

# CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY

---

Is God Trying to Tell Us Something?

WAYNE SAPPEN

Possible Courses of Action Involving a Disaffected or  
Dissident Individual or Group of Individuals in the  
Church

ARTHUR CARL PIEPKORN

The Service Conducted Facing the People

CHARLES McCLEAN

From Tokyo to Oslo

WON YONG JI

Homiletics

Book Review

Vol. XLII

December

Number 11

## BOOK REVIEW

*SACRAMENTUM VERBI: AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF BIBLICAL THEOLOGY*. Edited by Johannes B. Bauer. Translated by Joseph Blenkinsopp, David J. Bourke, N. D. Smith, and Walter P. van Stigt. New York: Herder and Herder, 1970. 3 vols. xxxiii and 1141 pages. Cloth. \$49.50.

What! Another theological wordbook of the Bible? Why? That's the first reaction one gets to the multiplication of tools. That is especially true when one looks at price tags. So the question deserves a serious answer. Why *Sacramentum Verbi*?

One answer might be that it is a dictionary whose 209 articles are written by 53 scholars who are all European and Roman Catholic. The American publisher is a Roman Catholic house that is trying to hold the line for Roman Catholic theology by importing safe Biblical materials. The trouble is that that answer won't do. The scholars who contributed are all first-rank Biblical scholars committed to descriptive Biblical theology. They include names like Blinzler, Schnackenburg, Spicq, and Prümmer. The editor describes the task of the dictionary as giving a descriptive presentation of the content of theologically important words.

Neither the selection of the terms nor the content of the articles is normally biased by denominational theology. There are isolated exceptions. The article on "charisma" seems weighted in favor of the Roman Catholic hierarchical structure of the church. But such an example is rare indeed.

The terms treated are well selected. Some articles treat Biblical personages, for example, Abraham, Adam, Mary, and Moses. It was hard to see how David could be omitted—or for that matter Peter. Another group of articles takes up angels and demons. Some articles refer to events in the life of Jesus, for example, His baptism, transfiguration, and ascension. The bulk of the articles are devoted to terms that have major theological significance. These sometimes receive

extended treatment. The article on "church," to cite a case in point, fills 31 columns.

Why publish this set? A better answer would be to provide a work of reference for the Scripture student, for the preacher, and for the layman interested in what the Bible has to say, in the light of current scholarship, about the major themes of theology with which the work deals. To achieve that end the editor himself says that in Biblical theology one must today collaborate with scholars of other Christian communions. While no non-Roman-Catholic scholars wrote for this encyclopedia, their influence was felt. A short glance at the bibliographies appended to every article and at the supplementary bibliographies included in volume 3 to update the work makes very clear that the authors know, use, and appreciate all Biblical scholarship. American journals are frequently used and cited.

The same might be said about method. One cannot find any kind of "Roman Catholic exegesis" in this work. Rather the writers use that method which is catholic in Biblical studies today, historical criticism.

Physically the set is handsome. It is printed in a large, readable type. It has over 100 pages of indices, including a Scripture index with about 25,000 entries. It fulfills the promise that it offers.

One thing does puzzle this reviewer, the title. In England this same set bears as its title what the American edition uses as a subtitle. Why *Sacramentum Verbi*? It is not guarantee-money or an oath. It does not seem to belong to the sacramental system of Roman Catholic theology. Does it imply that use of the work is somehow a sacramental offering to God of unusual piety? Or is it only to quietly imply to the purchasers of *Sacramentum Mundi*, a six-volume theological encyclopedia edited by Karl Rahner for the same house, that they ought to purchase this in order to complete the library that they have begun. The significance escapes me, but only of the title. The work itself

is significant. It is of the same stature as the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* and *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*. No reader will fail to note that this work will enhance the library of anyone who owns it. May they be many.

EDGAR KRENTZ

*REFORMATION HEUTE: BIBELARBEIT UND REFERATE AUF DER INTERNATIONALEN THEOLOGENTAGUNG DES LUTHERISCHEN WELTBUNDES VOM 29. 5. BIS 2. 6. 1967 IN BERLIN.* Edited by Heinrich Foerster. Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1967. 254 pages. Paper. DM 24.00.

Nine essays, a foreword, and a summary conclusion are presented in this product of an international theological conference sponsored by the Lutheran World Federation in Berlin in 1967. Four essays center on Luther's doctrine of justification; two deal with the Christian in society; two present Luther's meaning for the ecumenical dialog; one discusses Luther's stance toward the Peasants' Revolt. One is tempted to summarize each of the essays and then to commend it for its worth. To single out one or the other of the essays is difficult, for the essays are timely. The treatment of a topic on "Luther's Doctrine of Justification and Social Righteousness" (there are two essays with this title) is highly relevant for 1971. Two essays have the title "The Christian's Place in Society," and both essays speak to today. Ecumenism may seem to have lost some of its appeal, but Luther's voice for the ecumenical movement of the 20th century is being recognized as increasingly authoritative.

Although the print is heavy and somewhat difficult to read, the volume is rewarding reading. The doctrine of justification in its various aspects has meaning for the individual Christian and for the church. For Lutherans in Germany the failure to issue a statement on the doctrine of justification at Helsinki in 1963 was more of a disappointment than it was for the Lutherans in America. *Reformation Heute* cannot take the place of such a statement. However, it can and does testify that Lutherans take the doctrine

of justification as taught by St. Paul and Martin Luther seriously and find that it has meaning and application for the church some 450 years after the onset of the Reformation.

CARL S. MEYER

*HIDDEN RECORDS OF THE LIFE OF JESUS.* By Jack Finegan. Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1969. xxvii and 320 pages. Cloth. \$12.00.

Finegan is interested in identifying material in patristic and apocryphal New Testament materials that might be "deserving of attention along with the canonical material" (p. xxxi). In a sense, then, his primary objective is to find material that has as much right to being considered historical as that of the gospels in the New Testament.

This is a very scholarly, a strange, and in some degree a very disappointing book. Finegan has a long prolegomenon in which he discusses the significance of apocrypha and the canons of the Old and New Testaments in the light of that discussion. He works almost entirely with early canon lists and patristic citations. This is followed (still as part of the prolegomenon) with discussions of Jewish Christianity, Egyptian Christianity, and Gnosticism. These are also based almost entirely on patristic citations. There is no attempt to identify some documents as, say, Judaeo-Christian and then give a discussion of Jewish-Christian theology. The discussion of the Gnostics proceeds almost entirely on the basis of the anti-Gnostic early fathers. One does not anticipate a balanced presentation. The prolegomenon concludes with a very brief description of the modern discovery of New Testament apocryphal materials (including Nag Hammadi) and a transition to the gospel materials in them.

The bulk of the book (pages 123—306) is labeled "Texts." Here Finegan gives the Latin or Greek (but not the Coptic) original text, a translation, and a discussion. He begins with quotations from early fathers' writings, gathers those from titled books (for example, *The Teaching of Peter* or *The Gospel of the Egyptians*), and then proceeds to manuscripts. These include Greek papyri

and parchments and Coptic papyri and parchments. One wonders if this division by writing material is really useful. For the Greek fragments a photograph is always given.

The work never gets synthetic. Nowhere is the sum total of a document or of a school of thought brought together. Moreover, so much is attempted that the result seems fragmentary. This reviewer had the feeling at the end that all the parts of the body are there, but not arranged in the shape of a recognizable being. There are good bibliographies of modern scholars, but Finegan himself works only with ancient texts. In short, the book reads much like scholarly notes that never were put into really organized form—and that is too bad, because Finegan clearly has something to say on these texts. Unfortunately, his reader will find that something hard to discover and digest.

EDGAR KRENTZ

*GRUNDFRAGEN ALTTESTAMENTLICHER THEOLOGIE.* By Edmond Jacob. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1970. 51 pages. Paper. DM 48.00.

The five essays in this volume comprise the Franz Delitzsch Lectures of 1965. After discussing the history and method of Old Testament theology, Jacob examines: (1) The Question of God as the Basic Question of Old Testament Theology; (2) Revelation and Word; (3) History and Salvation History; and (4) The Dynamic Unity of the Old Testament. The following paragraphs present some highlights in these lectures.

The God of Israel is known primarily for his desire to come to men, and this anthropomorphic will is not in spite of but because of His deity. Similarly the name Yahweh expresses at once God's desire to be with men while retaining the mystery of His being. Jacob sees a polemic in the Old Testament not only against magic and necromancy but also against those dogmas which hide the true nature of God. While parts of Job portray God as one who punishes those whom He loves and whose ways are unsearchable, for example, the poet is really urging his

readers to fear and serve God only for His own sake.

Jacob emphasizes that God steps out of His hiddenness through His Word, especially as delivered by the prophets. In many ways they perform the functions of the "angel of the Lord" and are a manifestation of Yahweh. The interpretive prophetic word turns history into salvation history. Basic to the unity of the Old Testament is not the covenant, but the variety and dynamic of the history which God has with His people. He finds in the course of Israel's history with its depths and heights a "witness to Christ," an anticipation of His death and resurrection. Christians should also be edified by the Old Testament's struggle for community with God, as expressed in the praises of the Psalms as well as in the questions of Job and Qoheleth.

RALPH W. KLEIN

*HOME CELEBRATIONS.* By Lawrence E. Moser. New York: Newman Press, 1970. 166 pages. Cloth. \$4.95.

*Home Celebrations* is another volume in *Studies in American Pastoral Liturgy*, a series designed to provide liturgical text material for the contemporary Roman Catholic religious scene. Convinced of the paucity of prayer in contemporary Roman Catholic families, Moser offers this collection of more than 30 original home rituals as encouragements to Christian families to observe common family occasions within the context of their communal prayer life. Nearly every ritual is constructed around a pattern of alternation between Scripture readings and prayers of short phrases arranged in poetic style.

There are orders for the birth of a new child, for moving into a new home, for the engagement of a son or daughter, and for retirement. Liturgies are provided for the family celebrations of Advent, Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, for Independence Day, for illness, for the absence of the father, for the visit of relatives, for a death in the family, and for many other occasions.

Introductory explanations and the content of the prayers reflect the liturgical and theological leanings of the author. Every-

thing in this world, according to him, is "sacramental in nature"; these orders are meant to "make present in celebration the sign-value of things." Interpersonal relationships, assumed by him to be basic to family prayer, are stressed in phrases such as: "We are questions, Lord, each to each — only your Spirit is an answer."

Candles, flowers, music, and tactile gestures are suggested for certain orders, and bread alone, or bread and wine together, are used as staple signs of familial unity in many of the rituals.

The Lutheran user will want to clarify that point at which common eating of bread seems to become participation in the Holy Eucharist, as he will want to call into question on the basis of the Lutheran symbolical books the propriety of unordained persons celebrating the Sacrament of the Altar, as suggested by these orders. It is also difficult to understand the lack of overt references to *Holy Baptism and the Holy Eucharist* in orders which seem to demand them.

The author displays a gift for composing prayers in a fresh style ("Father, your Word to us became flesh, so that our word might do the same . . ."), but meaning sometimes suffers in the desire for poetic niceties ("you have made the things of your world the instruments from which our hands may draw the music of your Word to us").

The author claims the book is not tree or leaf, but seed, and it is offered as a "jumping-off place." As such it could enable Christian families to observe important communal functions within the context of Christian worship.

MARK BANGERT

*ATLAS ZUR KIRCHENGESCHICHTE. DIE CHRISTLICHEN KIRCHEN IN GESCHICHTE UND GEGENWART.* Edited by Hubert Jedin, Kenneth Scott Latourette, and Jochen Martin. Freiburg: Herder, 1970. 83, 152, and xxxviii pages. Cloth. DM 122.50.

This massive, authoritative work of reference is a *sine qua non* for every library and student of the Christian church. It will be one of the cornerstones of any adequate collection in church history. It deserves rapid

translation into English so that college and seminary undergraduates will be able to use it. It is difficult to praise it too highly or recommend it too strongly, as a short description will make clear.

It is an atlas in the classical sense, containing 257 maps and plans on 152 pages. The maps, arranged in general chronological order, are often full page in size — on pages measuring approximately 10 by 14 inches. Colors have been selected for clarity. The maps are in general remarkably clear; even when filled with data, the printing is careful and legible.

The maps illustrate an amazing amount of material. A partial list follows: the missionary spread of the church from its beginnings through the modern missionary movements (including those to the American Indian), plans of ancient and medieval Christian cities, councils and synods (both locations and participants), heresies, sects, and schisms (Donatist, Monophysite, medieval), monasticism east and west (including orders, Russian and Egyptian monasteries), pilgrim cities and pilgrimage routes, crusades, relics and their translation, history of ethnic churches (Armenian, Persian, and Coptic, Oriental Christianity in its various phases), universities, Islam and the church, the confessional loyalties of different areas, denominational history and world distribution, church government in the past and present, and the ecumenical movement. Each map is self-contained; there are no plastic overlays.

There is a good general introduction to the nature and purposes of the atlas followed by 70 pages of interpretive material. For each map a commentary, signed by the authority, is given. These interpret the map, give modern or ancient literary sources, references to other maps that illustrate the same theme, and a useful bibliography of modern literature in German, English, French, and Italian. These commentaries are so important that one ought never use the relevant map without reading the commentary.

The final pages contain a comprehensive

index to the maps and plans (the commentaries are not included).

The editors are men whose scholarship is well known. Their denominational ties assure one that the atlas does not play denominational power politics with history; indeed, it is an unbiased, authoritative tool. One's respect rises with each consultation. It means that the church historian now has a tool to rival the many fine Biblical atlases. We hope that its publisher can keep it up to date in the many revisions that will hopefully increase its life. *Floreat in multos annos.*

EDGAR KRENTZ

**BLACK ANTI-SEMITISM AND JEWISH RACISM.** By Nat Hentoff and others. New York: Shocken Books, 1970. 237 pages. Paper. \$1.95.

Four blacks and seven Jews wrote the sharply divergent essays that make up this volume. Most are reacting to the charge of black anti-Semitism raised during the New York teachers' strike of 1968.

Rabbi Jay Kaufmann fears that with Negro anti-Semitism added to the already deep white anti-Semitism the only possible consequence is a predominant Fascist attitude which will harm both Negroes and Jews. He faults the Christian church — black and white — for failing to react to the anti-Semitic elements in the Negro community. Thus he declares: "The threat of black militant charges of racism and Tomism totally silences criticism in and of the Negro community and even leads to the condoning of egregious conduct that is as vile as that against which the whole Negro revolution has been mounted."

Walter Karp and H. R. Shapiro note the exaggeration of black anti-Semitism by members of the United Federation of Teachers who were using this issue to break the alliance of liberal Jews and blacks in an effort to defeat the decentralization of school control. It seems that the teachers' federation reprinted 500,000 copies of anti-Semitic leaflets and gave wide publicity to a scurrilous remark on radio about Hitler's failure to make enough lamp shades — all to discredit proponents of decentralization. Rabbi Alan Miller concurs: "I also realized to my horror that anti-Semitism was being used by Jews as part of a deliberate policy to unite New York Jews against the legitimate aspirations of black and Puerto Rican parents and children."

Julius Lester, a black radio announcer whose programs were central in the dispute, argues against the equation of black anti-Semitism with European anti-Semitism. Blacks have neither the capability nor desire to carry on pogroms. While Lester offers substantiation for his charge of paternalism among Jewish liberals, his defense of the "lamp shade" remarks as symbolical rather than literal discourse seems somewhat beside the point.

The essays are informative, frightening, saddening. To hear James Baldwin tell of his childhood experiences in Harlem or Rabbi Miller identify anti-Semitism as a Christian phenomenon is to sense the depth of our nation's and our own problems and failures. The one ray of hope in an otherwise bleak picture is that such books of dialogue are still published.

RALPH W. KLEIN