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## Book Reviews

*Jesus and the Angels: Angelology and the Christology of the Apocalypse of John.* By Peter R. Carrell. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 95. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. 270 Pages. Cloth.

One of the fruitful fields for the study of early Christology that has begun to be rediscovered and harvested by scholars is the use of angel traditions by early Christians in understanding and expressing the identity of Jesus. This is especially true in the study of the book of Revelation (for example, Robert Gundry, "Angelomorphic Christology in the Book of Revelation," *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* 33 [1994]: 662-678). Apart from the prominent Paschal Lamb Christology of chapters 4-7, Revelation contains several exalted depictions of Christ that evince a relationship to some of the varied theophanies and angelophanies of the Old Testament and other Jewish literature. Peter Carrell, in this revision of his dissertation work under James Dunn at the University of Durham, tackles the central questions of which angel traditions influenced John's recording of these visions of Christ in Revelation and why he used these traditions.

Before exploring the visions of Christ in Revelation that draw on angel traditions, Carrell devotes considerable space—almost half the book—to sampling from the vast array of Second Temple angel traditions. He examines the angelic figures in Zechariah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, as well as principal angels and angelomorphic figures found in later Second Temple Jewish literature. This essential survey of important texts reveals some weaknesses in Carrell's research. First, he marginalizes the foundational Angel of YHWH traditions in the Pentateuch, Joshua, and Judges by briefly noting them on only one page. Although there are not significant verbal correspondences between these texts and the visions of Christ in Revelation, the basic ideology that YHWH can and does appear in the form of an "angel" who bears the Divine Name is very significant for later texts, including the angelomorphic depictions of Christ in Revelation. Second, in his effort to contrast his own research with that of Christopher Rowland (one may see especially *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity*), Carrell fails to give ample attention to the significance of Ezekiel 1:26-28 for the Christophanies of Revelation. For example, he argues for the problematic position that the "man" of Ezekiel 8:2 is an angelic being distinct from the "man" on the throne in Ezekiel 1:26 who is the visible Glory of YHWH, and then asserts that Ezekiel 8:2 influenced John's recording of the visions of Christ more than the Ezekiel 1:26.

Furthermore, in spite of the relationship between Ezekiel 1:26 and Daniel 7:9, Carrell argues that the "one like a son of man" in Daniel 7:13 is angelic and not divine. Third, he perpetuates the understanding that first century Jews held to a "strict monotheism" that did not acknowledge that an angelomorphic figure could share YHWH's status, authority, or nature. These perspectives lead him to draw this flawed conclusion: "the angelology which influenced the Christology of the Apocalypse was, in all likelihood, an angelology in which an angel was an angel and not a divine being" (76).

Carrell's focus in the second half of the book is on three texts in Revelation: 1:13-16; 14:14; and 19:11-16. His discussion of the angel traditions John drew upon in recording his visions poses several interesting and enlightening possibilities (for example, the use of 1 Enoch 69 to understand the secret name in Revelation 19:12). He has the tendency, however, to emphasize angelophanic aspects of these visions of Christ without noting the substantial overlap of angelophanic and theophanic categories due to the many angelomorphic theophanies in the Old Testament. He goes much too far in this direction when he asserts that John may have been drawing on traditions about angelic humans with white hair, such as the one concerning Noah in 1 Enoch 106, when he depicted Christ with white hair in Revelation 1:14. His conclusion that John and his readers may not have specifically, nor primarily, matrixed the white hair of Christ with that of the Ancient of Days in Daniel 7 is very tenuous.

Carrell's emphasis on the angelic aspects of Christ in these visions does not mean that he thinks that John is presenting Christ as less than divine. He clearly recognizes the divinity of Christ in Revelation, but bases this conclusion primarily on the Lamb Christology and the worship of the Lamb alongside God. The only true theophany in Revelation, according to Carrell, is God on the throne in Revelation 4. Therefore, he stresses that the temporary aspect of the angelomorphic visions of Christ limits the ontological assertions that can be made about the Christology these visions depict. These temporary visions, however, were recorded in order to continue to depict Christ for the church, including something about his ontology. A preferable approach is to see the angelomorphic Christ of Revelation as the visible manifestation of YHWH in continuity with Old Testament theophanies. John's use of some non-theophanic angel traditions to record these visions does not marginalize this basic understanding.

In spite of his sensitivity to angelomorphic Christology, Carrell takes a cautious approach in his identification of other "angels." For

example, he is hesitant to identify any other angelic figure in Revelation as Christ, including the mighty angel of chapter 10. He, instead, identifies this mighty angel with the revealing angel of Revelation 1:1. Although he discusses the revealing angel in some detail, he does not see that the revealing angel can be identified as the angelomorphic Spirit because "the seven spirits before the throne" (Revelation 1:4) are also "the seven angels who stand before God" (Revelation 8:2).

Even with these criticisms, the basic approach of Carrell in understanding the Christophanies of Revelation in light of earlier angel traditions is commendable and significant. This monograph is an important piece that deserves to be read by those who want to further their understanding of these visions of Christ by examining the literary traditions John may have drawn upon as he recorded them.

Charles A. Gieschen

***Martin Luther: Exploring His Life and Times, 1483-1546.* By Helmar Junghans. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998. CD-Rom. \$39.00.**

In 1997 Concordia Theological Seminary was invited by the Lilly Foundation, along with twenty-nine other theological schools from around the United States, to participate in a program called "Information Technology for Theological Teaching." With the Wabash Center for Teaching Theology and Religion providing key leadership in the program, Lilly hoped to encourage seminaries of all traditions and situations to explore the ways that computer technology could favorably impact classroom teaching and learning at the Master of Divinity level. Lilly has since solicited grant proposals from forty other theological schools, the awards due to be made in the autumn of 1999. Once these awards are made, seventy of the approximately 210 theological schools in North America will be participating in this experiment. Now from Fortress comes a tool that will impact teaching and learning not only in the seminary classrooms, but in the parishes as well.

*Martin Luther: Exploring His Life and Times, 1483-1546* is a CD-ROM designed for both the Intel and MacIntosh platforms. Its content has been supplied by noted Luther scholar Helmar Junghans of the Theological Faculty at the University of Leipzig. Junghans organizes Luther's life under eight headings: Childhood and Education; Monk, Journey to Rome, Professor of Theology; Indulgences, Papal Bull, and

Imperial Ban; Spread of the Gospel; Rise of a Protestant Church; Luther's Everyday Life; Battle between God and the Devil; and Luther's Last Journey. These eight sections consist of a traditional text presentation of Luther's life and thought. Beyond the text, however, screens contain icons that, when clicked on, will bring up pictures, music, a chronology, and other specialized information. Unfortunately, though, the apparatus might be a bit confusing and intimidating for those unfamiliar with computers. A bit of experimentation, however, should quickly dispel any discomfort getting around the CD.

The text is adequate in its presentation of Luther, sketching a general portrait of Luther and his times, as well as introducing his thought. It is certainly no replacement for the recognized biographies, though one might argue that it is does not intend to be. That point does raise some questions, however. First, what is the target audience? The traditional character of the text section seems to lean toward an older audience, while the links, particularly the 'films,' seem to have a younger audience in mind. The "films," however, present the greatest problem. Depending on one's generation, one might describe them as "Luther meets Monty Python" or "Luther visits South Park." These are the least satisfying aspect of the CD, and at times they degenerate into plain silliness. For example, the film on the Anabaptists features a naked woman running across the screen and Jan of Leyden turning into a man/goat/devil. "Luther's Kidney Stones" has to be seen to be believed! The remaining films, though less offensive, do not add appreciably to the materials on the CD. On the other hand, the ease with which one may call up pictures of the places where Luther worked, hear Luther's hymn texts being performed, and view appropriate art help make the goal of the title realizable—one can explore Luther's life and times.

Second, there is the whole issue of Information Technology in teaching and learning. Everyone engaged in theological education in the late 1990s is aware of the different learning styles that students bring to the educational enterprise. The appearance of tools such as this push the envelope of theological educators to come to grips with some fundamental issues. For example, is the formal lecture as a teaching tool a thing of the past? Do we need to move away from the "sage on the stage" to a more democratic "guide on the side"? While a "disc review" is not the place to engage such issues fully, it is likely that other Information Technology resources will soon present

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themselves. The world of graduate theological education will have to grapple with these issues in a meaningful way very soon.

Overall, then, *Martin Luther: Exploring His Life and Times, 1483-1546*, used judiciously and in tandem with other resources, could provide a helpful introduction to the life and thought of the Great Reformer. The excellent graphics and accessible music complement a passable text, though the films are not especially helpful.

Lawrence R. Rast Jr.

***Where in the World Is God?* By Harold L. Senkbeil. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1999.**

Preaching is unique to the church. In the preacher, the gospel becomes eminently practical as it enters into combat with sin, death, and hell. The living voice of the gospel is not finally prized for its logic or its reasoned explanations, but for its victory. For twenty-seven years, Pastor Senkbeil has engaged the enemy. *Where in the World is God?* is a crop of his sermons. The word of God has produced a bountiful harvest in the pulpit of Elm Grove Lutheran Church. This collection is the first fruits. Pastor Senkbeil's winsome words comfort the hurting heart and challenge the self-righteous soul. In a world where man can find no firm footing, these sermons proclaim the God who is once and for all located in the flesh of Jesus Christ. For those seeking devotional reading that breathes the comfort of the gospel, this collection will be a true treasure.

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