

probably good evidence that the real issue lies elsewhere. The real ecumenical question regarding Mary will not be worked out on the level of exegesis, but rather on the level of theology and church praxis. What, for instance, does such a doctrine as the perpetual virginity of Mary mean for the ongoing life of the church? Is it a necessary part of Christian faith? What is the ultimate basis of its claim to authority? Is it reformable? What is the purpose of and legitimacy of the evolution of the church's reflection on Mary and her place in liturgy and piety?

For Roman Catholics and Protestants to agree on what is said about Mary in the NT may be the easiest step of all. The next step — namely, to decide what the churches are ready to say about Mary, and on what basis — will be more crucial for all who are concerned. The dozen scholars who contributed to *Mary in the New Testament* have probably made such a start possible.

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Cassidy, Richard J. *Jesus, Politics, and Society: A Study of Luke's Gospel*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1978. ix + 228 pp. \$15.95/7.95.

Since the 1960s there has been a growing interest in Jesus' political and social stance as portrayed in the Gospels. Cassidy attempts an evaluation of this stance in the Gospel of Luke.

The passages in Luke that contribute to an understanding of the social and political teachings of Jesus are approached by way of redaction criticism. At times this means examining a minor social or political statement within a passage to the neglect of the major theme that initially led Luke to record the passage. In a note at the end of the book the author recognizes that minor themes may be presented within passages that contain unrelated major themes, and an examination of these minor themes must not result in a contradiction of their contexts. However, if the reader did not bother to turn to the "notes" to each chapter, he would miss this important methodological point, as well as other helpful statements on methodology. This inconvenience, of course, is a weakness in the format of the book and not in the work of the author.

Chap. 1 is an elementary "introduction" to the Gospel of Luke. The problems of date, authorship, and Luke's skills as a theologian and historian are dealt with. Redaction criticism is briefly explained and identified as the method used in this study. Chaps. 2 through 6 deal with the social and political stance of Jesus. These chapters are followed by four appendices. The first three give a brief history of Palestine under the Romans and the Herods, the country's social and economic situation during the first century A.D., and a short survey of five socio-religious groups, i.e. the Pharisees, Zealots, Essenes, chief priests, and general populace. As with the first chapter, the first three appendices are elementary and make a contribution only to a reader who is unacquainted with these subjects.

Therefore, only chaps. 2 through 6 (pp. 20-86) and appendix 4 (pp. 128-130) contain a treatment of Jesus' social and political stance. Appendix 4 is a brief refutation of Hans Conzelmann's evaluation of Luke's gospel as a "political apologetic." This appendix is simply a collection of the arguments and conclusions worked out in the body of the book that are important to the author's refutation.

Cassidy defines social stance as "the response that Jesus made, through his teachings and conduct, to the question of how persons and groups ought to live together" (p. 20). Beginning with the reading from the scroll of Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth, Cassidy shows that the Lucan Jesus is concerned with "the poor, the captives, the blind, the oppressed." Luke's version of the "Sermon on the

Mount" supports an interpretation of the Isaiah passage that sees the poor and blind as literally poor and blind. Thus for Luke the passage from Isaiah sets the tone for Jesus' ministry. He will take a special interest in the outcast and despised of society, including women and Gentiles.

The Lucan Jesus is opposed to the accumulation of wealth. Surplus possessions are identified as "unrighteous mammon." Luke's account of Zacchaeus, therefore, not only portrays Jesus' interest in the outcasts of society, but also stands as the prime example of what is expected from those who accept Jesus' teaching regarding accumulated wealth. Although Jesus admonishes the rich to use their surplus possessions to ease the plight of the poor, Cassidy notes that the Lucan Jesus does not place upon the rich the responsibility for the fact that the poor are poor.

Cassidy prefers to describe the Lucan Jesus as nonviolent, as opposed to nonresistant. The popular understanding of Jesus held by many Christians, clergy and laymen alike, is that of nonresistance. Nonresistance is defined as a rejection of all actions that would involve physical violence to others, and refraining from direct confrontations with those responsible for existing evils. On the other hand, non-violence avoids violence to other people but challenges and confronts those responsible for existing evils.

The Jesus of Luke's gospel followed the path of nonviolence. Many of his teachings challenged existing social evils. He also acted aggressively, the cleansing of the temple being a case in point. Certainly the religious leaders saw him as a disruption to the establishment and admitted as much to Pilate during Jesus' trial (Luke 23:2, 5).

It is Cassidy's portrait of Jesus as an aggressor that may disturb the old, familiar concept of Jesus. Yet his portrait of the Lucan Jesus is accurate.

Politically, the Lucan Jesus is critical of the chief priests and the Roman leaders. He teaches the existence of only one realm, God's realm. Caesar did not rule independently. The social order of the Roman empire was a part of God's larger order of creation. "Therefore, the Romans' social patterns were to be evaluated against the standard of the social patterns desired by God, and supported or not on that basis" (p. 58).

In Cassidy's opinion, Jesus' reply to the question on taxation, to render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, states that only in the areas in which Caesar's patterns harmonize with God's desired patterns can Caesar expect allegiance. Render to God the things that are God's is seen as requiring a rendering to God even if it means a rejection of practices that Caesar himself has established. In short, the policies and practices of Rome must be evaluated and responded to from the standpoint of the social patterns that God desires.

When told by certain Pharisees that Herod Antipas sought his life and that he should escape while he had a chance, Jesus refused to change the course of his ministry and defied Herod to interrupt his work, "for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem" (Luke 13:31-33). When brought before Herod during his trial, Jesus showed no deference to the ruler by ignoring Herod's requests and remaining silent when addressed.

When brought before Pilate and asked if he was the king of the Jews, Jesus replied: "You have said so" (Luke 23:3). Cassidy does not see Jesus' response as an affirmation, but as a terse answer that betrays an attitude of noncooperation, which, together with the critical attitude on the part of Jesus, forms the basis of Cassidy's refutation of Conzelmann, who believed Luke portrayed Jesus in a light that would be favorable to Rome.

The last chapter of Cassidy's book bears the intriguing title, "Was Jesus Dangerous to the Roman Empire?" The author concludes that he was. Even though he "rejected the use of violence and was not a Zealot, Jesus still posed a threat to

Roman rule." How was this possible? Cassidy believes that if large numbers of people had ever accepted the social patterns advocated by the Lucan Jesus and adopted his stance toward ruling political authorities, the Roman government, or any other government based on a similar social order, could not have continued.

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Clements, R. E. *Old Testament Theology: A Fresh Approach*. London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1978. x + 214 pp. £6.95.

The student of the OT is aware of a constellation of OT theologies such as those by W. Eichrodt (1961-67), G. von Rad (1965), E. Jacob (1958), T. C. Vriezen (1970), J. L. McKenzie (1974), S. Terrien (1978), W. C. Kaiser (1978), C. Westermann (1978) and W. Zimmerli (1978). Indeed, there have been more than a dozen volumes on that subject between 1970 and 1978. The decisive differences between such tomes in OT theology are indicative of the disarray and inherent difficulty of the enterprise of the discipline. The volume under review is actually not a new OT theology, but rather a kind of preface (or call it prolegomenon) to an OT theology.

Clements is a Baptist teaching at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, England, and is a well-known international figure in OT studies. He divides his monograph into eight chapters, the first two and the last two of which are particularly concerned with the issues of writing an OT theology, i.e. matters of methodology and related subjects. Chaps. 3 through 6 (pp. 53-154) deal with what Clements regards as central themes in the OT. Thus the theme of "The God of Israel" (pp. 53-78) is treated under such aspects as the being, names, presence, and uniqueness of God. A comparison of the section on the presence of God with S. Terrien's tome *The Elusive Presence* (1978), in which he argues for the centrality of the theology of divine presence, is both stimulating and rewarding, and in some sense demonstrates the divergency of methodology. The same is true, though in a different sense, of a comparison of Clements' chapter "The Old Testament as Promise" (pp. 131-154) with W. C. Kaiser's book *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (1978), in which it is argued that the central theme of the OT is the promise (and blessing) theme. Clements does not follow a centrist approach to the OT on the basis of which an OT theology can be structured and systematized. Thus for him the unity of the OT is not a single theme, dual theme, or a formula, but "it is the nature and being of God himself which establishes a unity in the Old Testament, . . ." (p. 23). This reviewer has also argued for the same direction ("The Problem of the Center in the OT Theology Debate," *ZAW* 86 [1974]:65-82). This position certainly places the resolution of the problem of organizing the OT materials elsewhere, because the OT itself does not order its ideas or concepts in a systematic fashion (cf. G. F. Hasel, "The Future of Biblical Theology," *Perspectives on Evangelical Theology*, eds. K. S. Kantzer and S. N. Gundry [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1979], pp. 179-194).

The chapter "The People of God" (pp. 79-103) discusses the relationship of people and nation, the theology of election, and the theology of covenant. The chapter "The Old Testament as Law" (pp. 104-130) traces the meaning of *iōrah* as applicable to the Pentateuch and its use in the prophetic writings and compares it to that of "law."

In contrast to other approaches for OT theology, Clements not only emphasizes the significance of the canon but argues with force that the canon of the Hebrew Scriptures, i.e. the OT, in itself and by itself is the authoritative norm for OT theology. "There is a real connection between the ideas of 'canon' and 'theology,' for it is the status of these writings as a canon of sacred scripture that marks them out as