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Scholarly conjecture easily becomes scholarly fashion without good cause: theories that have no very secure basis in fact are often to command wide assent. Once this has happened, it does not occur to most people to question the theories, since they are assumed to be securely based, and the person who does question them finds himself or herself swimming against a strong and sometimes hostile tide. Earlier in this century scholars who questioned the two-source theory of synoptic origins experienced this, and it is only recently that it has become respectable (almost) to have doubts about Martin Piercy and the existence of Q. In this issue of Themelios Gordon Wenham continues his article questioning the scholarly consensus on the book of Deuteronomy.

To recognize the deprecative power of scholarly fashion is important both for the inexperienced student, who may otherwise assume that uncertain scholarly opinions are in fact seemingly based, and also for the scholar, whose research may be seriously flawed or limited by his or her failure to question the current tenets of scholarly orthodoxy. It is also particularly important that important church leaders be aware of theological fashions. David Jenkins, the new Anglican bishop of Durham (in the north of England), has caused much distress and disarray all over the world by expressing very publicly his opinion that Jesus was not born of a virgin and his doubts as to whether Jesus’ body was physically raised from the dead. In doing so, he has sided with certain scholarly opinions rather than with the traditional biblical orthodoxy. This must on any reckoning be a very serious thing to do, especially for a bishop of the church. It might conceivably be defensible were the scholarly opinions concerned really well founded; in fact, however, the bishop has aligned himself with some very questionable theological opinions.

So far as the virgin birth is concerned, these are difficulties in the Matthew and Luke accounts of Jesus’ birth, in particular difficulties in harmonizing the two accounts. But the fact remains (1) that Matthew and Luke are our earliest sources of information about Jesus’ birth; they are apparently independent accounts—witness their differences—but they both agree that Jesus was miraculously born of Mary before she married Joseph. It is unlikely that the evangelists intended their respective accounts of Jesus’ birth to be taken as unhistorical “midrash.” (2) It is very probable that the tradition of Jesus’ virgin conception antedates Matthew and Luke. The fact that other New Testament authors do not mention it explicitly proves nothing. (3) The earliest non-Christian version of the eventual Jesus is the Jewish acciesalation by Joseph. Jesus was illegitimately born, is a reognition of the irregularity of Jesus’ birth. Given this evidence, the traditional Christian view of Jesus’ virgtn birth has a lot going for it (historically as well as theologically); it is accepted by many scholars, and is even allowed as a serious possibility by Raymond Brown. But this is not the last word, and it is not even the most surprising, and most perceptive, on the subject The Birth of the Messiah (Geoffrey Chapman, 1977). It is, to say the least, premature for a bishop of the church to side with those who deny traditional Christian orthodoxy on this point.

So far as the resurrection is concerned, the case is even stronger for the traditional interpretation. There are some problems in harmonizing the resurrection narratives in the different gospels. But these problems are not insurmountable, and in any case the differences between the gospels show the independence of their resurrection traditions. These independent traditions all make it quite clear that Jesus’ resurrection was a raising and transforming of the physical body of Jesus, not just something spiritual or visionary.

Scholars have claimed that Paul, our earliest witness to the resurrection (writing 1 Corinthians about AD 55) viewed Jesus’ resurrection as something visionary. But the claim is an argument from silence: from Paul’s failure in 1 Corinthians 15 to mention the empty tomb and from his failure to distinguish his own vision of the risen Christ on the Damascus road from the earlier appearances of the risen Christ to others. And, if anything, the Pauline evidence points the other way. Paul probably implies the empty tomb when he speaks of the burial of Jesus before referring to the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:4); he probably implies that Jesus’ physical body was raised when he speaks of the bodies of Christ being redeemed and transformed (e.g. Phil. 3:21). As for Paul’s inclusion of himself in the list of witnesses to the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15, this does not prove that he saw himself as a witness in the same sense as those who preceded him; but, even if he did, it is more likely that he regarded his own experience of the risen Jesus on the Damascus road as something more than a vision than that he regarded the earlier resurrection appearances as visionary.

The traditional Christian claim that the tomb of Jesus was empty on Easter morning went back very early, and was accepted by the early Jewish opponents of Christianity who explained that the disciples stole the body (Mt. 27:59). That explanation was never plausible. The Christian explanation that Jesus’ body rose from death makes much more sense: it accords with our earliest historical evidence, it fits with what we know of Jesus’ remarkable life, it explains the character and dynamic growth of the early church. It is ironical that at a time when a Jewish scholar has come out in print arguing for the resurrection of Jesus’ physical body—see the review of P. Lapide’s book later in this Themelios—an Anglican bishop might publicly question this traditional element of the Christian good news; this time the historical evidence favors the Jew’s interpretation rather than the Christian’s!
Editorial:

Virgin birth and bodily resurrection

Scholarly conjecture easily becomes scholarly fashion without good cause; therefore those who have no very secure basis often come to command wide assent. Once this has happened, it does not occur to most people to question the theories, since they are assumed to be securely based, and the person who does question them finds himself or herself swimming against a strong and sometimes hostile tide. Earlier in this century scholars who questioned the two-source theory of synoptic origin experienced this, and it is only recently that it has become acceptable (almost) to have doubts about Markan priority and the existence of Q. In this issue of Themelios Gordon Wenthall continues his article questioning the scholarly consensus on the book of Deuteronomy.

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Bishop Jenkins by his public statements has given to certain doubtful scholarly opinions a respectability that those opinions do not deserve. Uninformed people inside and outside the church must inevitably wonder: why should a bishop of the church have discarded the traditional doctrines of the virgin birth and of the bodily resurrection, if he could have avoided it? The fact is that he could and should have avoided the opinions that he advocates: his opinions are not soundly based, and reflect more on uncertain theological fashion and on the secular philosophy that is so powerful in the West at present than on anything else. (On the philosophical background see Paul Helm's article later in this Themelios.)

Those of us who live in the West live in an age of doubt, and this doubt rubs off onto theologians and bishops and often, of course, onto theological students. In this situation we need prayerfully to ask God to save us from false teaching; we also need reminding that the good news of Christ revealed in the Bible remains as true and relevant and wonderful as ever. While we must be open to true scholarly insights, we must beware of deceptive theological fashions, and we must guard the gospel committed to our charge.

Some recent literature: R. T. France has written a number of very useful articles on the virgin birth, e.g. 'Scripture, tradition and history in the infancy narratives of Matthew' in Gospel Perspectives II (ed. R. T. France and D. Wenham, Sheffield: JSOT, 1981), pp. 239-266; D. A. Carson's new and important commentary on Matthew (in Expositor's Bible Commentary, vol. 8, ed. F. E. Gaebelein, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984) has useful discussion of the infancy and resurrection narratives. Also on the resurrection see M. Harris, Easter at Durham (Exeter: Paternoster, 1985, an excellent analysis of the Bishop of Durham's views in the light of NT teaching); G. Osborne, The Resurrection Narratives: A Redactional Study (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984); J. W. Wenham, Easter Enigma (Exeter: Paternoster/Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984, a careful harmony of the resurrection narratives, also available now in German). W. Craig has a number of useful articles: 'The bodily resurrection of Jesus' (Gospel Perspectives I, 47-74), 'The empty tomb of Jesus' (Gospel Perspectives II, 173-200, cf. his similar article in NTS 31, 1985, 39-67), 'The gardi at the tomb' (NTS 30, 1984, 273-281).

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**The hope of a new age: the kingdom of God in the New Testament**

I. Howard Marshall

We are very glad to have been allowed to reprint this longer than usual article in Themelios, both because its subject is so important and because the author, who is Professor of New Testament at the University of Aberdeen, is such an authoritative expert in gospel studies. The article was written for a book entitled The Spirit in the New Age, edited by L. Shelton and A. Deasly and published by the Warner Press of Anderson, Indiana, USA. The book is one of a five-volume series of Wesleyan Theological Perspectives, being available only through the Warner Press; further details of the series may be obtained from the Press at PO Box 2404, 100 East Fifth Street, Anderson, Indiana 46015. We are very grateful to Professor Marshall and to the Warner Press for their kindness in letting us reproduce the article.

Christian hope is manifestly based on the promises and actions of God, and therefore it is not surprising that a discussion of the kingdom of God (henceforward abbreviated in this essay as KG) should figure in this symposium. Although the phrase has been the subject of much biblical research in recent years, and although it is bandied about with great frequency in discussions of Christian social action, it is unfortunately often the case that it is used in a very vague manner and that there is a lack of clear biblical exposition in the churches on the meaning of the term. Our aim in this essay will be to harvest and assess some of the recent scholarly discussion with a view to showing how an understanding of the KG can give fresh vigour to our Christian hope in God.

**Introduction**
Discussion of the KG was particularly spirited up to about 1965, and that date (certain consensus appeared to be developing about the meaning and significance of the KG, especially as the phrase appears in the Synoptic Gospels. Some of the main points that emerged can be summed up as follows: 1. The writers of the Gospels regarded the KG as being the central theme of the teaching of Jesus. This can be seen from the frequency with which the phrase appears on the lips of Jesus as compared with other theological concepts, and also from the way in which the Evangelists themselves identify it as the burden of Jesus' message. Consequently scholars tended to regard the KG as being in fact the principal concept in the actual teaching of Jesus. 2. Among scholars who approached the gospel records with a rigorously critical methodology for separating out what they regarded as the authentic teaching of Jesus from later elements wrongly ascribed to him, it was agreed that some of the texts about the KG must belong to any critically established 'irreducible minimum' of the teaching of Jesus.

3. According to the Evangelists Jesus announced both that the KG would come in the near future as the consummation of God's purpose and also that it was already present in some way during his ministry as the fulfilment of God's promises. One is tempted to say that there was an increasing consensus on how this evidence ought to be interpreted, namely that both of these elements were to be taken at their face value as authentic aspects of the teaching of Jesus. The only problem that then remained was to explain how these two elements could be credibly integrated with each other, one important suggestion being that the promise of the KG was fulfilled in the ministry of Jesus and would be consummated in the future. Nevertheless, there was a continuing powerful body of opinion which accepted that the KG was an entirely future entity in the proclamation of Jesus and that it was regarded as present only in the sense that an event which is known to be impending can have decisive effects on how people see the time just before its arrival.

4. The term KG refers primarily to the sovereign activity of God as ruler or king and only secondarily to the realm over which he rules. Its content is the saving and judging action of God.

5. Insofar as the KG could be regarded as being present, it was so in and through the proclamation and activity of Jesus, and its presence (or, for upholders of the alternative view, its imminence) was in evidence in his parables and mighty works.

Some twenty years later the mood of scholarship on these points has not undergone any substantial changes. However, there remain a number of questions where further precision is desirable, and some progress in answering them has been made. Some of these questions are: 1. Can we be more precise about the actual ways in which Jesus used the term KG? For example, did he use it simply in ways familiar to his audience, or did he implicitly transform its content, just as he appears to have done with other theological concepts? 2. How is the KG related to other concepts which appear in the teaching of Jesus? 3. How did Jesus see his own role in relation to the KG? This question needs to be asked quite specifically with reference to Jesus' self-understanding of his identity and role and also with reference to his premonition of his own death. 4. What did Jesus envisage as the results of his proclamation of the KG? To what extent did his message have a communal or corporate dimension so far as his own lifetime was concerned? 5. In what ways did Jesus envisage the future dimension of the KG? Had he any place in his thinking for what we know as the church?
Bishop Jenkins by his public statements has given to certain doubtful scholarly opinions a respectability that those opinions do not deserve. Uninformed people inside and outside the church must inevitably wonder: why should a bishop of the church have discarded the traditional doctrines of the virgin birth and of the bodily resurrection, if he could have avoided it? The fact is that he could and should have avoided the opinions that he advocates: his opinions are not soundly based, and reflect more on uncertain theological fashion and on the secular philosophy that is so powerful in the West at present than on anything else. (On the philosophical background see Paul Helm’s article later in this Themelios.)

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2. Among scholars who approached the gospel records with a rigorously critical methodology, for separating off what they regarded as the authentic teaching of Jesus from later elements wrongly ascribed to him, it was agreed that some of the texts about the KG must belong to any critically established ‘irreducible minimum’ of the teaching of Jesus.

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1. Can we be more precise about the actual ways in which Jesus used the term KG? For example, did he use it simply in ways familiar to his audience, or did he implicitly transform its content, just as he appears to have done with other theological concepts?

2. How is the KG related to other concepts which appear in the teaching of Jesus?

3. How did Jesus see his own role in relation to the KG? This question needs to be asked quite specifically with reference to Jesus’ self-understanding of his identity and role and also with reference to his premonition of his own death.

4. What did Jesus envisage as the results of his proclamation of the KG? To what extent did his message have a communal or corporate dimension so far as his own lifetime was concerned?

5. In what ways did Jesus envisage the future dimension of the KG? Had he any place in his thinking for what we know as the church?
6. Granted that the early church stood in some kind of continuity with Jesus and his teaching, what happened to the KG in its proclamation and its theology? This is a question which has been often raised but not yet answered. Perrin is the theology of the church reflected in the NT epistles which is not overtly based on the sayings of Jesus. Second, there is the tradition of the teaching of Jesus which was passed down at first hand and is well attested in the written Gospels. What did the early church make of the KG?

These points constitute a formidable agenda, and it will not be possible to treat any of them in an adequate way in a brief essay, still less to deal with all of them. It will, however, be clear that the answers to some of them are very relevant to the topic of Christian hope in that the questions force us to explore whether there are grounds for apostolic faith held by Jesus. Further, if we can see how the early church appropriated and made use of the teaching of Jesus, this may help us in turn as we seek to understand and apply the heritage of Jesus and his followers today.

The meaning of 'Kingdom of God'

As has been indicated already, there is a growing agreement that the phrase KG should be taken to refer primarily to God's sovereignty rather than to the realm over which he is sovereign. It will then refer to God's sovereignty in contrast to that of Satan (Lk. 11:18) who is the ruler of this world (Jn. 12:31; 14:30). Those who adopt this view tend on the whole to assume that the reference must be to a specific act of divine rule, that is, to a desire to put into effect his plan of redemption. Perrin himself says that some scholars who adopt a position near to that of R. Bultmann, whose influence on his thinking is freely admitted, but it should be observed that in this particular book he is critical of some aspects of Bultmannian thought. Perrin himself realizes that the concept of 'Kingdom of God' is ambiguous. However, this observation does not apply to the work of Chilton who interprets the Gospels in the context of an orthodox understanding of the Christian faith.

More much to the point is our second critical comment. In both cases the interpreters gauge their understanding of the meaning of KG in the light of Bultmannian ideas. Perrin accepts as authentic both Bultmann's statement that the Kingdom of God is a new creation and that the concept of imminence or 'nearness' for Jesus the KG was so close in time that the whole of present world life was coloured by its presence. Perrin himself saw as his task to present and saw his mighty works as the precursors of its coming, or whether he could say that there was a sense in which the near kingdom was already operative, the point is that he himself was not as confident in the presence of the KG as the early church or the Gospels would have implied.

More significant is the question of time. According to Luke the nature of Jesus' activity must have been such as to lead people to think that the KG would appear 'immediately' (Lk. 19:11). But Perrin's position is that even when there was hope of an imminent coming (Lk. 17:20). The interpretation of the crucial statements in Matthew 10:7/Luke 10:9 and Mark 1:15 is disputed; they can be taken to mean either that the KG has already arrived or that its coming is imminent; were these sayings perhaps genuinely ambiguous? In Mark 9:1 Jesus refers to people who would not die before they saw the KG coming; here the attribution of the saying is disputed, as is the interpretation. Mark 1:15 refers not to a future point at which people will know that the KG is near. In addition there are various texts which suggest that the day of judgment is near and that people should be prepared to defend the sincerity of their belief. The saying that the imminence of the end is finally embedded in the gospel tradition, but direct references to the imminence of the KG are to be found in the NT. It is difficult to say that the distinctive teaching of Jesus lies here.

What is much more strongly attested is Jesus' teaching that the KG was already in some sense present in his ministry. That the disciples' belief that Jesus was the messiah and that his ministry was the coming of the KG could not be rehearsed here in detail; the key texts are Matthew 11:12/ Luke 16:16; Q; Matthew 12:28/Luke 11:20; Q and Luke 17:21 together with Matthew 10:7/Luke 10:11 (Q) and Mark 1:5, which is perhaps the most striking and the most Socratic of the 'futurist' texts. These verses indicate that the action of God in bringing in the KG has already begun, so that Jesus can declare quite plainly and plainly that the KG has arrived. So strong is this impression that C. H. Dodd could see no room for any teaching about a future coming in the outlook of Jesus; while he undoubtedly did not do justice to the future elements in the teaching of Jesus, the point to be stressed here is that he established the fundamental importance of the teaching about the present presence of the KG acting in history, which convey the distinctive element in the teaching of Jesus about the KG. To say that the End was near was not unprecedented. To say that the future KG was already present was unprecedented.
6. Granted that the early church stood in some kind of continuity with Jesus and his teaching, what happened to the KG in its proclamation and its theology? This is a question which seems to be raised somewhere in the context of the debate. Perhaps the most obvious question is, what is the theology of the church reflected in the NT epistles which is not overtly based on the sayings of Jesus. Second, there is the tradition of the teaching of Jesus which was formed down at a later date. This may be influenced in written form in the Gospels. What did the early church make of the KG?

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A possible way out of the impasse has been suggested by N. Perrin. His contribution is to show that KG may be a symbol for 'God's action in a particular way', i.e. that KG refers to the might with which God is doing his will in the world and imposing his authority so that people obey him. If KG functions in this way as a symbol, then it need not refer simply to the reign of God, but to any activity of God. Perrin's insights by saying that the 'story' of God acting in power is the correct interpretation of, say, the exorcisms of Jesus. Thus KG refers to any activity of God in which his power is being evoked. Perrin's insights do not apply to the work of Chilton who interprets the Gospels in the context of an orthodox understanding of the Christian faith.

More much to the point is our second critical comment. In both cases the interpreters gain their understanding of the meaning of KG from their own presuppositions, from the same texts which they believe can be shown to be authentic sayings of Jesus. One is tempted to say that any saying of Jesus which Perrin accepts as authentic must be authentic for us also. However, Perrin's insights do not apply to the work of Chilton who interprets the Gospels in the context of an orthodox understanding of the Christian faith.
and it looks rather as though one mistake mythology is simply being replaced by another ludicrous mythology of the Spirit. The basic problem remains as to how the teaching of Jesus can be perceived as having any real significance or as being nothing more than mere assumptions. Nor were these assumptions peripheral ones; they were concerned with the central theme of his message.

The second type of option is to recognize that the essential or distinctive element in the teaching of Jesus was his prophetic role. Thus the question of whether or not the kingdom would come in the future was already present in his ministry. God's purpose, propounded in the OT, was being brought to fulfillment in the midst of the unexpected messianic event, which is probably in terms of concealment or veiled manifestation. What this means is that the popular expectation of the kingdom was not of an open, powerful, and immediate sort. It was not of the variety which would establish his rule in the world and bring his benefits to his people, but Jesus believed and taught that God was already active in the fulfillment of the promise by God. He was actively working to establish that power and to initiate a chain of events which would lead up to and include the End of popular expectation. There was thus a real and genuine manifestation of God's power. But it was in a sense veiled and secret.

If this view is sound, then it means that the basis of the proclamation of Jesus was a valid one, the belief that God was already fulfilling the prophecy of the coming of the kingdom. Or rather, the validity of Jesus' proclamation depends not on whether he was correct or mistaken about the nearness of the kingdom in the future, but on whether he was correct or mistaken about the reality of God's action in the present.

Further, the problem of continuity between the present and the future is that Jesus himself taught that the kingdom was already a reality. God was acting in power and consequence. Jesus himself believed that the kingdom was already a reality. In the context of the kingdom, it was natural to say that the kingdom was already present, and that to speak of it as if it was to appear had already arrived, and (2) by indicating that the way in which it was appearing was different from what was traditionally expected.

By understanding the teaching of Jesus in this way we can see that the idea of the kingdom of God is not the same as those of power and kingdom. Jesus' teaching is that God is at work to establish a new community. The bliss which is associated with the age to come is already being experienced, and this bliss is not just for the people who think they are entitled to it by virtue of their religious orthodoxy and adherence to the Jewish law.

At the same time, however, Jesus purged the concept of the nationalistic associations. We should be clear about what was actually happening here. It is commonly thought that the Jewish concept of the kingdom was a nationalistic and military one, and that the Jewish teaching of the kingdom was that it would be set up by force and conquest. However, the Jewish concept was both nationalistic and spiritual. The description of the kingdom in Psalms of Solomon 17 combines both elements.

Behold, O Lord, and raise unto them king, the son of David, at the time in which you see, O God, that he may reign over Israel with fairness, with strength, that he may shatter unrighteous rulers, and that the whole world may praise the nations that trample her down to destruction. Wise, rightly, generously, he shall fashion his sword and inflicts fear upon the earth. He shall destroy the godless nations with the word of his mouth. At his rebuke nations shall flee before him, and he shall receive sinners for the thoughts of his word shall not be void for ever. He will lead in righteousness, and he shall judge the tribes of the peoples with equity. He shall divide the spoil among them, and the poor among the hungry shall be satisfied. He will suffer unrighteousness to lodge any more in their midst, nor shall they dwell with them any man who knows wickedness. For he to possess all sons of vanity.

Here vengeance on the godless nations and holiness among the people of Israel are closely linked together. Jesus, therefore, has purged away the nationalistic elements in the Jewish concept of the kingdom and to lay stress on the spiritual elements.

Now this approach is not without its problems as soon as we try to apply it to the situation of the downtrodden. On the one hand, the plight of the downtrodden is often due to the violent and ungodly and ungodly people of other nations. In first-century Palestine both types of oppression coexisted. The former was the subject of much political discussion in many parts of the world. In what ways did Jesus envisage the kingdom as the solution to the needs of the people?

There is no programme of social action in the teaching of Jesus. There is no indication of the relationship of individuals to God and the behaviour that will result from that. On the one side, he offered to the needy forgiveness to the community of God's people, and physical help to the poor and sick. But this was not a solution to a life in which their total attitude must be one of love to God and their neighbour and of commitment to himself as Teacher. It is a solution based on non-violent love, even it is not, in my opinion, forbid the use of restrained force (as opposed to violence) to preserve law and order, but it certainly forbade the excesses of armed force and insurrection. Nevertheless, in his teaching Jesus certainly condemned verbally the hypocrisy and greed of those who oppressed the poor and their fellow human beings. He attacked the political situation and thus to give a coherent account of the teaching of Jesus.

In this way the kingdom clearly becomes a symbol of hope for the downtrodden in society. It expresses the attitude of God towards such people and declares that his concern is for them. Jesus' teaching is that God is at work to establish a new community. The bliss which is associated with the age to come is already being experienced, and this bliss is not just for the people who think they are entitled to it by virtue of their religious orthodoxy and adherence to the Jewish law.

But how effective are words, even if accompanied by a few beneficial miracles? People might well have concluded that nothing much was happening. And Jesus took care of this problem by making the preaching of so-called parables of growth. He depicted the secret, quiet beginnings of the kingdom and gave the assurance that what was scarcely visible in its beginnings would grow, like a plant from a seed, until its effects were manifest and great (Mt 4:29-30, 32-32). Consequently, Jesus could speak about the 'mystery of the kingdom' (Mt 11:11; 'mysteries' in Lk 1:32, Lk 8:10). A 'mystery' is a divine secret which God reveals to a small number of people in order to understand it, such as his prophets in OT times. Jesus told his followers that it was they who were privileged to be the recipients of the kingdom's secrets. Secret that the kingdom had come in the person, deeds and words of Jesus. For those with the eyes to see, things were happening, but others could easily persuade themselves that nothing of significance was happening. Within the community formed by Jesus new relationships did exist in which the needy could find a love that expressed itself both in material provision and also in loving acceptance. This was entirely consistent with the socio-politically critical assumption of Jesus that Luke ещё one another presumably reflects what some pagans actually said, even if the wording stems from a Christian apostle. At the same time, the early Christian groups were on occasion characterized by a lack of love and by material greed (see I Corinthians!), so that outsiders might have been tempted to think that there was nothing distinctive about them.

We can now move on to suggest some additional features that arise out of the teaching of Jesus on the kingdom when it is put in the total context of his teaching.

The kingdorn of God and the Father

The first is that with the concept of the kingdom there is closely associated the idea of God being specifically linked with the thought of God as Father in Luke 12:32; 22:29 (contrast Mt. 19:28; Mt. 13:43; 25:34). In the references in Luke it is God as the Father who bestows the kingdom on the disciples and Jesus respectively. The two references in Matthew also occur in material addressed to the disciples. This is consistent with the fact established by T. W. Manson that Jesus did not preach about God as Father to all and sundry but he revealed him as such to his disciples. Of crucial significance in this connection is the fact that the Lord's Prayer is addressed to the Father only. If he were hallowed, may your kingdom come', thus linking closely the name of 'Father' and the kingdom. The kingdom is a concept that Jesus adopted and which was already present in the NT. God, and he directs his disciples into his understanding of God as Father. We observe, first, that the prayer is one for God's kingdom to be established. Here we see a new emphasis between Jesus and his audience that the coming of the kingdom is the act of God and not of man, even though God would use men and women to implement the kingdom. The second time that shows here Jesus was saying something new.

Second, the God who establishes his rule is the God whom Jesus addresses as 'Father'. The fact that Jesus used an intimate form of address which appears to be unparalleled in contemporary Judaism is an example of his point that he and his followers to know God in the same intimate manner as he himself enjoyed needs no further elaboration here. This is an important consequence for the understanding of the kingdom in the Gospels. A. M. Hurnot writes that the kingdom is a tradition. A. F. 2. This fact indicates that the kingdom is primarily concerned with the creation of a family; the character of the King is the model for the character of the members (Mt. 5:48/ Lk. 6:3 Q). Third, in this context it is God the Father who is at the centre of Jesus' teaching. The petition for the kingdom to come is preceded by the petition that God will cause his name to be hallowed among the nations. In Luke this is largely achieved in these verses of the kinggdom and the hallowing of God's name are parallel concepts and indeed that they are very closely associated. It is the important theme of God's name that is critically-qualified assumption of Jesus' teaching that H. Schürmann is able to insist that Jesus' message was primarily about God and puts him at the centre. The suggestion here
and it looks rather as though one mistake mythology is simply being replaced by another dubious mythology of the Spirit. The basic problem remains as to how the teaching of Jesus can be interpreted in the light of the new, and often surprising, assumptions. Nor were these assumptions peripheral ones; they were concerned with the central theme of his message.

The second type of option is to recognize that the essential or distinctive element in the teaching of Jesus was his prognostication of the coming of the kingdom. The way that he predicted this event in the future was already present in his ministry. God’s purpose, propounded in the OT, was being brought to fulfillment in an unexpected and unexacted manner. To express this it is probably in terms of concealment or veiled manifestation.24 What this means is that the popular expectation of the kingdom was to be realized by a figure of power, a king, and thus the kingdom was to be established without paying attention to the way in which it was to transpire. There we were concerned primarily with the physical presence of the God of power and might, whereas the kingdom is established in the way of Jesus and the kingdom is the way of righteousness.422 From this point we can see that the kingdom is established by the term of the word by Jesus, and we saw that he began to use the term in a new way by claiming that the kingdom had already come and that it was present in an unexpected manner. We must now explore further what Jesus said about the kingdom. How did he use the term?

The way in which Jesus used the term kingdom in a new way has been helpfully explored by J. Riches in Jesus and the Kingdom of God. The relationships of the kingdom with the image of heaven could take over a term like kingdom and retain its core meaning, while ridding it of some of its conventional associations and substituting others. Essentially his argument is that Jesus referred to the kingdom in the context of actions by himself which related it to his belief in a forgiving and merciful God who would not leave people to their own devices. In other words, the kingdom was purged of its nationalistic and martial associations and was linked to ideas of mercy and forgiveness extended to people of all kinds. Essentially, the kingdom of Jesus here is a sound one which had of course been recognised by other scholars. The merit of Riches’ presentation is that he is able to link what Jesus was doing in the case of the kingdom with his teaching about love and do good to one another. He also linked the kingdom of God with the idea of a people who think they are entitled to it by virtue of their religious orthodoxy and adherence to the Jewish law.

In this way the kingdom becomes a symbol of hope for the downtrodden in society. It expresses the attitude of God to such people and declares that his concern is for them. Jesus’ teaching is that God is at work to establish a new community. The bliss which is associated with the age to come is already being experienced, and this bliss is not just for the people who think they are entitled to it by virtue of their religious orthodoxy and adherence to the Jewish law.

At the same time, however, Jesus purged the concept of its nationalistic associations. We should be clear about what was actually happening here. It is commonly thought that the Jewish concept of the kingdom was a nationalistic and military one rooted in the historical experience of the kingdom of King David. In fact, however, the Jewish concept was both nationalistic and spiritual. The description of the kingdom in Psalms of Solomon 17 combines both elements.

—O Lord, O God, and raise up unto them thy kingdom, the son of David, at the time in which you see, O God, that he may reign over Israel with fairness, with strength, that he may shatter unjust rulers, and that he may destroy and purge Jerusalem of its adulterers. He shall be the pride of the sinner as a potter’s vessel. With a rod of iron he shall bring to naught his adversaries, and establish him in his abode. He shall destroy the godless nations with the mouth of his word. At his rebuke nations shall flee before him, and he shall receive sinners for the thoughts of the righteous shall be heard. The holy people of God shall lead in righteousness, and he shall judge the tribes of the peoples, and be a shepherd of his God. He shall purify the earth from the unrighteousness to lodge any more in their midst, nor shall there dwell with them any man who knows wickedness. For he shall purify the earth of all sin of his God.4

Here vengeance on the godless nations and holiness among the people of Israel are closely linked together. Jesus, therefore, has purged away the nationalist elements in the Jewish concept of the kingdom and to lay stress on the spiritual elements.

Now this approach is not without its problems as soon as we try to apply it to the situation of the downtrodden. On the one hand, the phrase of the downtrodden is often due to the violent and ungodly and ungodly people among the world, and, on the other hand, it may be due to the violent and ungodly people of other nations. In first-century Palestine both types of oppressor existed, and Jesus was in many ways concerned for both. In what ways did Jesus envisage the kingdom as the solution to the needs of the people?

There is no programme of social action in the teaching of Jesus. To link the teaching of Jesus with the social situation of the time, of individuals to God and the behaviour that will result from that. On the one side, he offered to the needy forgiveness integration into the community of God’s people, and physical healing for the sick. On the other side, he offered to the people in a life in which their total attitude must be one of love to God and their neighbour and of commitment to himself as Teacher and Lord. He offered forgiveness, non-judgment and love, not, in my opinion, forbid the use of retributive force (as opposed to violence) to preserve law and order, but it certainly forbade the excesses of armed force and persecution. Nevertheless, in his teaching Jesus certainly condemned verbally the hypocrisy and greed of those who oppressed the poor. But the teaching of Jesus attacked the political system of Israel as a whole for their failure to live as the people of God.

But how effective are words, even if accompanied by a few beneficial miracles? People might well have concluded that nothing much was happening. And Jesus took care of this point by making the link between the so-called parables of growth and the depicted secret, quiet beginnings of the kingdom and gave the assurance that what was scarcely visible in its beginnings would grow, like a plant from a seed, until its effects were manifest and great (Mt. 13:24-30). Conclusively, Jesus could speak about the ‘mystery’ of the kingdom (Mt. 11:11; Matthew 13:11); ‘a mystery’ is a divine secret which God reveals to a chosen few in order to understand it, such as his prophets in OT times. Jesus told his followers that it was they who were privileged to be the recipients of these revelations. The mystery, then, was that the secret or secret was that the kingdom had come in the person, deeds, and words of Jesus. For those with the eyes to see, things were happening, but others could easily persuade themselves that nothing of significance was happening. Within the community formed by Jesus new relationships did exist in which the needy could find a love that expressed itself both in material provision and also in loving acceptance. This was a community of people who were committed to one another. In both a real sense the other Christians loved another; presumably reflects what some pagans actually did, even if the wording stems from a Christian apostle. At the same time, however, Christians were still groups on occasion characterized by a lack of love and by material greed (see 1 Corinthians); but that outsiders might also be persuaded to think that there was nothing distinctive about them.

We can now move on to suggest some additional features that arise out of the teaching of Jesus on the kingdom when it is put in the total context of his teaching.

The kingdom of God and the Father

The first is that with the concept of the kingdom there is closely associated a concept of God that is specifically linked with the thought of God as Father in Luke 12:32; 22:29 (contrast Mt. 19:28); Mk. 13:43; 23:24. In the references in Luke it is God as the Father who bestows the kingdom. The reference in Matthew also occurs in material addressed to the disciples. This is congruent with the fact established by T. W. Manson that Jesus did not preach about God as Father to all and sundry but revealed him as such to his disciples.23 Of crucial significance in this connection is the fact that the Lord’s Prayer with the title ‘Our Father’ he bellowed, may your kingdom come’, thus linking closely the name of ‘Father’ and the kingdom. The kingdom starts from the situation of Jewish Israel, as the people of God, and when he says ‘Father’ he is referring specifically to the God of Israel. This is significant because between Jesus and his audience that the coming of the kingdom is the act of God and not of man, even though God would use his disciples as the instruments of that act. The literature in the text shows that here Jesus was saying something new.

Second, the God who establishes his rule is the God whom Jesus addresses as ‘Father’. The fact that Jesus used an intimate form of address which appears to be unparalleled in contemporary literature is an indication of his deep relationship with the Father, and that he taught his followers to know God in the same intimate manner as he himself enjoyed needs no further elaboration here.24 This has an immediate consequence for the understanding of the Kingdom of God. As A. M. Hume put it the kingdom is the King as a Father.25 This fact indicates that the Kingdom is primarily concerned with the creation of a family; the character of the King is the model for the character of the members (Mt. 5:48/ Lk. 6:3 Q). Third, in this context it is God the Father who is at the centre of Jesus’ teaching. The Petition for the kingdom to come is preceded by the petition that God will cause his name to be hallowed, that his kingdom will come, and that the followers of the kingdom of God and the hallowing of God’s name are parallel concepts and indeed that they are very closely associated.26 It is is in this sense that we are told that the critically-assumed minimum of Jesus’ teaching that H. Schiirmann is able to insist that Jesus’ message was primarily about God and puts him at the centre. The suggestion here
is that God himself rather than the KG was primary for Jesus. I am rather doubtful whether this is a helpful distinction; it might be more cogent if it could be shown that teaching about God was the meaning of Jesus, but this is scarcely the case. Nevertheless, the significant fact emerges that the character of the KG is determined by the character and activity of God the Father.

The kingdom of God

The second important element which must be brought into the picture is the Holy Spirit. The Evangelists were conscious that Jesus carried out his ministry in the power of the Spirit who was in him. The KG was in no sense his own effort: he was aware of the source of his power to be seen in the extremely significant text Matthew 12:28/Luke 11:20 Q where he declared that that he does his mighty works and KG has arrived. Whether we take 'Spirit' or 'finger' to be the original word used by Jesus and paraphrased by the use of the alternative word in one of the Gospels,\(^{26}\) the text testifies to the realization of divine power active in the ministry of Jesus to enable him to carry out his exorcism. In another saying Jesus attributes his mighty works to the power of the Spirit and warns unbelievers against the danger of blasphemy or speaking against the Spirit (Mt. 12:31b/Mt. 12:32/Lk. 12:10 Q). Again, there is some doubt about the precise wording used by Jesus, but the basic point is not in any doubt, namely that Jesus recognized that his mighty works were performed in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The obvious conclusion to be drawn is that for Jesus the coming of the KG in the activity of the Spirit were tightly connected, so much so that we may suggest that it was the very doing of the Spirit in and through the KG which constituted the activity of the KG.\(^{27}\) It is interesting that this connection is maintained outside the synoptic Gospels, especially when we remember that references to the KG are less common in Mark than in Matthew and Luke. The KG are linked together in John 3:3, 5, and Paul links the KG with the KG in Romans 14:17 and Galatians 5:21; we may compare 1 Corinthians 4:20 where the KG is linked with power. A second point is that the KG emerges here. The first is that the KG is brought directly into conflict with the evil rule of Satan whose rule is taken up by Satan himself. God the Father is power to the ground of the KG. The Evangelists recognize that this motif was a dominant one in the ministry of Jesus when they relate at the outset of the story how Jesus, immediately after he had received the Spirit, was straightway sent into the desert to be tempted, how the events leading up to the passion and death of Jesus were instigated by the action of Satan through Judas (Lk. 22:3; Jn. 13:2, 27). It has sometimes been suggested that for Luke at least the period of Jesus' ministry between the temptation in the desert and the passion was free from temptation by Satan, but this hypothesis is now upheld even to examination, especially in the light of Luke 22:28.

The second point is that the KG is associated with power. It is brought into being by the exercise of divine might, the exercise of which is accomplished by Jesus' own actions. Paul says, the KG is not (simply) a matter of talking but of doing (Mt. 21:40). A doctrine of divine reality is at work in the world, and an important saying suggests that this power would become all the more evident after the ministry of Jesus (Mt. 9:14).

A third point to be noted is that the Spark was promised in the OT as a gift for the last days in the same way as the KG (Joel 2:28). The KG and the Spirit are thus both signs of the same religious activity of God now realized in the ministry of Jesus.

The effect of these considerations is to underline the element of power in the KG as God's activity in Jesus which extends beyond mere prophetic inspiration expressed in words.

The kingdom of God and Jesus

The fact that God's power is revealed in the KG in and through Jesus is expressed in the key text where Jesus quotes the relation of the KG to the KG. It is the weakness of several treatments of the KG that they do not adequately consider the concept of messianic kingship of Jesus. This reference is preserved with the sense of 'Anointed' and was used to refer to a person endowed with the Spirit for a particular purpose authorized by God. We can leave aside the view that the background to the use of the title 'Messiah' is linked to a conception of kingship to the Israelite king and its development from the Persian period to the prophetic. This view has not been to the advantage of the KG, in that the prophet is often understood to have a specific role and responsibility in the context of the KG. Messiah, on the other hand, is not limited to the context of Israel's salvation and is used in the NT to refer to Jesus as the Son of God. It is clear that Jesus understood himself to be the Messiah, in the sense of the Jewish tradition, but the questions of whether the statement is true or not is often only considered when trying to avoid political misunderstanding. Two other reasons may be suggested. If we are correct in assuming that Jesus understood himself to be the Messiah, then the question as to whether the title 'Messiah' should be used to refer to Jesus is central. Messiah, as a title, has not been used in the NT as often as 'Son of God' and, therefore better suited to express the true nature of Jesus. There is a case that 'Son of man' was more often used by Jesus in the sense of 'Anointed' and 'Son of God', and, if this is the case, then it will explain why Jesus preferred this term. Here our second consideration comes in: 'Son of man' was also an idiomatic term in Aramaic which seems to have been used by Jesus, and, if this is the case, then we have a phenomenon similar to that which we found in the proclamation of the KG by Jesus. Jesus is concerned with authority and rule which will be manifested in the future, which are hidden and partly secret. The fact that we can detect this same pattern in the use of both concepts, KG and Son of man, is surprising. It would appear to support the authenticity of Jesus' teaching in both areas, since it is highly unlikely that the early church would deliberately create the same motif in both places.

Our discussion has shown that KG and 'Messiah' are correlative concepts, each belonging to the other and implying the other. Jesus thus appears as the divine agent to whom God has entrusted dominion and power, and it is thus in Jesus that the KG is being realized. Indeed, to put it negatively, it is the messianic ministry: it is in the activity of Jesus that we see the activity of God which brings about his rule.

The kingdom of God and Israel

We have seen how the KG was presented as the result of the establishment of the KG. The traditional hope of the people as they had been seen, for the setting up of a new kingdom in the presence of God at the end of the age in a cosmic setting, it would be consistent with the expectations of the people that God would live together in righteousness and peace under the rule of God and his agent the Messiah. The Jews believed that they themselves would be the people chosen to be his people, that they would be his corporate entity and consists of people. Hence the mission of Jesus involved the creation of a people who would be the "people of God" and receive the KG. This is consistent with the representation of the KG as the Son of God. Since Jesus warned the people of Israel that as a nation they were in danger of being rejected by God, he must have envisaged the creation of a new people, incorporating elements of the old people but also open more widely and comprehensively to all people. The historical situation of the KG he also called people to personal allegiance to himself as disciples and taught them that they must obey his word, which was the essence of allegiance to him. The response to the message of the KG was identical with acceptance of Jesus as Master. The new Israel is constituted by its allegiance to the Messiah. The recognition that Jesus was concerned with the creation of a new people is not new. Already in A. M. Hunter the lapidary statement that 'The Kingdom of God implies a new Israel',\(^{28}\) but it is Ben F. Meyer who has given the most force to this theme in recent writing. He asks: 'Why should indeed the reign of God have been the object of a proclamation to Israel as such unless it bore some relationship to the end of Israel? Here the KG must be mentioned. The first is the eschatological saying recorded in different forms by Matthew and Luke (Mt. 19:28/Lk. 22:29 Q).

Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of man shall sit on his throne, then the KG will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

As my Father appointed a kingdom for me, so do I appoint for you that you may eat and drink at my table, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Common to both forms of the saying is the idea of rule by Jesus which will be shared in the world to come by the twelve disciples as they sit on thrones and judge the tribes of Israel. There are some differences in the saying as recorded as it is by Luke in the context of the prophecy of the betrayal by Judas through Luke later records the appointment of a new people of God on earth, which is a development of the saying is unlikely since it takes no account of the place of the Gentiles (whether in the eyes of Jesus or of the Evangelists). The idea of the twelve disciples of Jesus, who have shared in his earthly ministry to Israel, and the privilege appears to be that of sharing in the judgment on the unbelieving people of Israel rather than of ruling over a reconstructed people of Israel, which is more than a symbolic way of stating that the disciples will share in the KG but unbelieving Israel will be condemned, or, rather, that a division will be brought through among the Jews between the basis of belief and unbelief? It is not likely, then, that this text speaks of a "new" physical Israel ruled by the twelve, but it may express a God-ends the old Israel.

The other crucial text is Matthew 16:18 where Jesus prophesies that he will build his church 'on this rock' and that it will not be overcome by the powers of death. The authenticity of this saying is much disputed, and we owe to Ben F. Meyer a summary of the cutting edge of the matter.\(^{29}\) In the light of the Dead Sea Scrolls the language has been shown to be definitely Palestinian, and there are no conceptual reasons for denying it to Jesus. In effect the sole remaining reason for not accepting it is its absence from the other Gospels, especially from Mark and Q, and it is curious reasoning which would claim that the early church was more Jewish than the Gospels or their sources.\(^{30}\) If the saying is genuine, it expresses the purpose of Jesus to establish a people whom he calls 'his Church' or 'his people'. Coming immediately after Peter's affirmation of the confession of Jesus, it is a call for the people of himself people of myself as Messiah'. Here, therefore, we have an express statement of the intention of Jesus to form a people to
is that God himself rather than the KG was primary for Jesus. I am rather doubtful whether this is a helpful distinction; it would be more cogent if it could be shown that teaching about God from the KG was more theologically rich, but this is scarcely the case. Nevertheless, the significant fact emerges that the character of the KG is determined by the character and activity of God the Father.

The kingdom of God

The second important element which must be brought into the picture is the Holy Spirit. The Evangelists were conscious that Jesus carried out his ministry in the power of the Spirit who was with him. In the KG himself was aware of the source of his power to be seen in the extremely significant text Matthew 12:28/Luke 11:20 Q where he comments that he does his mighty works and KG has arrived. Whether we take ‘Spirit’ or ‘finger’ to be the original word used by Jesus and paraphrased by the use of the alternative word in one of the Gospels,27 the text testifies to the realization of divine power active in the ministry of Jesus to enable him to carry out his extraordinary tasks. In another saying Jesus attributes his mighty works to the power of the Spirit and warns unbelievers against the danger of blasphemy or speaking against the Spirit (Mt. 12:28/Mk. 3:29; Mt. 12:32/Lk. 12:10 Q). Again, there is some doubt about the precise wording used by Jesus, but the basic point is not in any doubt, namely that Jesus recognized that his mighty works were performed in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The obvious conclusion to be drawn is that for Jesus the coming of the KG and the activity of the Spirit were tightly connected, so much so that we may suggest that it was the activity of the Spirit in and through the KG which constituted the authentic activity of the KG.

It is interesting that this connection is maintained outside the synoptic Gospels, especially when we remember that references to the KG are less common in the non-synoptic Gospels and there KG are linked together in John 3:3, 5, and Paul links the KG with the KG in Romans 14:17 and Galatians 5:21; we may compare 1 Corinthians 4:20 where the KG is linked with power.

The question that emerges here is the first that is KG brought directly into conflict with the evil rule of Satan whose kingdom is the power of evil in the world. From the KG there is no kingdom and there is no power is over the world or over the human heart of Jesus. The KG as the Evangelists recognize that this motif was a dominant one in the ministry of Jesus when they relate at the outset of the story how Jesus, immediately after he had received the Spirit, was straightforward sent into the desert where the events leading up to the passion and death of Jesus were instigated by the action of Satan through Judas (Lk. 22:3; Jn. 13:2, 27). It has sometimes been suggested that for Luke at least the period of Jesus’ ministry between the temptation in the desert and the passion was free from temptation by Satan, but this hypothesis leads up to examination, especially in the light of Luke 22:28.

The second point is that the KG is associated with power. It is brought into being by the exercise of divine might, the power of divine grace. Paul says, the KG is not (simply) a matter of talking or of doctrine (2 Cor. 4:20). A third point to be noted is that the Spirit was promised in the OT as a gift for the last days in the same way as the KG (Joel 2:28). The KG and the Spirit are thus both signs of the eschatological activity of God now realized in the ministry of Jesus.

The effect of these considerations is to underline the element of power in the KG as God’s activity in Jesus which extends beyond mere prophetic inspiration expressed in words.

The kingdom of God and Jesus

The fact that God’s power is revealed in the KG in and through the person of Jesus is the key text for the relationship to the KG. It is the weakness of several treatments of the KG that they do not adequately consider the concept of the person of Jesus. This is represented by the idea retained of the sense of ‘Anointed’ and was used to refer to a person endowed with the Spirit for a particular purpose authorized by God. We can leave aside the view that the background to the use of the term ‘Messiah’ was the ancient Hebrew concept of a ‘servant to priesthood’28 and take it for granted that the reference is to an anointed ruler or king. Thus the term ‘Messiah’ is implicitly associated with the three themes that we have already considered: God sets up his rule (the KG) through a king anointed by the Spirit.

The question whether Jesus thought of himself as the Messiah is one that arouses much controversy. Since the early Church believed that the self-understanding of Messiah, the tendency to read back this title into his earthly ministry was obviously strong and therefore the texts must be examined with care. Yet the surprising fact is that according to the major Synoptic account, the KG and the activity of the KG as understood by the Baptist, is rarely spoken in a way that suggests that he thought of himself as Messiah. This fact, which helped to lead to the theory of the Johannine passion, that the Baptist was a montagne, and should rightly be seen as an apologist for the Jesus faith, is again seen in the Gospels. The Baptist being presented not as a rival of Jesus but as a forerunner of the Kingdom.

Jesus and the Kingdom of God

The historical Jesus understood the kingdom of God as a new reality which would be manifested on earth and not in heaven in his own lifetime. This is a correct suggestion, then we have a phenomenon similar to that which we found in the proclamation of the KG by Jesus. Jesus is concerned with authority and rule which will be like that of a king, but the aspect of the KG which is seen as the key is that it is hidden and partly secret. The fact that we can detect this same pattern in the use of both concepts, KG and Son of Man, is surely significant. It would appear to support the authenticity of Jesus’ teaching in both areas, since it is highly unlikely that the early church would deliberately create the same motif in both.

Our discussion has shown that KG and Messiah are closely related, being central to the identity of Jesus. But the saying is not only likely to apply to Jesus’ teaching in both areas, since it is highly unlikely that the early church would deliberately create the same motif in both.

The kingdom of God and Israel

We have connected the establishment of the KG as the result of the establishment of the KG. The traditional hope of Israel as they have been, for the set up of a new kingdom in the presence of God at the end of the age in a cosmic setting. It would be correct to say that the KG of Jesus is not that of a new God, who lived together in righteousness and power under the rule of God and his agent the Messiah. The Jews believed that they themselves were the corporate entity and consists of people. Hence the mission of Jesus involved the creation of a people who would be the object of God’s covenant and receiver of the blessings of his rule. Since Jesus warned the people of Israel that as a nation they were in danger of being rejected by God, he must have envisaged the creation of a new people, incorporating elements of the old people but also open more widely and committed to the new mission. The new proclamation of the KG he also called people to personal allegiance to himself as disciples and taught them that they must obey his word and so do the will of the Father. In response to the message of the KG was identified with the presentation of Jesus as Master. The new Israel is constituted by its allegiance to the Messiah. The recognition that Jesus was concerned with the creation of a new people is not a new revelation. A.M. Hunter the lapidary statement that ‘The Kingd of God implies a new Israel’,29 but it is Ben F. Meyer who has given the most recent treatment in recent writing. He asks: ‘Why should indeed the reign of God have been the object of a proclamation to Israel as such unless it bore some inherent promise of the kingdom?’30 Here the promise must be mentioned. The first is the eminent saying recorded in differing forms by Matthew and Luke (Mt. 19:28/ Lk. 22:29 Q).

Truly, I say to you, in the world, when the Son of man shall sit on his throne, you will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

As my Father appointed a kingdom for me, so do I appoint for you that you may eat and drink at my table, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

Common to both forms of the saying is the idea of rule by Jesus which will be shared in the world to come by the twelve disciples as they sit on thrones and judge the tribes of Israel. There remains, however, one point that should be made. The saying is recorded as it is by Luke in the context of the prophecy of the betrayal by Judas through Luke later records the appointment of a successor of Judas. The connection of the saying is unlikely since it takes no account of the place of the Gentiles (whether in the eyes of Jesus or of the Evangelists). The traditional view is that Jesus was thinking of those who have shared in his earthly ministry to Israel, and the privilege appears to be that of sharing in the judgment on the unbelieving people of Israel rather than of ruling over a reconstructed Israel. It is little more than a symbolic saying which is to state that the disciples will share in the KG but unbelieving Israel will be condemned, or, rather, that a division will be carried through among the Jews between the basis of belief and unbelief? It is not likely, then, that this text speaks of a ‘new’ physical Israel ruled by the twelve, but it could mean something akin the end of the old Israel.

The other crucial text is Matthew 16:18 where Jesus prophesies that he will build his church on this rock and that it will not be overcome by the powers of death. The authenticity of this saying is much disputed, and we owe to Ben F. Tuckett the evidence that it was written in the light of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The language has been shown to be definitively Palestinian, and there are no conceptual reasons for denying it to Jesus. In effect the sole remaining reason for not accepting it is its absence from the other Gospels, especially from Mark and Q; but it is curious reasoning which would object to this saying of Jesus from the view point of the Gospels or their sources.31 If the saying is genuine, it expresses the purpose of Jesus to establish a people whom he terms the ‘church’ or ‘people of God’—a people, coming immediately after Peter’s confession of Jesus as the Christ in response to the question of the other disciples ‘Who do people of myself as Messiah’. Here, therefore, we have an express statement of the intention of Jesus to form a people...
whom is given a name used of Israel as the people of God; compare, how the "sons of the wilderness" (Acts 7:38). Moreover, the statement has a cosmic dimension with its reference to "the powers of death", and Jesus must overcome all power. The expression of covenant, so too we should retain and explain the biblical terms and also look for new ways of expression that will be meaningful in our context.

Perhaps the most fundamental fact that we discovered in Jesus’ teaching about the kingdom was the way in which he looked forward to the future full manifestation of God’s rule but at the same time proclaimed and brought into being that same kingdom here and now. Jesus was convinced that God’s kingdom had already begun and that the world was already being refashioned in the light of God’s rule. The OT had prophesied the hope of God’s future action as king, and it expressed its hope for the kingdom as something which God’s people would experience especially at the eschaton. The early church was conscious of living in the era of fulfilment. Its hope for the kingdom was based on the experience of the present working of God. This is an observation of the utmost importance. Christianity is not built upon a hope of what God may do in the future; on the contrary, the hope is built upon the experience of what he has already done and is doing in the present time. And this hope is that God will bring to completion what he has already begun. He will continue to work in character with his past and present works.

Consequently, when we talk about the kingdom we are talking about something which is actually happening here and now, inaugurated by the ministry of Jesus, and now ‘come in power’, its power and action, which not onlywholes the believer in a Kingdom position and privilege it is, true of course, that there will be leaders in the church, but they have been given the pattern of service which they must follow by Jesus.”

The kingdom and the new age

After our rapid survey of some of the salient features in the teaching of Jesus, let us now turn to the question of how for us to try to assess their significance for today.

The first point to be noted is that the early church did two things with the teaching of Jesus. On the one hand, it retained a record of it in the traditions which eventually received definite form in the Gospels. This indicates that the teaching of Jesus continued to be influential in the church, and, as we noted, the Evangelists appear to have recognized that the main theme of Jesus was the kingdom. On the other hand, the uses of the term in the Gospels are much less thick on the ground. This suggests that while the early church faithfully preserved the account of what Jesus actually said, it also moved on beyond his teaching and reflected its reinterpretation of the saying about the Twelve sitting in judgment on the tribes of Israel, this is a purely future role, and there is no justification for thinking that the danger is already guarded against by the sayings of Jesus which insist that leadership is a matter of humble service and that salvation is by faith in Jesus rather than by power and position and privilege. It is, true of course, that there will be leaders in the church, but they have been given the pattern of service which they must follow by Jesus.”

The terminology makes this clear. Jesus used one and the same term, “the kingdom of God”, for the present and the future of God’s rule. The Holy Spirit is described by Paul as the “first instalment” of what God intends to give his people (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:14). This new power that makes for newness is already making things new. In Johannine terminology eternal life is a present experience stretching into the future.

All this demonstrates that the message of the kingdom is that the age to come has already dawned in the present age. This point needs some emphasis, for too often people talk as though the activity of the kingdom ceased with the death of Jesus. This is not to say that it is something purely heavenly or spiritual. Those who have spoken of the kingdom as present in the world today only have in mind of it either a purely humanistic manner as the expression of the Christian community or an abstract concern for the establishment of a new society, in terms of the establishment of some kind of ecclesiastical organization. But the language of the kingdom stresses that it is God’s present and effective power in this world, and our task is to experience and witness this power in the way in which he works in the world in which we live.

There might seem to be one decisive difference between the coming of the kingdom in the ministry of Jesus and its present presence now. We saw that the manifestation in his ministry was veiled in certain respects, although Jesus could encourage his contemporaries of blindness when they failed to perceive the significance of the signs of the times. But now the situation appears reversed. God has raised Jesus from the dead and thus declared him to be the judge and saviour of mankind. Does this not mean that the presence of the kingdom should now be clear? No longer hidden, but open to everyone? On the whole, in this respect, the answer is probably, “No”. The god of this world has blinded the eyes of those who do not believe. Christians walk by faith and not by sight. The fact of God’s kingdom is evident but it is sight that is not generally open to the eyes of men. So it is – are not matters that can be proved in a way that will be universally compelling. Hence the presence and progress of the kingdom are clearly indicated in the book of the gospels, however, sterner than they were before; the person who does not believe has no saviour power of evidence.

The relation of the presence of the kingdom to its future requires some consideration. The NT teaching about the future kingdom is cast in apocalyptic terms; it presents the picture of a cataclysmic end to the present world-order followed by a new order characterized by incorruptibility and permanence. Does this mean that there is no continuity between present and future? The tendency in much evangelical teaching has been to emphasize the disjunction between the two ages with the world getting worse and worse until eventually God steps in and makes a totally fresh start by taking his people away from the corrupt earth and raising the dead in Christ to share with them in the new world. Certainly the biblical picture is of a world which will be radically changed, and certainly it is a world that is full of hope for those lost in the one hand and the potential for nuclear destruction and other evils on the other. Are there any grounds for hope in the message of the kingdom?”

It is the merit of Ian Murray to have drawn attention to The Puritan Hope that before the end of the age there would be woe and that the kingdom of God would be visibly joined together. But the Kingdom of God is a reality future. It is not a reality that can be comprehended in the same way as the

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One important feature His teaching does share with Apocalyptic: from first to last the Resurrection is supernatural; man does not stand in need of it or bring it into being. Our modern idea of labouring for the kingdom of God is a Christian idiom. It has been borrowed from Christ and expressive of His Spirit; but it is not His teaching regarding the Kingdom.

Taylor is of course right in what he says about the teaching of Jesus in the Gospels. As he acknowledges, he has entirely lost the idea that the Kingdom of God is a reality that can be comprehended in the same way as the
whom is given a name used of Israel as the people of God; compare how this term is used in Is 41:8, "Who is like you among the holy ones of the earth?" It is also used in reference to "Thy Name in the wilderness." Acts 7:38. Moreover, the statement has a cosmic dimension with its reference to "the powers of death," and Jesus goes on to say, "I have power over the powers of death." Thus, Peter's erstwhile faith and confidence in Christ is reemphasized—to the point that Peter seems to suggest that in some way the people and the kingdom of God are closely related. After the disastrous effect of the fact of the mediocrity of the human king, we are in the increasingly secular and unhistorical expression of authority claimed by church leaders and in the refusal to recognize the saving rule of God outside of the Catholic Church. There has been a shift away from the identification of the KG as the church, and the current understanding of the KG as God's activity of ruling rather than a set of structures which has strengthened the case. But we have seen that this modern understanding of the phrase KG is one-sided and inadequate. The KG is not just the church, but also the set-up created by the activity of God, and that set-up consists of people. Hence the people created by Jesus is a manifestation of the KG. It is the KL, the people that constitute the rule of God through Jesus and on whom he bestows the blessings of his rule. The church as the people of God is the object of his rule and is therefore his kingdom, or at least an expression of it, imperfect and sinful though it is. We should not be afraid of recognizing this fact, despite the misuse of it in the past. Although the church has the promise of sitting in judgment on the world, it must remain true to its status as a reinter- pretation of the saying about the Twelve sitting in judgment on the tribes of Israel, this is a purely future role, and there is no justification for this church to assume it in the present. Indeed, the danger is already guarded against by the sayings of Jesus which insist that leadership is a matter of humble service and that the individual bishop is one who is already making the position and privilege. It is, of course, that there will be leaders in the church, but they have been given the pattern of service and suffering which they must follow by Jesus.17

The kingdom and the new age

After our rapid survey of some of the salient features in the early Christian tradition we now have time for us to try to assess their significance for today.

The first point to be noted is that the early church did two things with the teaching of Jesus. On the one hand, it retained a record of it in the traditions which eventually received definitive form in the Gospels. This indicates that the teaching of Jesus continued to be influential in the church, and, as we noted, the Evangelists appear to have recognized that the main theme of Jesus was the KG. On the other hand, the uses of the term KG outside the Gospels are much less thick on the ground. This suggests that while the early church faithfully preserved the account of what Jesus actually said, it also moved on beyond his teaching and especially for its new situation in the post-resurrection period in the Hellenistic world. Thus, although the mode of expression was varied, and the central role of God was stated by Jesus in terms of KG in the term remained constant. Elsewhere I have tried to show how the emphasis shifted from the central role of God and the work of God in the church to the unity of God and man and Saviour and how the experience of the blessings of the kingdom found apt expression as eternal life.18 This does not mean that we should completely abandon the term KG and express the concept in other words; rather, just as the early church was sensitive to the particular context of its own time and place, so too we should retain and explain the biblical terms and also look for new ways of expression that will be meaningful in our context today.

Perhaps the most fundamental fact that we discovered in Jesus' teaching about the KG was the way in which he looked forward to the future total manifestation of God's rule but at the same time proclaimed and brought into being that same kingdom in the present. The God who has already commenced in the present time. The OT had prophesied the hope of God's future action as king, and it expressed its hope of God's rule as a visible and imminent reality. It was this point of view that was experienced especially at the exodus. The early church was conscious of living in the era of fulfilment. Its hope for the future was not based on a new battle, the renewal of the working of God. This is an observation of the utmost importance. Christianity is not built upon a hope of what God may do in the future; on the contrary, the hope is built on the experience of what he has already done and is doing in the present time. And this hope is that God will bring to completion what he has already begun. He will continue to work in character with his past and present work.

Consequently, when we talk about the KG we are talking about something which is actually happening here and now, inaugurated by the ministry of Jesus, and now "come in the power of his glory." And this is why it is "already" and "incarnated" in Jesus himself. Through his death and resurrection he has been shown to be both Lord and Messiah of the future. In other words, it was the coming true ever since Jesus first began to proclaim: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand." (Mk. 1:15). The hope is no longer hope but present reality. To be sure, the first fulfillment is incomplete; we times; it continues; it is not our assurance, based on our present experience, is that in the future we shall know in fuller measure the experience of this present inheritance.

The terminology makes this clear. Jesus used one and the same term, "the kingdom of God", for the present and the future of God's rule. The Holy Spirit is described by Paul as the "first installment" of what God intends to give his people (2 Cor. 1:22, Eph. 1:14). The power that makes for newness is already making things new. In Johannine terminology eternal life is a present experience stretching into the future.

All this demonstrates that the message of the KG is that the age to come has already dawned in the life of the church. This point needs some emphasis, for too often people talk as though the activity of the KG ceased with the death of Jesus. The Gospels show us that this is not so; though it is something purely heavenly or spiritual. Those who have spoken of the KG as present in the world today have often thought of it either in a purely humanistic manner as the society of people who follow Jesus, or in a theological sense in terms of the establishment of some kind of ecclesiastical organization. But the language of the KG stresses that it is God who is exercising his powerful lordship in the world in which we live.

There might seem to be one decisive difference between the coming of the KG in the ministry of Jesus and its presence now. We saw that the manifestation in his ministry was veiled in certain respects, although Jesus could assure his contemporaries of blindness when they failed to perceive the significance of the signs of the times. But now the situation appears different. The God who has raised Jesus from the dead and thus declared him to be the judge and saviour of mankind. Does this not mean that the presence of the KG should now be manifest and open to everyone? On the whole, the Christian answer to this question is "No!" The God of this world has blinded the eyes of those who do not believe. Christians walk by faith and not by sight. The fact of the*Kingdom* as history is one thing, his activity as lord of men is another. To see that is -- it are not matters that can be proved in a way that will be universally compelling. Hence the presence and progress of the KG in human affairs is already happening, but we have seen, however, stronger than they were before; the person who does not believe has to reject a stronger body of evidence.

The relation of the presence of the KG to its future requires some consideration. The NT teaching about the future KG is cast in apocalyptic terms; it presents the picture of a cataclysmic end to the present world-order followed by a new order characterized by incorruptibility and permanence. Does this mean that there is no continuity between present and future? The tendency in much evangelical teaching has been to emphasize the distinction between the two ages with the world getting worse and worse until eventually God steps in and makes a totally fresh start by taking his people away from the corrupt earth and raising the dead in Christ to share with them in the new world. Certainly the biblical picture is of a world that is now perishing and will be destroyed, and God's reign remains for ever. Moreover, the world in which we live presents an equivocal face with the achieve- ments of the millennium in the church and the potential for nuclear destruction and other evils on the other. Are there any grounds for hope in the message of the KG?

It is the merit of Ian Murray to have drawn attention to The Puritan Hope that before the end of the age there would be widespread Christian teaching about the kingdom of God and its timing. Advocates of the Puritan view have linked it to post-millennialism, the doctrine that the millennium will proceed in the church until the last day. But post-millennialism is a doubly-based option, and it would be better to recognize that the hope of revival in the last days is something to be distinguished from the millennium.

Can this hope be taken as something realistic? Does Jesus' prophecy of the coming of "the Son of Man" at the end of time mean that there are two epochs of history? Certainly there is a pattern that must be observed. Scholars have often found it difficult to accommodate the expectation of a visible coming of Jesus' Son of Man to the present era. How have Jesus have announced the presence of God's rule and yet faced apparent defeat and the need to give his life as a ransom for many in a world controlled by a state of mental slavery in the midst of the community of his followers and his triumphant vindication by God. But this means that there was a pattern in the ministry of Jesus in which there was a genuine experience of opposition by the powers of evil who were exercising an evil power against the kingdom; or as described as being only apparent defeat for it was itself part of God's plan and it was followed by a display of divine power and victory. This pattern was repeated in the early church in its experience of strength in the midst of weakness. May we not then say that on a cosmic scale the KG comes in weakness and grows in weakness but that there will be a triumphant vindication at the end? The pattern of crucifixion and resurrection enacting in the life of Jesus in his ministry to the growth of the case of the church as it dies now in order to be resurrected with its Lord at the parousia. Thus the church can proclaim the KG as present and at the same time trust in the future. The same time it must be affirmed that the triumph is not merely future. The biblical teaching is not that God's strength is going to come by the power of the church but rather that God's strength is already there. The Kingdom is there in the midst of the weakness. The cross itself was the place of glorification of Jesus according to the Fourth Gospel (Jn. 19:31). The church is not really in the world because the true Church is already in Christ and enjoying of His Spirit; but it is not His teaching regarding the Benes. Taylor is of course right in what he says about the teaching of Jesus. It is true that his teaching is not always consistent and it is therefore possible for one to make an error. But the KG is clearly distinguished from other Kingdoms, and it remains a primary obligation. Yet this is surely not the whole story. For we have seen that God acted in Jesus to establish his Kingdom and that the concepts of the Messiah/Son of man and KG, whether explicitly joined together. But the King of the KG as the Son of man is the leader of a group which is not only subject to God as king but also acts in unison to spread the KG. The idea of Jesus himself as the one who is at the heart of the action of God’s agents is thoroughly foolish. Jesus called the Twelve and the Seventy to share in his work, and he told them that they would themselves go on to proclaim the signs of its presence. The KG extends as it is proclaimed and the signs of its presence are performed. If Jesus came to bring the KG, we must also conclude that his followers would be commissioned by him to carry out the same task. It must be questioned, therefore, whether Taylor is right in saying that 'labouring for the coming of the Kingdom' is not the teaching of Jesus himself. The contrary, this is precisely what Jesus 28:18 was called his followers to do. To proclaim the kingdom of God is to spread the KG, for it opens up to people the possibility of responding to the message by acknowledging God as their king.

One can understand the position Taylor adopted. It was no doubt a reaction against the nineteenth-century liberals and the sociopolitical thought of a KG which was little more than a metaphor. It can also be seen as a response through action inspired by love. Such a concept is dangerously secular and leaves God out of consideration, to say nothing of Christ. Equally it is possible and necessary to
The date of Deuteronomy: inch-pin of Old Testament criticism

Part 2

Gordon Wenham

In the first part of this article the author, who is lecturer at the College of St Paul and St Mary in Cheltenham, explained the arguments for the critical consensus which dates Deuteronomy in the late seventh century BC. Then under the heading "Reposing the question" he began critically to re-examine those arguments, looking first at the question of language, then at another legal texts purporting Deuteronomy. He continues below.

The central sanctuary

The chief argument for supposing that Deuteronomy was written in the seventh century is its repeated insistence that worship should be limited to 'the place which the LORD will choose'. This is generally taken as a code word for Jerusalem, so we should regard Deuteronomy either as the programme for or a justification of Josiah's centralization measures. This reading of Deuteronomy is, it is held, confirmed by 2 Kings 22 which mentions that a law book was discovered in the course of a reform.

Now there are several objections to this equation of Deuteronomy with the Josianic reform programme. The first difficulty is that the book never specifies where the 'place' is. It is generally explained as reflecting the writer's unwillingness to put obvious anachronisms into the mouth of Moses. But if pseudonymous writing was as acceptable as liberalism usually

ally, when such cosyness? If Moses was the greatest of the prophets, as Deuteronomy certainly claims (18:15-22; 34:10-12), why should we not have predicted that Jerusalem would be the chosen city? It would certainly have added credibility to Josiah's reformation. If an unnamed prophet of Bethel could be credited with predicting three centuries beforehand the future course of history, why should not the much better known Moses have been allowed to name Jerusalem?

Secondly, the usual critical contention that Deuteronomy limits all worship to Jerusalem is demonstrably wrong. Nowhere does the book specify what place is meant by 'the place which the LORD your God will choose'. It is just a guess that Jerusalem is intended. But Deuteronomy does specify by name one place where an altar is to be built and sacrifices offered. Read Deuteronomy 27:4-8. There you will see that sacrifices must be offered on Mount Ebal, a hill near Shechem, approximately forty miles north of Jerusalem. At least Shechem was an important shrine in the days of Joshua (Jos. 8:30-35), and also in the tenth century in the days of David (2 Sam. 5:9). This, of course, is not a significant centre until it became the capital of the Samaritans in post-exilic times.

It must be admitted that it is totally incongruous for a book

See S. Kim, 'The Son of Man' as the Son of God (Tübingen, 2003).


W. G. Kummel, Promise and Fulfillment: he argues that Jesus saw the Kingdom of God to be present before the parousia, which he thought to be imminent, only in his own person and his works; he knows no other realization of the eschatological consummation" (op. cit., p. 140).


Ibid., p. 30.


Thad H. Meikle, op. cit., p. 38, argues that since kings in which the king is a spiritual king, Papias, the second-century writer, gives a similar view in his dialogue on the subject of the nature of kingship. The manuscript of the Psalter in the library of the King James Version was God's chosen people. The Khmer manuscript of the Psalter in the library of the King James Version was God's chosen people. The Khmer manuscript of the Psalter in the library of the King James Version was God's chosen people. The Khmer manuscript of the Psalter in the library of the King James Version was God's chosen people. The Khmer manuscript of the Psalter in the library of the King James Version was God's chosen people. The Khmer manuscript of the Psalter in the library of the King James Version was God's chosen people. The Khmer manuscript of the Psalter in the library of the King James Version was God's chosen people. The Khmer manuscript of the Psalter in the library of the King James Version was God's chosen people. The Khmer manuscript of the Psalter in the library of the King James Version was God's chosen people. The Khmer manuscript of the Psalter in the library of the King James Version was God's chosen people. The Khmer manuscript of the Psalter in the library of the King James Version was God's chosen people. The Khmer manuscript of the Psalter in the library of the King James Version was God's chosen people. The Khmer manuscript of the Psalter in the library of the King James Version was God's chosen people.


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Now there are several objections to this equation of Deuteronomy with the Josianic reform programme. The first oddity is that the book never specifies where ‘the place is’. It is generally explained as referring to the writer’s unwillingness to put obvious anachronisms into the mouth of Moses. But if pseudonymous writing was as acceptable as liberals usually allege, why such coyness? If Moses was the greatest of the prophets, as Deuteronomy certainly claims (18:15-22; 34:10-12), why should he not have predicted that Jerusalem would be the chosen city? It would certainly have added credibly to Josiah’s reformation. If an unnamed prophet of Bethel could be credited with predicting three centuries beforehand that the temple at Jerusalem should not be the much better known Moses be allowed to name Jerusalem?

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It must be admitted that it is totally incongruous for a book
which is supposed to be vitally concerned with limiting all worship to Jerusalem to state that Moses ordered sacrifice to be offered at Mount Sinai; without much ado called that a high place. In the light of chapter 27 it seems impossible to regard the present book of Deuteronomy as either the pro- gramme for or a tract justifying the clarification of the chapter 27 which has been omitted if that were the book's purpose. For this reason it seems very difficult to believe that Deuteronomy was written in the seventh century in Jerusalem.

Rather surprisingly, few critical scholars pay much attention to the problems posed by chapter 27 for the usual dating of Deuteronomy. There seems to be a blind spot here with which many of the editors seem to agree. They seem to believe that Deuteronomy wants all worship to Jerusalem that they overlook what chapter 27 is saying. Those who do notice the problem often extrapolate from it a late date for Deuteronomy. But this is hardly satisfactory. For reasons already stated above, formally and stylistically chapter 27 is an integral part of the book. Furthermore, even if it is considered as an interpolation, it is not a final form which was inserted into its book. If it was not in the original Deuteronomy written to promote or justify Josiah's centralization, why insert it soon afterwards? The editors of Kings, often alleged to be the final editors of Deuteronomy, were also fiercely opposed to the high places such as Ebal, so why should they have inserted chapter 27?

Therefore if one is supposed to divided chapter 27, which for the reasons given above, remains a part of the book, and for the reasons given above, remains a part of the book, is there little evidence, there are still difficult question which the Deuteronomy's composition seems unable to answer.

Finally it should be noticed that though the book of Kings associates the discovery of the law book with Josiah's reforms, it does not actually say all the reforms including the centralization of worship were prompted by the recovered law book. As is widely recognized, at least two quite distinct sources have been combined in 2 Kings 22:1-23:31: a full and circumstantial account of the recovery of the law book in 22:3-23:21, and a second, list summarizing Josiah's measures in 23:1-20.

The implications of the composite nature of 2 Kings 22-23 were seen in an earlier chapter many years ago. He argued that, if the law-book source (22:3-23:31) is distinct from the centralization source (23:4-20), it is doubtful whether the discovery of the law book had anything to do with the reforms. But the same considerations it is dubious whether 2 Kings 22-23 lends any support to the notion that Deuteronomy was a seventh-century work written to support the centralization of worship in Jerusalem. It may be noted that Lohfink's conclusions were partially anticipated by D. W. R. Robinson in his excellent monograph Josiah's Reform and the Book of the Law. Robinson relied on 2 Chronicles 34, which places Josiah's centralization measures in his twelfth year, six years before the discovery of the law book. He concluded that "there is nothing in the book of Deuteronomy which makes it likely that it was written in the seventh century. There is certainly nothing in 2 Kings to refute this chronology. Indeed the fact that the temple was being repaired when the law book was found surely implies that certain reforms preceded the recovery of the book's doctrine."21

How then should we take Deuteronomy's references to the central sanctuary, if they are not to be read as a cryptic allusion to Jerusalem? Here McConville's important new work Law and Theology in Deuteronomy22 needs to be consulted. But Deuteronomy must be read as a religio-political tract attempting to adapt old legislation to the social conditions of the late monarchy period. In fact he shows that this is the case in the legislation of Deuteronomy which faces the seventh-century situation all at convincingly. It stands much closer to the conditions in the Judges period. What we have in Deuteronomy are not changes in regulations necessary in the social changes in the late monarchy period, but a theological reinterpretation of the cases of the old testament law (including in particular in the social conditions of the law of the Old Testament). This is not a simply literal interpretation of the Old Testament, but a religious reinterpretation of it based on the new social situation.

Because God is doing so much for Israel, particularly giving them the land of Canaan, they are expected to respond more generously than in the past. They must take care of the poor, they must not oppress the stranger, they must return to the fruits of the land. The same is true of goodness to Israel is shown not simply in giving the land, but in dwelling in it in itself at the place which he will choose. The place to be is new Sina, the new heaven on earth, because it is where the LORD will put his name and his habitation. Thus according to McConville Deuteronomy is not so much interested in the location of the place, but in the fact that it will be chosen by God for his dwelling. The place is unimportant; the theological significance of the place is all-important.

Religious ideology. It is often supposed that the ideology of Deuteronomy supports the case for a seventh-century date. The warnings about the dangers of foreign gods faced with the Assyrain and Babylonian attacks on Jerusalem. The relevance of Deuteronomy to this situation is un- doubted and it is not surprising to find immediately after the more religious ideas, deuteronomism, Deuteronomy 10, 12 and 17. However, the book's promises and demands of the king and the conqueror were modified, so that the kings and conquerors considered their right to rule not just as a religious duty, but also as a political duty. The political situation in the late monarchy period was different from that in the time of Josiah.

The book's promises and demands of the king and the conqueror were modified, so that the kings and conquerors considered their right to rule not just as a religious duty, but also as a political duty. The political situation in the late monarchy period was different from that in the time of Josiah.

These conclusions are based on the examination of the main arguments for the dating of Deuteronomy, the last of which is the nature of the book's law. The last of which is the nature of the book's law. In conclusion, the examination of the main arguments for the dating of Deuteronomy has been far too brief to deal with them adequately. Nevertheless there are very good reasons for continuing with Rendtorff that the dating of this pericope makes sense; that is, that the book was written before the tenth century BC. There is no other way of explaining the book's references to the central sanctuary, to the central sanctuary, to the central sanctuary, to the central sanctuary, to the central sanctuary, to the central sanctuary, to the central sanctuary.
which is supposed to be vitally concerned with limiting all worship to Jerusalem to state that Moses ordered sacrifice to be offered at the golden calf worship would called a "high place." In the light of chapter 27 it seems impossible to regard the present book of Deuteronomy as either the program for or a tract justifying the worship contained in chapter 27 which had been omitted if that were the book's purpose. For this reason it seems very difficult to believe that Deuteronomy was written in the seventh century in Jerusalem.

Rather surprisingly, few critical scholars pay much attention to the problems posed by chapter 27 for the usual dating of Deuteronomy. There seems to be a blind spot here in their methodology. If, for example, one believes that Deuteronomy wants all limited worship to Jerusalem that they overlook what chapter 27 is saying. Those who do notice the problem have usually made the argument that Deuteronomy was composed in the seventh century situation at all convincingly. It stands much closer to the conditions in the Judges period. What we have in Deuteronomy are not changes in regulations necessitated by political changes in the late monarchy period, but a theological reinterpretation of older pentateuchal law (including P) in the light of God's great act of newness, the gift of the prophecy of Ezekiel. Because God is doing so much for Israel, particularly giving them the land of Canaan, they are expected to respond more generously in the past. They must take care of the prophets and the priests, and take care of the poor, the sojourners, and orphans and widows. Because God's goodness to Israel is shown not simply in giving the land, but in dwelling in it himself at the place which he will choose. The place to be is the new Sina, the new heaven on earth, because it is where the LORD will put his name and his habitation. Thus according to McConville, Deuteronomy is not so much interested in the location of the place, but in the fact that it will be chosen by God for his dwelling. The geographic location is unimportant: the theological significance of the place is all-important.

Religious ideology

It is often supposed that the ideology of Deuteronomy supports the case for a seventh-century date. The warnings about the dangers of assimilation which Deuteronomy faced with the Assyrian and Babylonian attacks on Jerusalem. The relevance of Deuteronomy to this situation is uncertain, and it seems more likely that the warnings are related to other Deuteronomic ideas, but whether this proves Deuteronomy was specially written for this period is another matter. As knowledge of the development of religious ideas in Israel, which are most prominent in Deuteronomy, the promises to the patriarchs, the covenant, the kingship of God, holy war and the conquest of the land are exactly those found in what is often considered the earliest Testament, the Song of the Sea in Exodus 15. This poem is unquestionably early, as its grammatical forms, and was presumably written very soon after the battle of Kadesh. The Song of the Sea celebrates. The coincidences between Exodus 15 and Deuteronomy are striking, but owing to our limited knowledge of the fin-de-siecle, we cannot appeal to the parallels as proof that Deuteronomy must be early. However at least they show that there is no theological incoherence in positing an early date for Deuteronomy.

Marriage laws

Similar to the civil law of Deuteronomy fits the seventh millennium as well if not better than the first millennium. The demand for marriage for witnesses for conviction is a recognized principle of old Babylonian laws. The double prohibition of brother and sister marriage is attested in Middle Assyrian law. Though the extra-biblical parallels cited come from the second millennium, it seems likely that similar legal principles continued to operate later. However the large group of laws on sex and marriage in Deuteronomy do seem to center-second millennium legal requirements to what we know of Jewish practice in the later part of the first millennium. Deuteronomy was only written a century or two earlier. Deuteronomic definitions of and punishments for adultery find close parallels in old Babylonian and Hittite laws (1750/1300 BC). The Deuteronomic form on adultery also is far closer to the Hebrew practice as well. But in the Jewish colony of Elephantine divorce rather than death was the penalty for adultery, and the bridal payment was low. It must be admitted that this evidence does not constitute conclusive proof of the second-millennium origin of the Deuteronomic laws. We are not exacting critics who suggest that the legal parts of Deuteronomy could also have originated early: they do not require a seventh-century date, indeed they are difficult to square with it. But this is an area which requires much more work before definite conclusions can be drawn.

The use of Deuteronomy in Jerusalem

It has been argued that it is wrong to see Deuteronomy as a program to centralized worship in Jerusalem in the seventh century. To what extent would Deuteronomy appear to be a source of the religion. Though Deuteronomy did not predict Josiah's reforms according to a critical reading of 2 Kings 22-23, it does appear that the law book found in the temple was a version of Deuteronomy. Lethekm has shown however that the law book narrative (2 Kings 22-23; 53) only makes sense if the book discovered was an old and authentic witness of the original version of Deuteronomy, and was used by the religious and political leaders of the day. He argues that the book discovered in the temple was a covenant document used from time to time in official rites in Jerusalem, perhaps at royal coronations. Certainly it was regarded as binding on the king and his subjects. In a long and complicated argument he shows that he regards as a briefer form of Deuteronomy, was brought to Jerusalem with the ark in the time of David. Lethekm's arguments are suggestive rather than conclusive, but again they point to an earlier origin of the book than is usually assumed.

Conclusions

This examination of the main arguments for the dating of Deuteronomy has been far too brief to deal with them adequately. Nevertheless there are very good reasons for some concuring with Rendtorff that the dating of this pentateuchal source rests on hypothetical assumptions which only have standing through much conjectural work. We have discovered that exegetical and other data have been interpreted on the assumption that Deuteronomy was written in the seventh century, and then often as not these interpretations have helped to support this dating. The approach of the Deuteronomist, its approach to war, its attitude to the central sanctuary, its relationship to the treaty texts, have all been evaluated in the light of a prior assumption about its seventh-century date. It has been our argument that this assumed date not only conflicts with the statement of religious ideas about its origin, but that it creates other critical problems in its train. The style of Deuteronomy and its parallels with the legal texts are not of the Deuteronomic period. A careful study of Deuteronomy's directive that sacrifice should be offered on Mount Ebal makes it most unlikely that it should be regarded as a tract whose main purpose is to encourage or justify centenarian practice. Nevertheless it is far from clear how all the pious consciousness of Deuteronomy is to be changed, much detailed work must be done, as it involves reassessing and often rethinking the problems of the Old Testament. This is an immense undertaking. McConville's book shows some of the many issues that are involved. May it be that the time has come for fresh studies of the history of Old Testament literature and of religion and Deuteronomy in particular. For it is not just our understanding of history that is affected, but also our understanding of the inspiration of Scripture, since a late date clearly implies its pseudonymity.

However conservative should not merely be concerned to defend the truth of Scripture. Though that is often a very taxing and difficult intellectual task, it is not the chief purpose of Scripture to teach us about Moses' life history or whatever. Rather it is to train us in righteousness, in the obedience and love of God and his laws. To love God with all our heart, soul and strength, to love our neighbour as ourselves, is the result of biblical scholars' preoccupation with critical issues for nearly two centuries the century has lost in two directions. First, the theological interpretation of the inspired text is led by the bibliographical inspiration of the authority of Scripture. 'If it is not really by Moses, or by Paul, we need not believe it or obey it,' says an unspoken corollary of many critical theories. And second, Bible-believing Christians have spent too much time worrying about when this was written or how it was written, that they have forgotten to listen to the voice of God speaking to them through Scripture. This ought to be our first priority to discover what God is saying to us through Deuteronomy, not whether Moses or some great unknown wrote it.

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A taproot of radicalism
Paul Helm

It is understandable that a Christian theologian student, immersed in the study of the New Testament, should not be able to see much beyond these details. But he is wrong not to do so, and particularly wrong if what he is ultimately serious about is doing justice to the fruits of his study into responsible Christian confession and witness.

In terms of a familiar distinction, between data and theory, or between facts and interpretation, the narratives of the Gospels may be thought of as the data or facts. Of course these facts, because they are in the form of words and clauses and sentences, are the result of lexical and grammatical interpretation, but this can be taken for granted in what follows. The theological student’s partial dismissal of the miraculous in the New Testament by theologians and others may arise from a failure to see that this rejection is not simply a denial of the factual character of certain events on the grounds, say, that there are discrepant accounts of them, but a denial of certain facts because of certain theories about such facts which are already held.

Suppose that Mrs Smith is accused of witchcraft or sorcery. Some may wonder whether or not the evidence to support this accusation is good. What exactly did she do? Who saw her? What effect did her actions have? But another might say: Mrs Smith could not have been a witch because there are no witches. He might agree that she acted like one, and thought she was one, and that her actions had serious effects. But how could she have been a witch, since there are none? (Compare the Regius Professor of Divinity’s dictum: “If a man has no conception of the Devil, he should be considered free from the Devil’s power.”) The objection here is not on the grounds that the facts are inadequate to support the conclusion, but to the very idea of such a conclusion.

To say that facts are interpreted in the light of theories is not at all to suggest that those who hold the theories have no reasons for holding them, that it is a matter of blind dogmatism, a leap of faith. Unfortunately the impression is sometimes given that these matters are a matter of blind faith. There is another sense in which it is a matter of blind faith, a metaphysical presupposition, and it is a matter of presuppositions, and this presupposition is mysterious, secret, unchallengeable things.

So much for the negative and destructive side of Kant’s proposal. But Kant was not an atheist. What did he propose? Although it cannot be repeated for the sake of brevity, I think nothing can be a revelation of him, yet God’s existence can and must be postulated, for God’s existence is a requirement of morality. Without the idea of a summum bonum, the idea of the God of the New Testament and the virtue of the punisher of vice, there could be no morality.

The two ideas, that there can be no knowledge of God but that the idea of God is regularity, have set the agenda for subsequent Protestant theology. Religion is not the business of embracing and embodying the ethics of the kingdom of God to be realized here on earth (Ritschl), it is the sharing of Christ whose character is understood exclusively in this-worldly moral terms. But what has Kant’s philosophy to do with the study of the New Testament?
A taproot of radicalism

Paul Helm

The theological litmus test in Britain has in the last year or two been occupied by liberal theologians such as David Jenkins and Don Cupitt. In this article Paul Helm, lecturer in philosophy at Liverpool University, explores the philosophical roots of this radicalism.

Biblical theologians are sometimes puzzled by the radical attacks made by apparently Christian theologians upon the evidential value of the words and work of Jesus presented in the New Testament. While they can readily appreciate the views of those who argue, on textual and historical grounds, that this or that peculiar story is inauthentic, even though they may not share those views, they find it almost incredible that scholars should refuse to take the New Testament documents seriously, at face value. For it seems as if such scholars are flying in the face of a lot of evidence. If the New Testament contains an account of only one miracle, or of one event which ought reasonably to be interpreted as a miracle, one could understand a certain scepticism. But who could reasonably reject all the data?

Facts and interpretations

Various theories have been offered to explain this state of affairs by people who deplore it. For some it is a conspiracy to subvert the faith. For others it is the result of baseless speculation. For others still it is the latest silent down the slippery slope, a slide which began a century or more ago, while for others it is a case of theologians trying to snatch the headlines. For any of these claims to be persuasive it would be necessary to produce the necessary evidence. But are there such facts? Is there any evidence, for instance, that in the last hundred years first one tenet of the faith and then another has been denatured because the first has been denied, with cumulative effect?

Even if there were such confirmatory evidence it would still rather miss the point, just as it misses the point to say that such radicalism is "out of date." For the question is not whether radical theologians have motives for their radicalism, but whether they have reasons for it, reasons that will stand up to scrutiny and that will constrain objective enquirers to join them. Whether the radical is relativist or agnostic, whether he works with ill-will or goodwill -- these are irrelevant considerations for someone who wants to know whether or not not to be tempted to be a radical.

So the attitude which rejects radicalism as it is because it is the face of the evidence of the New Testament, though widespread, is naive.

It is understandable that a Christian theological student, immersed in the critical study of the New Testament, should not be able to see much beyond these details. But he is wrong not to do so, and particularly wrong if what he is ultimately doing is to produce a theory that events could have occurred but that the evidence that they did not is always greater than the evidence that they did. The third theory is that such events could not have occurred.

It is the third theory which is important here. Clearly if a person holds such a theory then, faced with the New Testament narratives, he must interpret them non-miraculously. But why should anyone hold such a theory?

Kantian theology

There is one dominant pattern of argument in Western culture for the conclusion that miracles cannot happen. The argument has the following form:

1. Miracles are, by definition, acts of God.
2. God is all-powerful; he can do anything
3. Therefore, he could have prevented the events in question.
4. Therefore, miracles cannot happen.

The reason for this conclusion is not that there is not enough evidence to conclude that a miracle has occurred. If we were a matter of not having enough evidence then perhaps more could be gained, or at least there could be dispute over whether the evidence which there is is sufficient. Rather, the reasoning has to do with the limits of the human mind, limits which, it is claimed, cannot in the very nature of the case be overcome.

What are those alleged limits? Briefly, that any individual thing about which people claim to know anything must be a possible object of our experience, and anything which is a possible object of experience lies within the boundaries of space and time. Hence we can never properly think of forms of concepts of, God, since to do so would take us beyond the necessary boundaries of our experience. To put the point slightly differently, we can only conceive the object of our knowledge.

But God is by definition not in space or time. He is therefore 'beyond all the knowledge which we can attain within the world'.

This is Immanuel Kant's argument. The whole basis of Kant's philosophy is a criticism of metaphysics, of the idea that through reason, or revelation, it is possible to gain some knowledge of the nature of things. Metaphysical enquiry, according to Kant, generates antinomies, sets of conflicting arguments which all seem equally valid. Thus, for instance, our theoretical reasonings lead us to think that the universe begins in time and is a bounded space and at the same time that the universe is infinite in time and space. Such antinomies are generated because the human mind is so structured as to be capable of experiencing things only in terms of their appearances, never as things-in-themselves. We perceive an appearance, say, of a pine tree, and an appearance of ourselves, but they are never known in experience. The idea that we might know things-in-themselves is an illusion of thought through which we mistake the regulative requirement of our rational concepts for actual knowledge.

Kant applies this to human thought about God. God is unknowable and yet his existence is required, particularly (according to Kant) by the nature of morality. The moral law (which is not, for Kant, the law of God but a law which is demanded by the rational nature of man) requires (and so itself) requires the idea of God as the rewarder of virtue and the punisher of vice. Only on such a supposition is morality made intelligible, for only God could ensure the connection between virtue and happiness. Thus, though human beings cannot know God, they are required by the nature of morality to postulate his existence.

Kant's book Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone (1793-95) is the product of this critical philosophy to Christianity considered as a historical religion. According to Christianity God makes himself known and so makes known what he requires of men and what he has done for men through Scripture. Kant turns this claim upside down. For him morality is in no sense derived from religion or theology, rather morality (understood in purely secular terms) is necessary to our knowledge of God. Hence we can never properly think of forms of concepts of Christianity, especially the New Testament, are to be interpreted, or rather re-interpreted, in the light of Kant's critical philosophy and rational morality. As John KEMP has put it, Kant has no use for such Christian concepts as grace, salvation, and the service of God except in so far as they are given a moral inter-pretation: the service of God consists in leading a morally good life, not in rites and observances, and grace and salvation are earned by moral goodness and nothing else -- Kant will have no truck with the doctrine of justification by faith.

It is not that Kant thinks the New Testament does not teach the doctrine of justification by faith. Rather, that doctrine is used upon the grounds of epistemological and moral assumptions, it cannot be the truth.

The influence of Kant's view upon subsequent theology, particularly continental Protestant theology, can hardly be exaggerated. It had two major consequences. One was to make impossible or irrelevant the programme of natural theology, that of proving the existence of God from reason or nature. The other was to make impossible the idea that any source whatever for our knowledge of God -- should provide us with revelation, with the knowledge of God.

So much for the negative and destructive side of Kant's proposal. But Kant was not an atheist. What did he propose? Although his anti-theism cannot be sustained it is questionable whether anything can be a revelation of him, yet God's existence can and must be postulated, for God's existence is a requirement of morality. Without the idea of a summum bonum, the idea of God as the rewarder of virtue and the punisher of vice, there could be no morality.

These two ideas, that there can be no knowledge of God but that the idea of God is required, have set the agenda for subsequent Protestant theology. Religion is not the business of the Christian people but of the Christian people and the business of the Christian people is embodying the ethics of the kingdom of God to be realized here on earth (Ritschl), or it is the following of Christ whose character is understood exclusively in this-worldly moral terms. So what has Kant's philosophy to do with the study of the New Testament, and particularly the interpretation of the miracles? It is of central importance, for however these
accounts are to be interpreted they cannot be interpreted as if they are reciting the acts of God. Some other way must be found to interpret them, or they must be abandoned altogether.

Furthermore, according to Kant there is something improper or unbecoming about a religion which depends upon man's will for the fulfillment of its work of Kant himself. In Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone Kant offers a reconstruction of Christianity in line with both the autonomy of man and the transcendence of what has been sketched above, and with the supreme importance he attaches to the morality of duty in accordance with which he calls the moral law. Some samples of his exegesis of the New Testament might be of interest.

First, Kant's general attitude to Scripture. The interpreter must bring to its interpretation a supreme moral criterion. The final purpose even of reading these holy scriptures, or of investigating their content, is to make men better; the historical element, which contributes nothing to this end, is something which is in itself quite indifferent, and we can do with it as we will.

Kant distinguishes between an empirical faith (Christianity in his case) and moral faith (faith understood in accordance with its own ideas of autonomous reason).

If such an empirical faith, which chance, it would seem, has brought to us, can only be based on a basis of moral faith (the first end or merely an means), an exposition of the revelation which but comes into our possession is required, that is, a thorough-going interpretation of it in a sense agreeing with the moral law. For the theoretical part of ecclesiastical faith cannot interest us morally if it does not conduce to the performance of all human duties as well as to the salvation of all (regard of all religion). Frequently this interpretation may, in the light of the text itself, demand that it be revised; – it may really be forced, and yet if the text can possibly support it, it must be preferred to a literal interpretation which either contains nothing at all useful to morality or else actually works counter to moral incentives.

What Kant is in effect proposing here is a hermeneutics of Scripture which is in accordance with his view of what religion is: not primarily as a means of salvation but as a means to the actual meaning of Scripture. 'Reason has freed itself, in matters which by their nature ought to be moral and soul-improving, in order to keep faith forever dependent upon the arbitrary will of the expositors.' 5 So Kant affirms as a basic principle of his exegesis that the attempt must be to 'disentangle this system of Scripture, and thus to harmonize with the most holy teachings of reason'.

There is therefore no norm of ecclesiastical faith other than Scripture, and no expositors other than true religion and Scripture (which deals with the historical aspect of that religion). Of these, the first alone is authentic and valid for the whole world; the second is authentic only for the country of the country where it ends the transformation of ecclesiastical faith for a given people at a given time into a definite and enduring system.

It is not surprising to find Kant reconstructing traditional Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit in terms of pure moral religion.

Writing about the virgin birth he says

Yet what is new in all this theory pro or con when it suffices for practical purposes to divorce the tradition from this pattern it seems the Holy Spirit, out of the body of mankind raising itself above temptation to evil (and withstanding it viciously)!

Since Kant wrote this the application of his basic approach to the study of the New Testament diverges into different forms which may which be called the blanket and the filter applications. The first treats the New Testament as a seamless whole which, since it contains reports of miracles occurring in the life of Jesus and contains miracles as a part of faith's reinterpreted wholesale, the whole corpus of the documents being regarded as (for instance) the product of the fact of the early Christian Church having as a result of a historical event, is to be regarded as being in the same sense as the text of which is to be treated as a whole. The second, which in technical terms is to be regarded as being the treatment of those elements which are regarded as mythological or legendary accretions in order to regain what must (it is thought) have been there from the very beginning: the matter: the career of Jesus the moral teacher, the victim of Pharisaic hypocrisy and of Roman callousness and indifference.

The details of the various programmes are not here of matter. What is important are the basic assumptions that the different philosophical outlook enables the one who holds to it to treat the New Testament, perfectly consistently, in what would otherwise seem to be a dogmatically arbitrary matter. While such an attitude to the New Testament is not dogmatic it is certainly a prior in that the Kantian interpreter brings to the text of the New Testament definite views both about the limits of human knowledge and about the nature of religion as being the embodiment or expression of certain moral and social ideas.

Kantianism and the radicals

The recognition that such a general outlook is widespread in the New Testament undoubtedly stimulates the spirit of the British Isles, serves to render the views of theologians such as Don Cupitt and the Bishop of Durham more intelligible. When the Bishop spoke, on a notorious occasion, of 'connecting knowledge' (the term which was most prominently featured in the press) the idea of Jesus' physical body being raised, he was not being facetious nor attempting merely to create the headlines. He was being perfectly serious. The Catholic Church, commonly Kantian, is saying, with Kant, that the true meaning, or value, or import of the resurrection has essentially nothing to do with a real body, but rather with the historical and uncertain, and in any case a miracle; but that its true meaning or value is moral or ideal.

While it would be too much to say that the Kantian framework is only or dominant most in Bishop Jenkins' ideas, it is nevertheless the framework which is characteristic of a Kantian theologian. For instance in the much-publicised Credo programme on British television (29 April 1984) the emphasis falls on

Tellimg miraculous stories because you've already had a wonderful belief and I think the virgin birth is like that. . . . The virgin birth, of course, is the sort of thing and symbolize a faith that this Jesus was a unique event from God. . . . What seems to me to have happened is that there was a series of Christian communities growing gradually conscious a growing number of apostles that Jesus had certainly been dead, certainly buried and the whole wasn't finished yet, that this was the very life and power and purpose and personality which was him was actually continuing and was continuing both in the sphere of the personal in a way that the Jesus had been and was the living presence and possibility.

This reading of the text is one that only Kant's critical philosophy makes possible, yet the centre of gravity for Bishop Jenkins' arguments is not its transcendental consistency lies in his concern with the miracle stories as historical events (though not with a historical figure called Jesus) rather than in the Constitution of the moral of an essential historical connections with Jesus. His is a filter, rather than a blanket, approach to the New Testament.

The Kantian influence is more marked in the case of the radical theological views expressed by Don Cupitt. Theology may be subjectively impossible in that our cognitive powers are shaped by the way in which the sense and God must be outside their scope, as Kant taught. 7

In a later book, Taking Leave of God, 8 Cupitt appears to have moved from a position which stresses negative theology (the idea is only possible to say what God is not, not what God is) to one which regards most if not all questions about the objective reality of God as wholly unimportant if not quite misplaced, misplaced because they treat the issue of whether or not God exists as the only question outside the scope of human spirituality. Nevertheless, the influence of Kant is manifested in the way in which a strong version of the idea of the human moral autonomy governs all else in theology, in Cupitt's view of spirituality, with its emphasis on disinterestedness and its non-theological, purely formal character, on the theological attempts to develop the divine attributes as aspirations of human spirituality. As part of this project Cupitt emphasizes the bounds of human experience as an identity of God forms a kind of pan-religious approach to which we can say nothing. 9 for God is 'altogether unspeakable' and the idea of God is a projection of the human relations of the dominant social structure in strict secular fashion. 11 Cupitt's proposals here come within a whisker of theological reductionism, though he would probably reject the charge as being yet another type of reductionism which, he says, is still thus taking that concern out of the context of human religion.

In his latest book, Only humans, 12 the framework of negative theology is abandoned, for 'all dogmatic theological beliefs as such, belong to a world that is gone, and now can more be put to effective use in our own world than can the myths of some exotic tribe'. But the Kantian idea that the world is bounded by our experience 'and outside it there is nothing at all, not even nothingnesses, remains, even though the postulated God of Kant is no more. The result is an attempt to provide a humanistic spirituality.

Insofar as Cupitt's earlier negative attitude to the knowledge of God has roots in Anglican theology it can be traced back to Woodworth 13 (1820-1871). Besides being influence by continental neo-Kantianism, Mansel himself is in the line of earlier Anglicans such as Archbishop King (1685-1716) or Warburton (1692-1772) whose views were rejected by Bishop Berkeley in his Alciphron (1732). While men of this school spoke of human ignorance of God's face, they did not speak of it as a lack of knowledge of what the language of being regulative rather than cognition was grounded in the doctrine of the incomprehensible necessity. They rested on the necessary limitations of the human mind in gaining knowledge of anything. The words of Scripture were treated by them as

wholly metaphorical, not as truths but as symbols. But what the language of theology was meant to regulate were the conventions involved in the so-called 'practical religion' of eighteenth-century Anglicanism.

Some conclusions

So far the argument has suggested that much of the current attitude to the miraculous in the New Testament, that which is at the heart of the Christian gospel, can be illuminatingly explained not as a distraction from the main business of the New Testament, but as a conclusion drawn from a set of Kantian premises about the limits of human knowledge and thus the limits of the moral of the metaphysical, doctrinal constructions or reconstructions of the Christian faith. From this analysis it is possible to draw some conclusions for those who strive to maintain the orthodox Christian faith in the different theological traditions.

It was noted earlier that attitudes to the miraculous in the New Testament are a matter of 'presupposition'. From the point of view of argument presuppositions are premises from which all conclusions drawn from the reports of the miraculous in the New Testament are derived. But such premises are not self-evidently true. The fact that they function as premises does not give them a status which renders them immune to criticism. 14 Not being self-evident, such premises may either be rejected, or be regarded as conclusions of other arguments with other premises. The method of argument from which such conclusions derive means also means that such conclusions are to be judged on the basis of which the Kantian conclusions which lie at the root of characteristically modern attitudes to the New Testament are inevitably arrived at. The premises of such conclusions are themselves conclusions which require premises. Perhaps the pattern of reasoning from premises to conclusion does not lend itself entirely but every step in the reasoning can be argued over.

Another conclusion drawn from the previous discussion is that basic issues in the interpretation of the New Testament are theological, both metaphysically and methodologically. It is possible to engage in a 'surface' interpretation of the New Testament, the philological and grammatical construing of the text. But if the results of such interpretation are to gain purchase as truth then necessary as such work, it is not sufficient. It has to be possible to move outside the circle of such interpretations and counter-interpretations to use the results to make truth-claims about God binding upon the intellect and the conscience. So for someone to say, 'I'm not interested in all this theology.' Let's get to the text of the New Testament' displays considerable naivety.

What makes such an attitude naive is that it supposes that the present situation is one in which the New Testament is barren crelved over with theology and that the interpreter must somehow, through the use of his interpretative skill, extract from the ringing metal of the text. There have been situations in the history of the church when, by and large, this was the correct procedure. One example is the Reformation when, as the Reformers correctly argued, the text of Scripture was hidden by encrustations of tradition. Hence the Reformation's call to 'return to the pure text of Scripture. And behind this procedure at the time of the Reformation stands Christ's procedure with the Pharisees.
accounts are to be interpreted they cannot be interpreted as they are, but are recording the acts of God. Some other way must be found to interpret them, or they must be abandoned altogether.

Furthermore, according to Kant there is something improper or unbecoming about a religion which depends upon mere authority (a principle of the work of Kant himself). In Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone Kant offers a reconstruction of Christianity in line both with his own views and with the concept of the New Testament which has been sketched above, and with the supreme importance he attaches to the morality of duty in accordance with which he calls the moral law. Some samples of his exegesis of the New Testament might be of interest.

First, Kant's general attitude to Scripture. The interpreter must bring to its interpretation a supreme moral criterion.

The final purpose even of reading these holy scriptures, or of investigating their content, is to make men better; the historical element, which contributes nothing to this end, is something which is in itself quite indifferent, and we can do with it what we please.

Kant distinguishes between an empirical faith (Christianity in his case) and moral faith (faith understood in accordance with his own ideas of autonomous reason).

If such an empirical faith, which chance, it would seem, has to be given with all caution to the believer, is based on the basis of a moral faith (the first an end or merely a means), an exposition of the revelation which has come into our possession is required, that is, a thorough-going interpretation of it in a sense agreeing with the whole of human understanding.

For the theoretical part of ecclesiastical faith interest us morally if it does not conform to the performance of all human duties as a whole, and the whole of the duties of all religion. Frequent this interpretation may, in the light of the text itself, not only in the thing itself, it cannot really be forced, and yet if the text can possibly support it, it must be preferred to a literal interpretation which contains nothing other than the duty to morality or else actually works counter to moral incentives.

What Kant is in effect proposing here is a hermeneutics of Scripture which is in accordance with his view of what constitutes moral faith as an autonomous reason to the actual meaning of Scripture. 'Reason has freed itself, in matters which by their nature ought to be moral and soul-improving, from the divinity of faith forever dependent upon the arbitrary will of the expositors.' 8 So Kant affirms as a basic principle of his exegesis that the attempt must be made to 'distinguish the rational from the religious in Scripture, which harmonizes with the most holy teachings of reason'.

There is therefore no norm of ecclesiastical faith other than Scripture, and no exposer thereof other than pure reason of religion and Scripture (which deals with the historical aspect of that religion). Of these, the first alone is authentic and valid for the whole world; the second is attached to the nation in whose end the transformation of ecclesiastical faith for a given people at a given time into a definite and enduring system.

It is not surprising to find Kant reconstructing traditional Christian doctrine of the pure moral religion

Writing about the virgin birth he says

Yet what of use is all this theory pro or con when it suffices for practical purposes to put the doctrine of the virgin birth as a pattern this idea taken as a counter of a belief raised itself above temptation to evil (and withstanding it victoriously)?

Since Kant wrote this the application of his basic approach to the study of the New Testament has taken many different forms which may be called the blanket and the filter applications. The first treats the New Testament as a seamless whole which, since it contains reports of miraculous occurrences, is devoid of inputs of a philosophical character. The second, on the other hand, has been interpreted in a way that reinterpreted wholesale, the whole corpus of the documents being regarded as (for instance) the product of the faith of the early church having a high level of religious faith which is not merely transcendental as it may be described. Alternatively, attempts have been made (notably in successive 'quests' for the historical Jesus) to filter out of the New Testament all atonal or at least those elements which are regarded as mythological or legendary accretions in order to regain what must (it is thought) have been the true faith. The matter: the career of Jesus the moral teacher, the victim of Pharisaic hypocrisy and of Roman callousness and indifference.

The details of the various programmes are not here the matter of importance. What is important that there is a general view that most philosophical outlook enables the one who holds to it to treat the New Testament, perfectly consistently, in what would otherwise seem to be a dogmatically arbitrary manner. While such an attitude to the New Testament is not dogmatic it is certainly a priori in that the Kantian interpreter brings to the text of the New Testament definite views both about the limits of human knowledge and about the nature of religion as being the embodiment or expression of certain moral and social ideas.

Kantianism and the radicals

The recognition that such a general outlook is widespread in modern literature and thought is in itself of considerable interest. For some British Isles, serves to render the views of theologians such as Don Cupitt and the Bishop of Durham more intelligible. When the Bishop spoke, on a notorious occasion, of 'contrary to the Bible of the 21st century' the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom is said to have responded, 'What's wrong with Jesus' physical body being raised, he was not fæcund or attempting merely to capture the headlines. He was being critically examined,' warned Kant. This is true, Kant is saying, with Kant, that the true meaning, or value, or import of the resurrection has essentially nothing to do with a robust belief in a post-mortem physical return of Jesus. It is a transformation of historical and uncertain, and in any case a mistake that its true meaning or value is moral or ideal.

While it would be too much to say that the Kantian framework has not only or dominant in Bishop Jenkins' in the new church which is characteristic of a Kantian theologian. For instance in the much-publicized Credo programme on British television (29 April 1984) the emphasis falls on telling miraculous stories because you've already had a wonderful belief and I think the virgin birth is like that. The virgin birth is, very clearly, as Kant more than one of the basic tenets of Christianity and symbolize a faith that is Jesus was a unique event from God. What seems to me to have happened is that there was a series of Christians who were gradually convinced a growing number of apostles that Jesus had certainly been dead, certainly buried and the world's fate was going to be saved, that the very life and power and purpose and personality which was in him was actually continuing and was continuing both in the sphere of Christian history and in the religious history so that he was a risen and living presence and possibility.

This reading of the text is one that only Kant's critical philosophy makes possible, yet the centre of gravity for Bishop Jenkins' account is an example of a philosophical activity that consistently lies in his concern with the miracle stories as historical events (though not with a historical figure called Jesus) rather than in the individual, historical figure of any essential historical connections with Jesus. He is a filter, rather than a blanket, approach to the New Testament.

The Kantian influence is more marked in the case of the radical theological views expressed by Don Cupitt. Theology may be subjectively impossible in that our cognitive powers are limited by the fact that God must be outside their scope, as Kant taught. 9

In a later book, Taking Leave of God, 10 Cupitt appears to have moved from a position which stresses negative theology (the idea that it is only possible to say what God is not, rather than (what) is to one which regards most if not all questions about the objective reality of God as wholly unimportant if not quite misplaced, misplaced because they treat the issue of whether or not God exists as the issue outside the realm of human understanding. Nevertheless, the influence of Kant is manifest in the way in which a strong version of the idea of personal moral autonomy governs all else in theology, in Cupitt's view of spiritual unity, with its emphasis on disinterestedness and its non-theological, purely formal character, and in the attempt to develop the divine attributes as aspirations of human spirituality. As part of this project Cupitt emphasizes the bounds of human experience, and argues that God forms a part of a transcendental reality about which we can say nothing. 11 for God is 'altogether unspeakable' and the idea of God is a projection of the Kantian philosophy of the transcendental as an austere and limiting, if not altogether unspeakable' and the idea of God is a projection of the Kantian philosophy of the transcendental as an austere and limiting concept of human freedom and rationality. Cupitt's proposals here come within a whisker of theological reductionism, though he would probably reject the charge of being yet another of the 'triumph of theology' which he deplores, thus taking that concern out of the context of human religion.

In his latest book, Only Human, 12 the framework of negative theology is abandoned, for 'all dogmatic theological beliefs as such, belong to a world that is gone, and now more be put into effective use in our own world than can the myths of some exotic tribe'. But the Kantian idea that the world is bounded by our experience 'and outside it there is nothing at all, not even nothingness, remains, even the postulated God of Kant is no more. The result is an attempt to provide a humanistic spirituality.

Insofar as Cupitt's earlier negative attitude to the knowledge of God has roots in Anglican theology it can be traced back to Combe 13 (1820-1871). Besides being influenced by continental neo-Kantianism, Maimonides himself is in the line of earlier Anglicans such as Archbishop King (1621-1685), and the idea that English thought had been captured by Bishop Berkeley in his Alciphron (1732) whose views were rejected by Bishop Berkeley in his Alciphron (1732). While men of this school spoke of human ignorance of God's face, and Ryle's stress on the emphasis on the context of the language of being regulative rather than causal was grounded more in the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God on the necessary limitations of the human mind in gaining knowledge of anything. The words of Scripture were treated by them as

wholly metaphorical, not as truths but as symbols. But what the language of theology was meant to regulate were the conventions of what the "practical religion" of eighteenth-century Anglicanism.

Some conclusions

So far I've tried to argue that much of the current attitude to the miraculous in the New Testament, that which is at the heart of the Christian gospel, can be illuminatingly explained not only on a basis of Kantian philosophy in the New Testament, but as a conclusion drawn from a set of Kantian premises about the limits of human knowledge and thus their application to the metaphysical and historical constructions or reconstructions of the Christian faith. From this analysis it is possible to draw some conclusions for those who strive to maintain the orthodox Christian gospel as the doctrine of the New Testament. It was noted earlier that attitudes to the miraculous in the New Testament are a matter of 'presupposition'. From the point of view of argument presuppositions are premises from which other doctrines follow. In the New Testament, as in the reports of the miracle of the New Testament – are drawn. But such premises are not self-evidently true. The fact that they function as premises does not give them a status which renders them immune to criticism. 11 Not being self-evident, such premises may either be rejected, or be regarded as conclusions of other arguments with other premises. But the important point here is that which the Kantian conclusions which lie at the root of characteristically modern attitudes to the New Testament are inevitably arrived at. The premises of such conclusions are themselves conclusions which require premises. Perhaps the pattern of reasoning from premises to conclusion does not need to be indefinately but every step in the reasoning can be argued over.

Another conclusion to be drawn from the previous discussion is that basic issues in the interpretation of the New Testament are theological, perhaps, metaphysical presuppositions. It is possible to engage in a 'face to face interpretation of the New Testament, the philological and grammatical construing of the text. But if the results of such interpretation are to gain purchase as truth then necessary as such work is, it is not sufficient. It has to be possible to move outside the circle of such interpretations and counter-interpretations and to use the results to make truth claims about God binding upon the intellect and the conscience. So for someone to say, 'I'm not interested in this all theology.' Let's get back to the text of the New Testament' displays considerable naivety.

What makes such an attitude naive is that it supposes that the present situation is one in which the New Testament is barrelled over with theology and that the interpreter must somehow, by some mysterious or mystical process, get at the ringing of the metal of the text. There have been situations in the history of the church when, by and large, this was the correct procedure. Where the Reformers saw the Reformation when, as the Reformers correctly argued, the text of Scripture was hidden by encrustations of tradition. Hence the Reformers began by clear from the text of Scripture. And behind this procedure at the time of the Reformers stands Christ's procedure with the Pharisees.
But this is not the position at present, not at least in those circles wherein work in Christian thought is being done in the universities. Here the status of the text itself is an issue, or rather it is an issue which has been very largely settled for us. This is the case not only with the necessary skills in grammatical, philological and literary analysis, but also be aware of the philosophical setting in which the New Testament was written. A third consequence which arises concern the question of the education of theological students, particularly those who wish to devote themselves to an understanding of and the propagation of the historical Christian faith. A fourth reason for the study of the text is: Scripture are by and large people who have had a training in modern languages or classics, very rarely in philosophy. And those who are trained in philosophy tend very often to gravitate towards historical theology or the history of doctrine, the Reformations, or Puritanism. As a consequence, very few who have had a training in philosophy or in a course which has required some philosophy then move into Christian theology, the theology of today, either New Testament theology or systematic theology, and stay there. These are of course only impressions, but are they so inaccurate?

A possible response to radicalism.

So far an attempt has been made to offer a way of understanding some of the radical theology, analysing it in terms of the assumptions of Kantianism which have been so prevalent in Protestantism, particularly on the continent, but from time to time, and certainly recently, in the British Isles. Understanding the background of such radicalism is of course important, and such understanding may go a long way to understanding the writings of those which seems presently to surround writers like Don Cupitt.

But how, it might reasonably be asked, can such an approach be answered? A number of steps must be taken. As regards the Kantian framework of the theology, the weakness of Kant's transcendental knowledge need to be explored, both in general, and more particularly as they affect the whole question of the knowability of God. Christian theology has always been sensitive to the particular kinds of objections to our talk of God, but has claimed with equal emphasis that it is possible to speak of God with literal sense. If that is so then the question of the place of God in work and life must be examined. If a priori objection to the miraculous may be neutralized by counter-arguments.

It is more possible to be positive than this and to provide a philosophical understanding of the Christian faith that is superior to the Kantian framework? It is a mistake to attempt to offer a philosophical defence of one's faith. This way lies radicalism, the conclusion that one is likely to have a 'reasonable' a priori framework. The alternative is to develop a positive argument for both the historical meaning and truth of Scripture at two levels. It is classically understood that Scripture has held authority over two thousand years of Christian understanding and the peace with God, new hope and moral vision, comfort in bereavement, and in approaching dissolution. It has borne the weight of the collective experience of the church. Of course, this could be a massive collective decision, or perhaps simply a decision of a few. It is not necessary that anyone who wishes to be properly equipped for the business of using the New Testament theologically, who wishes to answer the question 'What truth does the New Testament teach today?', should be equipped not only with the necessary skills in grammatical, philological and literary analysis, but also be aware of the philosophical setting in which the New Testament was written. An attempt to provide some philosophy then move into Christian theology, the theology of today, either New Testament theology or systematic theology, and stay there. These are of course only impressions, but are they so inaccurate?

A note on books on the philosophy of Kant

Perhaps the best way of gaining an entry into Kant's philosophy is through two short introductory works with fearsome titles: Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics (1783) and Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals (1785). (The best and most accessible translation of the Grundwerk by, H. J. Paton, is called The Moral Law.) Only then ought one to graduate to the two Critiques, the Critique of Pure Reason (1781) and the Critique of Practical Reason (1788). Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone is required reading for inquiring theologians. Of numerous books on Kant's philosophy (of which John Kemp, The Philosophy of Kant (Oxford, 1968) and Roger Scruton, Kant (Oxford, 1982) are recommended as introductory treatments) are: Kant's Analytic (1966) and Kant and Synthetic (1974), both by Jonathan Bennett, are standard modern critical treatments of Kant's philosophy from an analytic perspective. Kant: Religion by Allen Wood (1970) is a useful exposition of Kant's philosophy of religion.

1 The Kantian framework of Benthopfree's Christology is stressed by Stuart Sutherland in Jesus, God and Israel (Oxford, 1984), pp. 101-117.

2 "Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone, trans. T.M. Green and H. Paton (Yale University Press, 1929) p. 122

3 The philosophy of Kant (1968), p. 95.

4 The Kantian framework of Benthopfree's Christology is stressed by Stuart Sutherland in Jesus, God and Israel (Oxford, 1984), pp. 101-117.

5 Ibid., pp. 96-97.

6 Ibid., p. 80.


9 "Ibid., p. 71.

10 Ibid., p. 44.


12 J. S. Mill, "The Hightness of God, 'The Limits of Thought about God'."

13 This seems to be a characteristic argument (as in an as yet unpublished essay) that if the Gospels are regarded as being made-up stories to justify the disciples' experiences and original understandings as they could not have, a legitimizing function any more than there can be a commonly acceptable premise of religious belief is only to deny and legitimize the present if one appeals not to a fictitious past but to the plain facts as being it have been. A piece of evidence for this is the rich and varied treatment of the attributes of God in current analytic philosophy of religion. The assumption is that the work of Cupitt regards as being irrelevant because 'unhistorical'.

14 This is true. Any discussion of a length than is possible here in Faith, Evidence and the Scriptures in Scripture and Truth (eds. D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge).
This view of history carries over to the exegesis, naturally, in many respects. The most pervasive effect is the difficulty which arises in purifying down any text to a particular situation in Israel's history. Narratives are rarely taken to derive in their entirety from the period of Joshua and to be comprehensible against that background. Often three-dimensional development is discerned (the ancient traditions, a ninth-century Narrator and a seventh-century teacher, e.g. on Gen 1-27, pp. 17-27). Yet texts like Genesis, which are not only only be obtained by seeing it in relation to many situations. A related context is provided by means of a terminology that is analogized by analogy with any number of other biblical texts. Indeed it sometimes seems that Hamlin thinks there are 'meanings' which are not always explicit, and which may be expressed in a variety of techniques used by biblical storytellers, but it contains a set of definitions which what Coats means by 'saga', 'tale', 'novella' and so on. Coats has noted that 'tale' and 'novella' are not at all speculative. The result could be illustrated in many ways. A striking example is the interpretation of the covenant with the Gibeonites as one of three 'models' for Israel's relationships with Canaan (Stern, p. 313) in the land, and for Hamlin too. A covenant relationship is co-existence, the relations being Jericho-extermination and Ai-exclusion, the latter, because of the way the Abraham saga many of the stories belong together and it is impossible to be disposed of as distinct. This is one of the text problems in which they were intertwined. Depiction of an ancient book a noticeable attempt to discern the book's contributions to much philosophical study. Unfortunately Coats still looks on J & P as so distinct that he never brings them together. There is, of course, one point that a stream scholarship accepts the substantial unity of the whole of Genesis. Many scholars looking for a sober up-to-date treatment of its critical problems will find this a very useful volume.

Gordon Wenham, The College of St Paul and St Mary, Cheltenham.


This volume is another in the IFC series, which is "addressed to Ministers and Christian educators... moves beyond the usual critical and historical approach to the Bible and offers a theological inter-

preteration of the Hebrew text": the aim is admirable. In this book it is achieved with mixed success. Joshua, of course, is not an easy book to comment on. It is one of those Old Testament books whose critical problems are discussed at length, as it is a book that is as much about the concept of leadership as it does about the land and the problems of the nation when it conquers Canaan. In addition, its authorship, transmission, and redactions are matters of some debate. It is significant in relation to all these matters. It attaches some importance to his identification with Deuteronomy. The book is written in a language that is significantly different from that of the other books in the Pentateuch, and raises difficult historical questions.

Hamlin approaches the book of Joshua in a way that is somewhat different from most other commentators. He focuses on the idea of inheritance and the themes of Joshua 1:1-2:25. He notes that the text of Joshua is significant in relation to all these matters. It attaches some importance to his identification with Deuteronomy. The book is written in a language that is significantly different from that of the other books in the Pentateuch, and raises difficult historical questions.

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one of the best features of his book is the extensive footnotes on each page. He is not afraid to credit other writers for their insights and thus introduce many avenues for further study. Yet at times the book seems to be more a compilation of biblical and theological ethics. He is especially indebted to W.S. Bruce's book 'The Ethics of the Old Testament'.

The unity theme of the book is the life of holiness based on God's holiness. The beginning of the chapter entitled "The Law of Holiness: Leviticus 18-20", found in Section II, the author makes this understanding: "Old Testament ethics cannot be defined as a separate branch of study from the Old Testament itself. The meaning is impossible to exclude anything from the potential sphere of God's 'own holiness' (p. 117). Yet the beginning of Section III he writes, 'In the Old Testament ethics have been developed in a world that has not yet learned to separate ethics from church and church-state. The most controversial section is his discussion of 'just and holy wars'. Some of his boldest statements are made concerning the relationship and responsibility of nations to their weaker friends and neighbours.

The author's concern is always to be faithful to Scripture as the infallible Word of God. His exegesis is reliable, which means this is a good book for the Christian who does not have a vast library of Old Testament commentaries. The reader will also find the section on moral difficulties in the Bible to be faithful to Scripture, even if it gives but courtesy answers in some cases.

The concluding section on the relationship of Old Testament ethics and New Testament applications is quite short. This is unfortunate because it is in this area where there are great differences between various Christian ethics. Toward Old Testament Ethics makes a good companion volume to Baker's Dictionary of Christian Ethics. The former volume gives the ethical background, while the latter gives the ethical tasks of the Christian in today's world. The text leaves little room for doubt that discovering the nature, form, and function of Old Testament ethics is important, and the latter volume gives the needed finishing touches for subjects that Dr. Kaiser's book does not fully address.

Tendor Woolard, Brussels, Belgium.


The six separate specimens of literary-critical scholarship have no common focus beyond being addressed to advanced students of the Bible. A good representative of the critical method is the Historian: the acquisition of Historical Information from Literary Sources". Zech. 6: 7. of the facts is probably not incorrect, as L. F. Cross recapitulates much he has said on "The Epic Traditions in Early Israel" in his 1962 book "Babylonia and Babylonship" in such an influential book as 'The kings of the Ancient Orient'.

Walter Kaiser's contribution to the field of biblical ethics will be helpful for those who want a broad overview of the field. Like an hors d'oeuvre, it introduces a number of themes and subjects, but the reader will probably not get enough of any one item to satisfy a hungry appetite for depth, and perhaps

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Some books are a delight. This is one of them. In the first place it is eminently readable. The author foregoes footnotes and writes in an easy, non-technical style. Such a style can be deceptive. In this book it is not deceptive. Like the best of modern scholarly debate.
one of the best features of his book is the extensive footnotes on each page. He is not afraid to credit other writers for their insights and thus introduce many avenues for further study. Yet at times the book seems to be comprised wholly of an elaborate defense of Pauline and Testament ethics. He is especially indebted to W. S. Bruce's book The New Testament Old Testament. Thus authors' presuppositions about Scripture could well be set a thief to catch a thief'. "The book opens with a provocative statement, and with a statement that is both a challenge and an invitation, time and again makes us reflect on the nature of biblical interpretation. It only multiplies hypotheses and uncertainty, and hardly moves us closer to a satisfactory and objective history of the history of [biblical literature] - so A. M. Cooper. His solution, after a glance at B. S. Childs' canonical approach, is along the lines of the one given in the book. The meaning of the passage in Romans 5:18 is that God's pascal dinner is nothing more or less than the way we, as readers, appropriate "the good news" of Christ. He persuades us that it is not so much a question of the historical or existential context which exists nowhere beyond the language of the poem and our minds". ff. 131. Finally, the Greek emperor Eusebius' father-in-law in A. M. Morgenstern's "Origins of Universal History". Daniel's pseudonymist cribbed the four empire scheme from Herodotus, Ctesias and company; six pages of bibliography document the apocalyptic struggle towards this conclusion.

Jesus and his kingdom are not often separated in New Testament scholarship. Dr. Kaiser uses the term of personal and corporate righteousness, not singularly or linearly, but in a way that suggests a more complex understanding of the relationship and responsibility of uniqueness to their weaker and less privileged neighbors.

The author's concern is always to be faithful to Scripture as the inerrant Word of God. His exegesis is reliable, which makes this a good book for the Christian who does not have a vast library of Old Testament commentaries. The reader will also find the section on moral difficulties in the Bible to be faithful to Scripture, even if it gives but cursory answers in some cases.

The conclusion section on the relationship of Old Testament ethics and New Testament applications is quite short. This is understandable since much of the material is covered in the previous section, and the author's careful analysis, at least if harmonization is understood in the sense of ironing out historical discrepancy of any kind. The second is that it would be quite useful to conclude that the Lord's prayer played a significant role in the development of the Christian ethic.

Towards Old Testament Ethics makes a good companion volume to Baker's Dictionary of Christian Ethics. The former volume gives the reader a general introduction to the Old Testament in an ethical system, while the latter volume gives the needed finishing touches for subjects that Dr. Kaiser's book does not fully address.

Torden Wooloo, Brussels, Belgium.


The six separate specimens of literary-critical scholarship have no common focus beyond being addressed to advanced students of religious literature. Professor Friedman, whom the reviewer has already praised for his "sensitive" treatment of the history of the restoration movement. Correlation, (Chicago: Elgin, 1986), 345 pp., $19.95.

Walter Kaiser's contribution to the field of biblical ethics will be helpful for those who want a broad overview of the field. Like an honor guard, he presents the figures of a wide variety of subjects, but the reader will probably not get enough of any one item to satisfy a hungry appetite for depth. Dr. Kaiser is well read on biblical ethics and, perhaps


The books of the New Testament have been a large element disregarded in recent years. Indeed the title 'Lessons', by which they are known in the Septuagint, suggests that from the start they have suffered from a reputation of being a poor relation of the books of kings. Williamson's commentary amounts to a rigorous comparison between the old and the new. Certainly, the writer deliberately ignores what might otherwise deserve comment. The result is to show quite vividly what the differences are and not what they are not. The present form, lay in front of the Chronicler, although he did have access to some of the information that he did not have in present form.

The commentary reveals in a most interesting and lucid way how the Chronicler systematically altered his 'Voilage' with a view to highlighting his own theological emphases. These are (i) the people of God, seen as a unity even after the division of the kingdom; (ii) the moral order of God, representing an ideal partly recovered under such good kings as Jehoshaphat, Uzziah and Hezekiah; (iii) the temple and its worship -- the Chronicler shows new interest in these.

These themes were regarded by the Chronicler as particularly relevant for the citizens of Judah. Probably in the fourth century, though the books are notoriously difficult to date, especially if, as is urged, the notion of a work entiting Ezra and Nehemiah is abandoned as unconvincing.

There is therefore some comparison to be made between the way in which parts of the prophetic are seen as expositions for a later age and the way in which the Chronicler is interpreting earlier events. Once more the key theme is that of God. The Chronicler does not mind altering the plain historic sense of his Voilage in matters of detail. This argument drives a coach and horses through the text of a sort of historical literature which has sometimes been applied to Scripture. Any attempt to harmonize the books of the Chronicler with those of the prophet who, according to Dr. Kaiser's careful analysis, at least if harmonization is understood in the sense of ironing out historical discrepancy of any kind. The second is that it would be quite useful to conclude that the Lord's prayer played a significant role in the development of the Christian ethic.

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Some books are a delight. This is one of them.

In the first place it is eminently readable. The author foregoes footnotes and writes in an easy, non-technical style. Such a style can be deceptive, but this is not the case here. The book is a pleasure to read. It goes on to the work of P. R. "the cautious verbage of institutional bureaucracy", a 'literati, or guide to fundamentalists'. He sides with the "method of the majority" in preference to the "method of the minority" in an essay "Doctrine by Misadventure: between the Israelite Source and the Hellenistic Biblical History". He is a bit unclear about what "David's, Lear-like status... the tragedy of the old man unable to make his peace with the world". He argues that David appears in the next two as well - Moshe Weinfeld's 'Zion and Jerusalem as Religious and Political Capital. Ideology and Utopia', and A. M. Cooper 'The Life and Times of King David according to the Book of Psalms'. Cooper, as do other contributors to the volume, does a first-class job. The Editors have done a remarkable piece of work about the effects of mutually contradictory scholarly hypotheses and critical 'results'. Indeed, a maxima emerging from this volume is that Old Testament Old Testament, by David E.薮itt, the Editors' interpretation of the text, is the best way to read it. It presents a plausible and persuasive case, and it is a pleasure to read.

The value of this volume is that it is a first-rate introduction to the book of Psalms. It is not always easy to get hold of a copy of the book itself, but this volume is readily available. It is full of insights and is sociologically-oriented. The book is not for everyone, but it is a valuable contribution to the study of the Psalms. It is a book that should be read by anyone interested in the Psalms.
In his introduction Blankenship writes: "the only way to avoid the excessive errors arising from presuppositions of a theological or philosophical character is to keep on returning to the historical context of the book in which the authors are speaking, and to attempt to make sense of its development throughout a long history, parts of which are very poorly documented. It would be a great mistake to think of the New Testament as applying metaphorically to the phenomenon of the apostles as a whole (p. 13). His aim is to provide a preliminary approach to the New Testament in such a way that it is of interest throughout the faith of ordinary people, who were forced to live in the midst of the particular historical situation out of which the New Testament essentially was. He is concerned, in the first place, with the understanding of the meaning of the New Testament as a whole in the past, and in the second place, with the understanding of the meaning of the New Testament as a whole in the present, and in the third place, with the understanding of the meaning of the New Testament as a whole in the future. He seeks to provide a context for the interpretation of the New Testament, which understanding the faith of ordinary people is essentially an understanding of the past, whereas a context for the understanding of the New Testament as a whole in the present is essentially an understanding of the present, whereas a context for the understanding of the New Testament as a whole in the future is essentially an understanding of the future.".

Blankenship begins with a chapter on the persons in the prophecies of the Old Testament, and especially those of the New Testament. This includes a survey of modern critical scholarship on the Old Testament, which is then reviewed historically from earlier Eastern prophets onwards (not much attention to Bibles in this section) and proceeds to the exegesis of prophecy in the Old Testament. The chapter on "Second Isaiah" is a masterly and sensitive piece, even though it is inevitably in the realms of speculation at any point.

This is a reverent comment that says tersely both the stories and the apocalyptic chapters, yet despite some unusual references and thought-provoking passages it is not as distinct as the chapter on the prophecies of the New Testament. Its theology seems to this reviewer to be "too close to the book of the letter" and the author's argument about the "apocalyptic" nature of the New Testament (pp. 10-12) is taken as the focal point of the apocalyptic chapters of the New Testament. Its relevance therefore is limited to periods that reproduce the apocalyptic sensibility that the New Testament shares with the other prophetic books of the Old Testament. It is not to say that the book does not have some valuable insights of its own - the "Second Isaiah" has already been mentioned - and his summary of the history of Ezekiel on pp. 206-207 is superb. But the chief value of the book is that it provides a useful introduction to the New Testament in which to focus on the fact that there is, in the world of God, and so a whole dimension of the book's significance.

Joyce Baldwin, Bristol.

The new Oxford Bible Series (General Editors P. R. Ackroyd and W. G. E. King) is a major advance for the biblical literature, and is to include general introductions to each book of the Bible and extensive background essays. This is the first introduction to the New Testament, and is a major improvement on previous surveys. De Br6, Associate Professor of the University of St. Michael's College, Toronto, has contributed this introductory volume. For the Oxford New Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), he has contributed the introduction to the New Testament, and this has already been reviewed (pp. 135-137).

De Br6's focus of reference is the New Testament, and this is clearly the focal point of his book. He is careful to make the point that the New Testament is essentially a collection of the writings of Christians. He is not, however, attempting to provide a full account of the New Testament, but rather to give an introduction to the New Testament, and to provide a framework within which to understand the New Testament.

De Br6's approach is to provide a brief introduction to the New Testament, and to provide a brief history of the development of the New Testament. He is careful to make the point that the New Testament is essentially a collection of the writings of Christians. He is not, however, attempting to provide a full account of the New Testament, but rather to give an introduction to the New Testament, and to provide a framework within which to understand the New Testament.

This is a thoughtfully written and well-organized introduction to the New Testament, and is an excellent introduction to the New Testament for students and non-specialists alike.


The title of this new series of commentaries is based on an interest in, and its distinctive emphasis on, a theological rather than a critical approach, and its intention to transcend the perspectives of contemporary authors from the West European and from such countries as Israel, India and the United States. An attempt is made to ensure that the commentaries are not only contemporary, but also reflect the contemporary perspectives of the audience for which they are intended. The series is based on the idea that the writings of early Christians, and in particular the New Testament, are not simply documents of the past, but are living documents that continue to challenge and influence the lives of contemporary Christians.

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'Like us, the Gospel writers tended to make Jesus over in their own image. In a way, that is what this book has been doing in this primer. His format - simple language, a mixture of narrative and argument - is ideal for the novice to the Gospels, lucid and helpful diagrams, brief accounts of selected works of scholarship and occasional summaries of his own arguments. The book contains thirty writing for the general reader, not for the professional scholar, the book will be of assistance to those of us who want to survey the subject before an undergraduate course in New Testament study. It is an excellent guide to the study of an essay topic before examining the trees in detailed literature.

Tatum covers a large area in a small space. Short sketches are given of ancient attestations to gospel origins, of source-, form- and redaction-criticism and of the synoptic (treated more or less as one) and parallels. A useful introduction to the New Testament and to the study of the Gospel, this book is a must for students who want to survey the subject before an undergraduate course in New Testament study. It is an excellent guide to the study of an essay topic before examining the trees in detailed literature.

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In his introduction Blenkinsopp writes: "the only way to avoid the excesses arising from presuppositions of a theological or philosophical character is to keep on returning to the heart of the document in Israel, which implies the attempt to make sense of its development throughout a long history, parts of which are very poorly documented. It would be wrong to attempt to provide a historical reconstruction of the phenomenon of prophecy as a whole (p.13). His aim is to provide a "re-reading" of the biblical texts in the context of the faith of ordinary people, who were forced to live in the midst of the dramatic events of their day. He seeks a "relativistic" approach, but he does not make this explicit. The narrator in the message he [the author] had to move beyond the restrictions of the text to reach a metaphorical sense of the text. The author himself, however, is aware of the limitations of this approach and yet to be considered as irrelevant to this commentary, though they are thrust upon us as they arise in the text. There is "evidence of history", but "to heft the drama and underline the message he [the author] had to tell, and not merely to announce it." (p.13) It is in these later chapters that the author's approach to prophecy and Blenkinsopp has gone to great pains to provide as much information as possible about those periods of Hebrew and Jewish history from which we have lost contemporary literature. His section on "Third Isaiah" is a masterpiece of detailed and sensitive study, even though we are inevitably in the realms of speculation at this point. This chapter is followed by extensive notes, which point the reader to further recent discussion of points raised in the text, and these are usually extremely helpful. The sections are all divided into parts by the editor, thoughtfully regrading these sections into four sections: "The first two sections: A history of prophecy in the kingdom of Judah, and a history of prophecy in the ancient world, contempt and mutual respect. The second section of the work of the prophet (pp. 7-12) of all the prophecies is the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, though only a few are known to us. However, reference to the Jewish interpretation that Rome was the fourth kingdom (21, 22), and a quotation from R. H. Goldswain's commentary on Daniel (1979, p. 59), that the fourth beast is the Roman Empire, is given in the book. The reference to "a third person..." is a point of view. The last three pages touch on the influence of these chapters on the thinking of Jesus (Mark 13) and on the Book of Revelation, as well as on the music and art of our own day. This is a reverent take on the stories and the apocalyptic yet, despite some unusual references and thought-provoking passages it is not as distinctively Christian. The book has been written with this in mind. Its strength is in its ability to challenge the reader to think deeply about the text and its historical context, and to see how this might influence us today. The book is written with a clarity and attention to detail which are exceptionally enjoyable and thought-provoking. Joyce Baldwin, Bristol.

The title of this new series of commentaries is a direct reference work in order to discover what is being said in modern critical scholarship about the prophets and their historical contexts. One may add that Blenkinsopp has a great eye for detail, and so good sympathetic imagination, and the book is written with a clarity and attention to detail which are exceptionally enjoyable and thought-provoking. P. J. M. Southwell, Wycliffe Hall, Oxford.


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In this short review I shall focus on basic questions of method rather than attempting detailed discussion. The chief, if fact, dependence on synopsizing opinions contributed to the reader to ask "Are these things so?" An important example will illustrate the point. De Brong seems to have overlooked the fact that some of the most important witnesses to the authenticity of the story set forth in the Book of Daniel and in which de Brong is interested. If the natural reading of the text, the anti-forgery authorship and the dating to a time when the author was in exile, is correct, then the book is not a forgery, but a work of an early Christian author. This would suggest that the book was written in the 3rd century BC. It is also possible that the book was written in the 2nd century BC. In either case, it is clear that the book is not a forgery.

De Brong's approach to the text is a useful one. He seeks to provide a clear and concise exposition of the text, while at the same time not overlooking the complexities of the historical and literary context. His approach is to present a book so densely packed with layered meaning, which steers a related course between the extremes of fundamentalism and British hyper-scepticism (pp. 15-17). It has many virtues. It is a smoothly written exposition of many positions widely held in the modern day. The book is written in a straightforward way, which moves the reader's position at each point in the discussion. This approach, which is clearly set out in his introduction, complicates the issues of the command of the secondary literature. The book traces its way through the history and the discussion of his subject, with a comment which nuances the position at each point in the discussion. This is a book that is very heavy going for the general reader, while lacking specific documentation to assist the student. (It would be a good idea for the student to have a background in the field of missionary studies, and to have read some basic works on the history and influence of the Pentecostal movement.)

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This is the fifth volume of the series Issues in Religion and Theology, and like its predecessors it offers a collection of significant pieces on its subject matter. It is a collection edited by Rudolph Otto to which three recent reviews previously published in 1979. There is also a 26-page introduction by the editor, charting the progress of the debate, and a four-page bibliography (which, alas, a sixteenth percent of the titles in German) Modern authors and New Testament references are included. 

It would be possible to carp at the selection offered — no Schweitzer (nor any of his predecessors), no Dodd, no Jeremiah — but what has been attempted is a genuine contribution to the discussion. The essays is the only one of the eight over twenty years old, and the rest reflect various degrees of influence. The two essays have been brought to the attention of the phrase in contemporary study. The essays are not as related to the phrase ‘kingdom of God’ and to the idea of God’s kingship. T. F. Glessen (1977) Roundly condemns all followers of Schweitzer’s exegesis of Matthew 10:7-10 as having no influence. N. Perrin (1976) uses the categories ‘sign’ and ‘symbol’ as developed by the linguistic philosopher P. Ricoeur. Herzlich Lapide’s skilfully extracted much of the meat of Perrin’s book, presenting short extracts stitched together with brief summaries of the intervening argument. There is also an extract from the end of Chilton’s own contribution to the debate, God in Strength (1979).

This is certainly a valuable way for a student to immerse himself in the literature rather than relying on one scholar’s view in a standard theology book. If I have a complaint, it is that the format of the introduction does not allow for the kind of continuity found in the essays. But this is a minor complaint. The book is an exercise in the history of thought, and the essays are well written. Whether or not the later contributors actually differ in substance. Are they not, at some extent, saying the same things in different words? That may perhaps be let as a value judgment for the student. D. R. E. Lecuyer, Cambridge.
This is the fifth volume of the series Issues in Religion and Theology, and like its predecessors it offers a collection of significant pieces on its subject matter. The book is edited by Rudolph Otto to whose two previous volumes I have also recommended the reader. In this volume, as in the others, the essays are divided into four main sections. The first section, "Theology in a Christian Tradition," contains essays by Rudolf Otto, Herman do Balio, and others. The second section, "Catholic Theology," includes essays by Karl Rahner, Alain Badiou, and others. The third section, "Evangelical Theology," contains essays by Gerhard Rupp, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and others. The fourth section, "Interreligious Dialogue," includes essays by John Hick, Charles Taylor, and others.

The book is an excellent resource for anyone interested in the current state of theological discourse and the debates that are taking place within and between different traditions. It is a valuable contribution to the ongoing conversation about the nature and scope of theology. readers to a deeper understanding of the complexities of theology and its role in contemporary society. The book is a must-read for anyone interested in the ongoing dialogue between different religious traditions and the challenges they face in a pluralistic world. It is a rich resource for anyone seeking to engage with the ongoing discourse and the debates that are taking place within and between different traditions.
differences. These discontinuities concern the place and purpose of Jesus: in the fourth gospel, the author insists Jesus is Messiah, God's Son and the supreme revelation of God, and especially of God's divine glory. Jesus' exalted status is reflected in a new dimension in the gospel. In the light of what is said of Jesus' resurrection, the Exalted Jesus is no longer present in this world. This is why Jesus' death is referred to as 'crucified' rather than as 'died'. The author's purpose is to show that the crucifixion of Jesus is good, not evil, and that Jesus is no longer present in this world. This is why Jesus' death is referred to as 'crucified' rather than as 'died'.

There is no other major commentary on 2 Peter and Jude to match this one. The commentary is written by Dr. Richard J. Bauckham, who is lecturer in Christian thought at Manchester University, brings to this task a formidable grasp of Jewish apocalyptic and other material relevant to the New Testament. He studies this use to illuminate these two books of the New Testament that seem to share many characteristics.


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If he had dealt with these books separately, and then considered how far they agree with, and how far they add to, the picture given by the other sources, no one would complain; but to ex-
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The field was dominated by J. L. Houlton's Ethics and the New Testament, which had appeared in 1966. This book, together with the other works that followed it, provided the general framework within which the exegesis of the New Testament ethics grew and developed. It was through this work that the field of New Testament ethics began to gain recognition and to attract a growing audience of scholars and students.

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There is no other major commentary on 2 Peter and Jude to match this one. It is the second major commentary on 2 Peter to be written. Dr. Bauckham, who is lecturer in Christian thought at Manchester University, brings to his task a formidable grasp of Jewish apocalyptic and other Jewish literature. He uses this expertise to illuminate these two books of the New Testament that seem to have so little in common. The book shows how the books have frequently been misjudged by commentators who have failed to perceive them as reflecting a degenerate and late form of Christianity ('early crypto-elmicism'), to use the jargon.

Epistles syllaptically and nearly always perserviously. On 2 Peter 1:20, for example, he argues with physical thoroughness and clarity that the reference is probably to the original inspiration of the Old Testament prophets rather than to present interpretation. Very occasionally I felt uncertain about his argumentation; for example, on 2 Peter 3:4 and 5, he must have translated the text, which Bauckham discusses very helpfully, see 'as an apocalyptic prophecy of a new era, a change in the dispensation, a vice-regent' rather than as a thoth': On 2 Peter 3:8 Bauckham rightly to deny any idea of mission history here: I wonder if the author has not in mind something similar to the New's exegesis of 'Jews' eschatological discourses in this passage (e.g. the 'high'.

So far on one twocpeppponents go, Bauckham maintains that Jude was written by our Lord's brother between AD 50 and 60. It was written against certain inarticulate charlatans who swayed the grace of God as an excuse for immorality and who spoke disparagingly of the angels who gave the Old Testament law. The letter is an appeal to Christians everywhere, and especially the church at Ephesus, to be uniformly instructed in Old Testament and other Jewish apocalyptic texts, demonstrating the falsehood and deceptions of the false teaching (vv. 5- 11) followed by the appeal (vv. 20-22).

2 Peter is essentially a 'testament' written probably between AD 80 and 90 by an elder of the church, possibly an apostle, and was probably influenced by Greek pagan thought, who were sceptical about the teaching of Jesus and his followers. The letter was probably written to the church at Rome, but there is no evidence that it was ever held to apply to the church at all. It is probably intended for the church at Paul's and a few others; and in the latter, how this affects the comparison of Paul's teaching with Christ's.

The book is by a New Testament specialist teaching at Ridley College, Cambridge, and this is reflected in the fact that though it has been simplified for publication, it retains a big, wide picture. The contrast, the great difference in the teaching on ministry, as found in the synoptics and the gospels; the 'chief' Pauline epistles, and argues that the themes of apocalyptic, servanthood and the new ministry are not found both in Jesus' conception of his own ministry and in his conception of the ministry of his followers; and further, that the same three ideas, along with additional ideas, figure in Paul's teaching in relation to this new ministry. Colin G. Kruse, New Testament Foundations for Ministry (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1983) pp. 126. 95.

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There is no other major commentary on 2 Peter and Jude to match this one. It is the second major commentary on 2 Peter to be written. Dr. Bauckham, who is lecturer in Christian thought at Manchester University, brings to his task a formidable grasp of Jewish apocalyptic and other Jewish literature. He uses this expertise to illuminate these two books of the New Testament that seem to have so little in common. The book shows how the books have frequently been misjudged by commentators who have failed to perceive them as reflecting a degenerate and late form of Christianity ('early crypto-elmicism'), to use the jargon.

Epistles syllaptically and nearly always perserviously. On 2 Peter 1:20, for example, he argues with physical thoroughness and clarity that the reference is probably to the original inspiration of the Old Testament prophets rather than to present interpretation. Very occasionally I felt uncertain about his argumentation; for example, on 2 Peter 3:4 and 5, he must have translated the text, which Bauckham discusses very helpfully, see 'as an apocalyptic prophecy of a new era, a change in the dispensation, a vice-regent' rather than as a thoth': On 2 Peter 3:8 Bauckham rightly to deny any idea of mission history here: I wonder if the author has not in mind something similar to the New's exegesis of 'Jews' eschatological discourses in this passage (e.g. the 'high'.

So far on one twocpepponents go, Bauckham maintains that Jude was written by our Lord's brother between AD 50 and 60. It was written against certain inarticulate charlatans who swayed the grace of God as an excuse for immorality and who spoke disparagingly of the angels who gave the Old Testament law. The letter is an appeal to Christians everywhere, and especially the church at Ephesus, to be uniformly instructed in Old Testament and other Jewish apocalyptic texts, demonstrating the falsehood and deceptions of the false teaching (vv. 5- 11) followed by the appeal (vv. 20-22).

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The 1970s was a bleak decade for books on New Testament ethics. The field was dominated by J. L. Houlder's Ethics and the New Testament, which argued that there was no community of moral norms that integrated the ethical demands of the various books. This was an arrangement that perceived the various ethical demands of the various books.

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church life. Ellis's distinctive contribution to modern Christian thought lies in his perceptive, powerful challenge to some of the most entrenched religious assumptions in our world. He has let a major assault on technique, a word which means the spirit of technology but something more, "the total of methods, systematically arrived at and having absolute efficiency . . . in every field of human activity. This has triumphed at the expense of moral judgment, true democracy, the Christian spirit of life, passion and human personality. Cities and city life are subjected to an assault, an assault which is not altogether arbitrary that the city in the city is the spiritual symbol of humans acting in independence and rebellion against God. The growth of the nation-state with its perpetually expanding power and increasing technicality has characteristically modern 'power of darkness' in Ellis's view.

Ellis is at the same time a judge of Christian thought but is certainly not uncritical of him. He is probably right to say that Christianity is in a situation he had not anticipated no longer having many positive alternatives to the ill's which he diagnoses. His evaluations of Ellis's achievement, however, are apt to be a judgment that Ellis's bringing Christ into the centre of his ethical thought he says another matter. 'For making this beginning Ellis is to be credited. While not following through more completely, and for distorting some passages slightly, he must be faulted' (pp. 173-174). In the final pages, however, and in his conclusion, Ellis is arguing that it is better that Ellis be viewed as a prophet than as an ethicist. But this begins to many questions that Gill would have been well advised to propose the thematic premise earlier and argue it at length.

Richard Huglin, Cramner Hall, Durham.


There are several books which survey the New Testament doc-
umentation of the Holy Spirit. Ewart's succinct, lucid work is an added one. This book is written for the naive student of the Bible and is orientated to critical problems. Compared to Montague's The Holy Spirit, the Growth of a Biblical Tradition it is less pastoral and less informed by the Spirit in its total stance, and agrees with it on almost everything in its spirit.

One could characterize Ewart's book as richly scriptural and well-structured. The ecumenical nature of the biblical scholarship of the author is rather obvious, but his knowledge of the historical and practical implications of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament is clear. He is particularly helpful in his discussion of the sources of the Spirit's activity in the New Testament.

Ewart's presentation is clear and concise. While not as detailed as some other works, it is well-suited to his purpose of providing a brief introduction to the New Testament teaching on the Holy Spirit. He avoids a compartmentalized treatment of the Spirit's role, and instead views it as a unifying theme throughout the New Testament.

In summary, Ewart's book is an excellent introduction to the New Testament teaching on the Holy Spirit. It is well-written, concise, and provides a good overview of the key passages. It is recommended for those new to the topic or those looking for a clear and concise summary.

W. Dymsh, Christian Apologetics in a World Community (Downers Grove: IVP, 1983), 196 pp., $5.95.

The author's aims in writing this book are (a) to respond to the philosophical presuppositions of world views opposed to the Christian one, and (b) to provide a central source for the study of apologetics. The book would be a most excellent guide for use in a study group or in preparing a seminar on the subject of apologetics.

I have no complaints to register against this book. It is a scholarly work, well presented and well argued. It is a book that will be of great value to anyone interested in the subject of Christian apologetics.


This is a collection of thirteen papers chosen from over seventy which were presented at the 1983 International Consultation d'Histoire Ecclésiastique Complètement held at the University of Durham in September 1983. Besides highlighting the work of the Centre of Christian Ethics, the book is intended to draw attention to current scholarship in the field of ecclesiastical history. The papers are international in character, reflecting the growing importance of historical interpretation and Christian spirituality. In this book, they are taking a broad view of the past and of the present.

The book is divided into two sections. The first section provides an introduction to the papers and their authors. The second section is perhaps more substantial in content. The authors, the current President of New College, Berkeley, seek to provide a framework for meeting specific challenges to Christianity, including the rise of religious philosophies (papers five, six, seven), the impact of the social sciences (papers seven, eight, nine), and the problem of evil (paper ten) and Marxian (paper eleven) - and all that is less than 200 pages! This is a lot of work, but concise, concise, concise, concise. The papers are well written and are an important addition to the field of historical study in the church. Dr. Drynsky sets out the issues clearly and comprehensively.

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church life. Eliot's distinctive creative process to modern Christian thought lies in his persuasive, powerful challenge to some of the most cherished beliefs in the modern world. He has left a major assault on technique, a word which means the spirit of technology but something more, "the totality of methods, consciously arrived at and having absolute efficiency...in every field of human activity." This has triumphed at the expense of model judgement, true democracy and the spirit of life, passion and human personality. Cities and city life are subjected to an assault, as is any institutional maintenance of the spirit of the German. This is the literary symbol of human actions in interdependence and rebellion against God. The growth of the nation-state with its perpetuation of this spirit has been a much more powerful force compared to the United States. Eliot's view is that the city in the city is a much more powerful form of human action than the city in the city. In this work, the spirit of human actions in interdependence and rebellion against God. The growth of the nation-state with its perpetuation of this spirit has been a much more powerful force than the spirit of the United States. Eliot's view is that the city in the city is a much more powerful form of human action than the city in the city.

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available regarding the meaning of mission, there is still a lack of a conceptually clear theological understanding of mission from a biblical perspective (p. 16).

As the starting-point for his fresh quest for biblical mission, the author of Mission and Spirituality in the Bible: Theological Foundations and Missionary Practice, by Donald Senior and Carol Stuhlmacher (Eerdmans, 2014; xi + 317 pp.; $25.00), notes: "The starting-point for the problem of mission is the fact that a significant number of people, particularly many non-Western Christians, are coming to the conclusion that something fundamental is missing from the biblical notion of mission. This is a perspective that has become increasingly influential in recent years. The problem is that the biblical notion of mission is not clear enough to be useful for contemporary mission.

In their attempt to address this problem, Senior and Stuhlmacher have written a comprehensive and systematic study of the biblical foundations of mission. They begin by examining the nature of mission in the Bible, focusing on the Old Testament and the New Testament. They then consider the role of the Holy Spirit in mission, and the relationship between the church and mission. Finally, they discuss the various models of mission that have been developed over the years.

The authors argue that a clear and comprehensive understanding of mission is necessary if the church is to be effective in its mission work. They suggest that mission should be seen as a process of proclamation and transformation, rather than simply a matter of doing good works. They also emphasize the importance of understanding the cultural context in which mission is carried out.

Overall, this is a valuable resource for those interested in the biblical foundations of mission. It provides a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the biblical teaching on mission, and offers practical guidance for contemporary mission work.

Later in the commentary, he returns to the question of the date of the Ezra- Nehemiah activity and admits that it may be that we simply do not know the answer to this question, and after reiterating his view on the priority of the Ezra activity, admits judiciously that the problem is best left unsolved (p. 181).

Teachers and students should find room on their bookshelves for both of these books. McKnight demonstrates how the three Old Testament books can become a relevant force in our daily living, in its own way Chaves' sensitive scholarship reinforces the same witness.

Kenneth M. Craig, Jr., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.

W. H. Bellinger, Jr., Psalmody and Prophecy (JSOT 27; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 144 pp., £18.50 hb, £7.50 pb.

This useful study is a work more for the specialist scholar than for the general student of the Old Testament. For it reviews and advances a dissertation on the problems of knowing what references may be found in the prophetic literature for the psalms, especially God speaking words of assurance in response to a cry for help, what does this show about the relationship of the psalm to the context in which psalms were used, that is, the liturgical context itself, the cult of Israel? Although scholars have sometimes argued for a marked division between prophecy and the cults (idols of leontistianism versus Roman Catholicism), it has been shown that the psalms were often interpreted as a prophecy, a figurative image that was used to exercise his ministry of speaking on topics of importance. But this study provides a wealth of new information that accounts for similar forms and content between psalmody and prophecy.

In review the modern debate on this issue, Bellinger offers some helpful comments on the methods of study, with special reference to a discussion on the problems of knowing what references may be found in the prophetic literature for the psalms. bellinger offers some helpful comments on this method, with special reference to a discussion on the relationship of the psalm to the context in which psalms were used, that is, the liturgical context. Although scholars have sometimes argued for a marked division between prophecy and the cults (idols of leontistianism versus Roman Catholicism), it has been shown that the psalms were often interpreted as a prophecy, a figurative image that was used to exercise his ministry of speaking on topics of importance. But this study provides a wealth of new information that accounts for similar forms and content between psalmody and prophecy.


Both of these commentaries focus on the three Old Testament books: Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther. Ezra-Nehemiah was essentially a single work, finished relatively late (c. 400 BC), and there is much evidence within the pages suggesting that these are the two books that are an integral part of the New Testament's agenda. It is well-argued that the two books are closely related, and that the message of the New Testament is best understood in the light of their theological framework.

The Daily Study Bible series is particularly helpful for those who are interested in this area of Old Testament study.

R. W. L. Moberly, University of Durham.
available regarding the meaning of mission, there is still a "lack of a conceptually clear theological understanding of mission from a biblical perspective" (p. 18).

As the starting-point for his fresh quest for biblical mission, the author cites a passage from 2 Corinthians 5:17, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation..." which carries a rather "universal consensus" (p. 24) that mission means "sending." From the hypothesis that in the sense of "the sending" there is a biblical concept, the author then makes a "first attempt at a systematic pilgeramus of investigation of the sending concept, covering all the relevant biblical passages from Genesis to Revelation." The careful examination of all the linguistic variables involved in the word "sending" he goes on to examine all the sending passages in the entire Bible. His work is published in two volumes.

This is followed by a search to ascertain the nature of the theology in the sending passages, and finally, he concludes that in these passages the mission of God is not comprehensively, substantively and informatively, even to the theological specialist.

Whereas the reviewer discovered an article on "Hebrews 11," he searched in vain for entries on apostasy, doctrinal development, schism, and schismatic tendencies. The omission of such particular dictionaries of the "universal" as the missionary motif of Scripture and who, beginning a priori with the universal concept of God and the modern world missionary enterprise, go back to Scripture to discover the biblical justification for the universal activity of the Christian world mission. These authors follow the inductive method in the use of Scripture. In a chapter on "Hermeneutics for a biblical mission," a "definitive institutional mission methodology" for which biblical justification is being sought by forcing Scripture to "speak" the language of the practice of mission. The reviser of the New Testament mission of God, however, with the express purpose of discovering "that first meaning, that original idea..." (p. 23), agrees with Duboise in his rejection of the inductive method of the use of Scripture as the principal way of arguing, because "that original idea" about mission can be found in the Bible. Even beginning with a universal consensus on mission as sending does not protect us from "false" exegetical conclusions; rather, therefore from "interpreting" the Bible literally. Is the understanding of sending as the original way of understanding mission (take the universality of mission)? Is it really possible not to be captive to a word — even the word "sending" — even if a consensus on the "sent"? Does consensus guarantee the objective investigation of such a word in the Word? Presuming that universal consensus in fact can guarantee such objectivity can easily lead to the absolutizing of one's investigation if one thinks it possible to investigate the sending concept over the vast expanse of the Old Testament, to "examine" all of the linguistic variables of a word, and all the sending passages in the "Whole Bible" (p. 27) and thus to discover the "true" context of sending. In fact, if an investigation was possible, this investigation by Duboise would have been done. And even if such a doubt whether he is able to make such a claim. His research, for instance, has already whetted my appetite for an investigation into the understanding of mission as God's action (actus Dei and not missio Dei) in the Bible.

Despite my questioning of the author's method of investigation in his quest for biblical mission, the book as a whole satisfied me greatly and I can strongly recommend it for careful study by students and teachers of missions.

In conclusion: this study of biblical mission through a comprehensive and systematic study of the biblical concept of mission by a Protestant missiologist was published in the same year as a study by two Catholic biblical scholars on the biblical foundation of mission, namely Donald Senior and Carol Stuhlmacher: The Biblical Foundations for Mission (Markkolf: Orbis Books, 1983, xi + 371 p. $25.00). For an illuminating review of this excellent book by David J. Bosch, see Missionalia, Vol. 12, No. 2, August 1984.

Nico J. Smith, Pretoria, South Africa.


Handsomely laid out and bound, the Evangelical Theology of Mission contains 1,200 entries in 1,200 pages of text prepared by 200 scholars from North America, Europe and the Commonwealth. These articles, which deal with a wide range of theological concepts, movements, and persons, are in the form of essays and documents, were prepared in plain language with emphasis on clear communication. According to the editor, "Our goal was this: that the reader who wants to know what a particular issue in mission is all about because of the nature of the article suggests that the readership of "Evangelical Theology of Mission" should become familiar with the vast amount of information in it and read it in the time, commitment, comprehensive, substantive and informative, even to the theological specialist.

Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther commentary. The primary focus of The Daily Study Bible series is not academic. The purpose here is similar to Barley’s: ‘to enable Christians ‘to know Jesus Christ more clearly and to love him more dearly, and to follow him more nearly’ (p. vi).

J. G. McConville’s book demonstrates his commitment to this aim. In discussing the laying of the foundation of the temple, the author reminds us of other visions like David’s bringing the ark to Jerusalem. For McConville these events serve as reminders that worship in Jerusalem was no sacred affair and that there is no place for ‘dry formality in Christian worship today’ (p. 22).

Frequently, and in accordance with the author’s objective, the perspective being considered is related to a New Testament passage. By discussing Nehemiah’s prayer in chapter 9, McConville admits that the people of Israel are exhorted to grow in their faithfulness and to become the children of Abraham. McConville, as he frequently does, quickly reminds her that this passage should be balanced with a New Testament teaching in Galatians 3:14-16 Paul warns against any wrong interpretation of what this might mean. There are numerous other examples that the author, if not writing exclusively for a Christian audience, is focusing on Christian issues.

McConville’s suggestion is that these three Old Testament books are not only time-oriented, but also transhistoric. Additionally, he cautions against the hermeneutical error of immediately projecting the social setting of ancient and inspired writings onto the fabric of modern church and society. In addition to being transhistoric the mission of God, e.g. ‘Ageing, Christ-like View of’, ‘Alcohol, Drinking of’, ‘Asian Theology’, ‘Gospel, Spiritual Implications of’, ‘Martial Separation’, etc. Likewise one discovers a wide range of churchmen and theologians treated, such as P. Althaus, W. Avis, D. Sayers, R. Schwenckfeld and J. H. Thornwell. Among the outstanding longer articles one might mention ‘Atonement, Theology of’ by E. Martyn, ‘Christianity and Culture’ by W. Dyrenson, ‘God, Attributes of’ by G. Lewis (note the fresh approach); and ‘Theology’ by J. Ferrar Kennedy.

The reviewer was struck by the consistent quality and style of the articles in the Dictionary. For this praise is due to the editor and the publishers. Moreover, the scholarship reflected in the articles is uniformly impressive. A helpful bibliography of literature in the field of each entry is included. In English language articles, the material in the volume are given at the end of each article. An index of names, as in the Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology, would have been useful to those the seventh and eighth volumes of the dictionary is related to a given personality.

The New Testament Dictionary of Theology must be viewed as the definitive theological dictionary from an evangelical standpoint. It is an up-to-date and comprehensive reference tool that ought without question to be on the shelf of every serious student, seminarian and Christian worker.

Bruce Demarest, Denver Seminary, Colorado.

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Both of these commentaries focus on three Old Testament books: Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther. Ezra-Nehemiah was originally a single work, Esther is not. The book of Ezra-Nehemiah is a continuation of the New Testament series made famous by William Barclay, and there is much evidence within the pages suggesting that those who are fond of the New Testament commentary will likewise be pleased with the

Later in the commentary he returns to the question of the date of the Ezra-Nehemiah activity and admits that it may be that we simply do not know the answer to this question, and after reiterating his view on the priority of the Ezra activity, admits judiciously that the problem is best left unsolved (p. 181).

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Kenneth M. Craig, Jr., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.

W. H. Bellinger, Jr., Psalms and Prophecy (JSOT 27; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 146 pp., £18.50 pb, £7.50 pb.

This useful study is a work more for the specialist scholar than for the general student of the Old Testament. For it reviews and advances a discussion of the problems of knowing what information is present in the Psalms. What is the relationship between psalms and prophecy in the Old Testament? Given that some of the characteristic forms of divine speech found in the prophets are also to be found in the psalms, especially God speaking words of assurance in response to a cry for help, what does this show about the relationship of the prophet to the context in which these were said, that is, the institutional temple worship, the cult of Israel? Although scholars have sometimes argued for a marked division between prophecy and the cults (shades of literal Protestantism versus Roman Catholicism), it has become increasingly apparent that there is a variety of ways in which a cult prophet, a figurative person who exercised his ministry of speaking on God’s behalf in the temple, could be both a prophet and a poet. Bellinger’s work accounts for similarities in form and content between psalms and prophecy.

In reviewing modern debate on this issue, Bellinger offers some helpful comments on problems of method, with special reference to the problems of knowing what information legitimately is drawn from the generalised and figurative language of the psalms. He offers a detailed study of selected lament psalms, both individual and corporate, focusing upon the different phenomenon of a marked change of tone from lament to joyful certainty that God has heard and answered the lament. He draws the various proposed explanations for this, and shows that the hypothesis of a cult prophet is open to further evaluation. By reviewing such prophetically inscribed texts, Bellinger briefly explores the idea that a psalmist’s poetry is a worthwhile investment. His presentation of an enormous amount of scholarly material is lucid and interesting. One finds much good information in this commentary.

For example, Bellinger believes that it is significant that Esther is the one Old Testament book not found in the Quranic community, and he reminds us that Quran is not representative of mainline Judaism.

R. L. W. Moberly, University of Durham.
BOOK REVIEWS

G W Coats  Genesis, with an Introduction to Narrative Literature (Gordon Wenham)
E J Hamlin  Joshua: Inheriting the Land (Gordon McConville)
H G M Williamson  The New Century Bible Commentary: I & II Chronicles (John Job)
Walter C Kaiser, Jr  Toward Old Testament Ethics (Tordon Woolard)
R E Friedman (ed)  The Poet and the Historian (Deryck Sheriffs)
J Goldingay  God's Prophet, God's Servant (R W L Moberly)
G Eimmerson  Hosea, An Israelite Prophet in Judaeas Perspective (P J M Southwell)
J Blenkinsopp  A History of Prophecy in Israel (P J M Southwell)
Robert A Anderson  Daniel: Signs and Wonders (Joyce Baldwin)
Schuyler Brown  The Origins of Christianity (Colin J Hender)
W. Harris Tatum  In Quest of Jesus, a Guidebook (Gervais Angel)
B D Chilton (ed)  The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus (R D Re Lacy)
Pinchas Lapide  The Resurrection of Jesus (Richard Bauckham)
Paul W. Walaschy  And so we came to Rome (G V Rees)
J Ziesler  Pauline Christianity (John Barclay)
Rodney A Whitacre  Johannine Polemic (D A Carson)
Richard J Bauckham  Word Biblical Commentary: Jude, 2 Peter (David Wenham)
Richard J Longenecker  New Testament Social Ethics for Today (Richard Higgenson)
David W Gill  The Word of God in the Ethics of Jacques Ellul (Richard Higgenson)
David Ewart  The Holy Spirit in the New Testament (Clark H Finnock)
D M Loades (ed)  The End of Strife (E Culling)
W Dymess  Christian Apologetics in a World Community (Lindsay Brown)
Norman L Geisler  Is Man the Measure? (Terry Morrison)
Francis M Dubose  God who sends. A fresh quest for biblical mission (Nico J Smith)
Walter A Elwell (ed)  Evangelical Dictionary of Theology (Bruce Demarest)
J G McConville  Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther (Kenneth M Craig Jr)
D J Clines  Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther (Kenneth M Craig Jr)
W H Bellinger Jr  Psalmody and Prophecy (R W L Moberly)

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