent reality while insisting that one may speak of transcendence (experiences of this aspect of reality are non-conceptual and are spoken of by means of symbols and metaphors designed to evoke the same experience in others). His concluding chapter is an attempt to discern signs of transcendence in modern physics itself.

The overall impression was of a brave attempt to harmonise an orthodox view of contemporary physics with an equally orthodox view of Christian theology. However, this book has added little of substance to the present body of literature on the dialogue between science and religion. Most of what is said here can be found in more carefully nuanced form elsewhere. I do not mean to denigrate Pollard's contribution to the dialogue. On the contrary, when these papers were originally published many of the ideas they contain were quite novel. For me, this was the chief value of the collection: a retrospect of the career and concerns of a pioneer of the dialogue rather than a contribution to the present debate.

Lawrence Osborn

The Liturgy of St. John

Gordon S. Wakefield. Epworth Press, 1985. Pp. ix + 95. £3.95

This book is a devotional work which uses critical scholarship rather than ignoring it. The author, a Methodist minister and Principal of the ecumenical Queen's College, Birmingham, attempts to bridge the gap between scholarship and the pulpit.

The subject matter is John 13-21, which the author divides into six sections, to each of which he devotes a chapter: The Preparation (13:1-17), The Fencing of the Table (13:18-38), The Ministry of the Word (14-16), The Prayer of "Consecration" (17), Crucifixion-Resurrection-Communion (18-20), and Post-Communion (21). Wakefield acknowledges that the book may be criticized because it is neither "pure" scholarship, nor "pure" devotion. He is trying to bridge the gap, which is no small task. In addition to providing a peg on which the interpretation of the final chapters of John may be hung, the author hopes that the book may shed some light on John's somewhat oblique eucharistic theology.

Whether a book impresses one as a tight, developing argument, or rather as a collection of somewhat disparate elements is very much influenced by the dispositions of the reader. (It is my experience that while a majority of fresh readers of Mark's Gospel see it as a collection of snapshots, a minority see in it a clearly developing argument.) I was more impressed by the very considerable number of rich insights in Wakefield's book than by its presentation of John 13-21 as a liturgy. Other readers will judge differently, and with no less validity.

The author rightly criticizes the age-long harmonization of the Gospels in liturgy and devotion, which conceals the piercing light which comes from each in turn in a pious haze (p. ix). The Lord's injunction after the Washing of the Feet is for mutuality, and hence any imitation of the action by priest, pope, or sovereign is to misunderstand its nature (p. 20). Wakefield is critical of the "open invitation" to communion, which he describes as a piece of 20th-century slackness. The church must not be so welcoming to sinners that it condones sin, or blurs the distinction between light and darkness, and itself betrays truth (p. 27). He insists that love should not be confused with a superficial politeness (p. 31). Chapter 4 on the Prayer of "Consecration" is particularly well done.

Chapter 5 on the Crucifixion-Resurrection-Communion draws attention to some of the more striking features of the Johannine Passion narrative. His discussion of the place of Mary Magdelene is very thought-provoking. He makes a great deal of the change required in the relationship of Mary and Jesus. Mary's clinging to Jesus will prevent him going to the Father. Otherwise the relationship might become "obsessive, infatuated and idolatrous": "The harsh truth is that to make human relations the supreme end of life is idolatrous" (p. 84). There follow some striking comments on the radical limitation of all human relationships, and on the encounter with the ascended Christ through preaching (and discussion and debate).

In dealing with the appearance to the ten, Wakefield suggests that there should be two rites of peace at the eucharist, one of reconciliation (cf. Matt. 5:23), and the other when we have entered into Christ's sacrifice. He draws from John some important ecclesiological conclusions about the supremacy of discipleship over ministerial position, and the great Christian privilege of all disciples of offering the divine forgiveness. It is not clear to this reader, however, how such a conclusion derives from the text of John.

One might justifiably expect that a work which derives from modern exegesis would deal with the stages of composition of the gospel, and pay much attention to the community in which and for which the author may be supposed to have written. These are two of the most obvious preoccupations of modern Johannine scholars. But in this work these questions are not dealt with at any length. The Gospel is examined only in its finished text, and only occasionally does the author attempt to situate a passage in a particular historical context. Wakefield appears to wish to root these chapters of John in the context of Christian living today, and he does so with considerable success, albeit without first having rooted the Gospel in its original context.

Concentration on details sometimes distracts the reader from the overall argument. The movement from exegesis to comment on modern practices within the churches is not always smooth, and applications to the present-day make some bold leaps in hermeneutics. If the case for regarding the final chapters of John as a liturgy is not overwhelmingly convincing, there is scarcely a page on which there is not a very perceptive comment. A reader of Wakefield's book would find it difficult to read John's final chapters again without at least being aware of liturgical elements in them.

Michael Prior, CM

BOOKS RECEIVED

Richard Bauckham *Moltmann. Messianic Theology in the Making.* Marshall Pickering. Pp. x + 175. £9.95

Paul A. B. Clarke and Andrew Linzey *Research on Embryos. Politics, Theology and Law.* Lester Crook Academic Publishing. Pp. 104. £5.95

Keith W. Clements *Lovers of Discord. Twentieth Century Theological Controversies in England.* SPCK. Pp. x + 261. £8.95

Klaus Deppermann *Melchior Hoffman. Social Unrest and Apocalyptic Visions in the Age of Reformation.* T. & T. Clark. Pp. 432. £29.95 hb

Marc H. Ellis *Towards a Jewish Theology of Liberation.* SCM Press. Pp. xii + 147. £6.95

Austin Farrer *Faith and Speculation. An Essay in Philosophical Theology.* T. & T. Clark. Pp. vii + 175. n/p

Everett Ferguson *Backgrounds of Early Christianity.* Eerdmans/Paternoster. Pp. xvii + 515. £20.45

Robin Gill *Beyond Decline. A Challenge to the Churches.* SCM Press. Pp. 146. £5.95

Fr Lev Gillet *Encounter at the Well.* Mowbray. Pp. 138. £5.95

John de Gruchy *Theology and Ministry in Context and Crisis. A South African Perspective.* Collins Flame. Pp. 183. £7.95

John de Gruchy *Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Witness to Jesus Christ.* Collins. Pp. x + 308. £7.95

Richard Harries *Christ is Risen.* Mowbray. Pp. ix + 131. £2.50

Eric James (ed.) *God's Truth. Essays to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of* Honest to God. SCM Press. Pp. xii + 227. £9.50

Grace Jantzen *Julian of Norwich.* SPCK. Pp. x + 230. £8.95

Alistair Kee *The Roots of Christian Freedom. The Theology of John A. T. Robinson.* SPCK. Pp. xvi + 190. £8.95

Hans Küng *The Incarnation of God. An Introduction to Hegel's Thought as Prolegomena to a Future Christology.* T. & T. Clark. Pp. xv + 601. £24.95

Ann Loades *Searching for Lost Coins. Explorations in Christianity and Feminism.* SPCK. Pp. x + 118. £4.95

Rudolph Nelson *The Making and Unmaking of an Evangelical Mind. The Case of Edward Carnell.* CUP. Pp. xiii + 252. £27.50 hb

Jacob Neusner *Christian Faith and the Bible of Judaism. The Judaic Encounter with Scripture.* Eerdmans/Paternoster. Pp. xviii + 205. £10.60

Aidan Nichols OP *The Theology of Joseph Ratzinger. An Introductory Study.* T. & T. Clark. Pp. vii + 338. £9.95

Iain Paul *Knowledge of God. Calvin, Einstein and Polanyi.* Scottish Academic Press. Pp. x + 155. £10.50

Petr Porkorny *The Genesis of Christology. Foundations for a Theology of the New Testament.* T. & T. Clark. Pp. xvi + 266. £14.95 hb

Ulrich Simon *From Holocaust to Atonement.* James Clark and Co. Pp. 138. £5.95

Choan-Seng Song *Theology from the Womb of Asia.* SCM Press. Pp. xiv + 241. £8.95

William H. Stephens *The New Testament World in Pictures.* Lutterworth Press. Pp. 420. £14.95

Stephen W. Sykes (ed.) *Authority in the Anglican Communion. Essays Presented to Bishop John Howe.* The Anglican Book Centre. Pp. 286. $18.95

Gerd Theissen *Psychological Aspects of Pauline Theology.* T. & T. Clark. Pp. x + 433. £19.95 hb

Peter Walker *The Anglican Church Today. Rediscovering the Middle Way.* Mowbray. Pp. 164. £6.95