

cultures of the world and 288 pages on “linguametrics” (2: v).

Undoubtedly, these volumes will be the standard reference work in this area for years to come. All seminary libraries should view this set as a “must buy.” Anyone who wants to study, work in, or visit any country or church in the world should come here for initial orientation and basic information.

A hard-core statistician would probably hope for more explanation regarding the dating of the latest numerical data and criteria for projections into the future. Most bibliographic sections for countries seem to have the cut-off date of 1996 (see, e.g., Japan) or 1997 (see, e.g., Kenya) or even earlier. When were the last bibliographic entries made, or does this vary by section or country?

Such questions detract little from this monumental work, which is a major contribution to the world church. Hearty congratulations and thanks to the editors, publisher, and the unsung contributors, who made it possible. One cannot help being amazed at the immense size, spread, and diversity of world Christianity.

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Burton, Keith Augustus. *Rhetoric, Law, and the Mystery of Salvation in Romans 7:1-6*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2001. xiv + 159 pp. Hardcover, \$79.95.

This book represents a revision of a doctoral dissertation supervised by Robert Jewett and submitted at Northwestern University in 1994. The author is currently Associate Professor of Religion at Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama.

The passage treated in this study (Rom 7:1-6) is, by common consent, one of the more difficult in the Pauline corpus. After noting that the law “rules” a person as long as that person lives, Paul cites, by way of illustration, the case of a married woman who is bound to her husband by the law forbidding adultery. But though she is bound by the law as long as *she* is alive, in the illustration she is said to be so bound throughout the lifetime of her *husband*: should her *husband* die, she is free from the law and may marry another. Paul then tells his readers that they, by sharing in Christ’s death, have died to the law and are now free to belong to another, namely, to Christ, who has been raised from the dead. Here it is not, as in the illustration, the living spouse of a deceased partner who is free to enter a new relationship; rather, in keeping with the initially stated principle, freedom from the law is enjoyed by the one who has died.

Though the analogy is not very felicitous (but what analogy from everyday life *could* Paul have invoked that would illustrate how death sets one free to pursue a different way of life?), the main point is clear—believers, by sharing in Christ’s death, are freed from the law to serve God in the new life of the Spirit. Burton, however, is not prepared to concede either the standard interpretation or the implication that the passage betrays “Paul’s argumentative inadequacy” (xiii). Burton believes that when due attention is paid to “the correct understanding of the analogical form” and to the precise definition of (Greek) *nomos*, Rom 7:1-6 proves “a fine specimen of [Paul’s] rhetorical acumen” (17, 99).

The book begins with a rapid summary of previous interpretations of the

passage, a rhetorical analysis of Romans as a whole, and a look at other analogical arguments in the letter. None of these surveys is pursued with sufficient rigor or detail to stand on its own; each sets the stage for the author's argument on Rom 7:1-6. Chapter 4 notes that *nomos* in Romans "means" a code governing community action. The author then proposes that since *nomos* is used in several passages in Romans (2:21-22; 7:7-12; 13:8-10) where commands from the Decalogue are quoted, and because the same referent is to be expected in other usages of the term in the immediate context, the primary referent of *nomos* throughout Romans is the Decalogue. Chapter 5 suggests that, since the specific law under discussion in 7:1-6 is the prohibition of adultery, "law" refers to the Decalogue in each of the eight occurrences of the term in this passage as well.

Chapter 6 contains the author's proposed reading of Rom 7:1-6. In addition to the identification of "the law" with the Decalogue, three features stand out.

First, the author insists that the point of v. 1 is not that death frees a person from the law, but that every living person is under the law's domain. In the illustration, the widow who marries a second husband is as bound by the law forbidding adultery as she was during her first marriage. In the case of believers, their death with Christ changes the nature of their relationship to the law ("one is transferred from the old life of sin where *nomos condemns*, to the new life in the Spirit where *nomos commends*" [87]), but they remain its subjects.

Second, the Christian audience, Burton believes, must identify first with the husband in the analogy who dies (inasmuch as they share in the death of Christ), then with the wife who is freed to belong to another (inasmuch as they now belong to the resurrected Christ). In the former case, the believer's "flesh" is in view—the flesh that dies with the crucified Christ. In the latter case, the believer's physical self (Greek *soma*) is in view, a neutral "self" that comes to share in the being of the resurrected Christ.

Third, as the widow is temporarily freed from the law when her first husband dies, but is again its subject when she remarries, so, Burton proposes, believers are temporarily freed from the law when the flesh "dies" with Christ, but are again its subjects in their new life in Christ.

The study ends with a brief conclusion (99-101), followed by nine appendices (103-135), including an introduction to classical rhetoric (110-116) and a survey of what the rhetorical handbooks say about arguments from analogy (117-128).

The book presupposes an academic readership (one would expect nothing different of a doctoral dissertation!), but should be accessible to the nonspecialist. In terms of the secondary literature, Burton is both well informed and informative. Whether his own reading—which he believes to be marked by its simplicity (98; cf. 37)—can restore Paul's reputation for rhetorical acumen is perhaps open to doubt, partly because the interpretation does not seem (to this reader, at least) more straightforward than alternative proposals, partly because, should Burton's reading be correct, Paul's rhetorical skill is paradoxically displayed in a passage that two millennia of readers have evidently misunderstood. In the end, however, Burton's construal of Paul's thought is more important than his proposals about Paul's rhetoric. Two aspects of his reading call for brief comment here.

First, does Paul refer to the Decalogue when he speaks of the "law" in Romans as a whole, and in 7:1-6 in particular? Burton's argument, it seems to me, does not succeed in establishing the point. Though he correctly notes that several quotations from the "law" are taken from the Decalogue, the same quotations are also (necessarily) found in the Mosaic "Torah" that *contains* the Decalogue. On what basis, then, are we to conclude that Paul intends the more narrow rather than the broader referent? None is suggested. In fact, it is clear from Galatians that when Paul says that the "law" and its "works" do not justify (see, e.g., Gal 2:16; also Rom 3:28, 28), circumcision and the observance of "days, months, seasons, and years" (Gal 4:10) were included in "the law's" demands. Indeed, the issue of whether Gentiles should be subjected to the distinctively Jewish observance of the "Torah" was what provoked Paul's discussions about the "law," its purpose, and its relation to the believer in Galatians; presumably the same issue lies behind the discussion in Romans as well. There appears, then, to be no reason to limit the "law" to the Decalogue.

Second, does Paul mean that believers were *temporarily* freed from the law, then became its subjects again (albeit in a new kind of relationship) through their union with the resurrected Christ? This may seem a logical reading of the analogy in Rom 7:2-3. Should the widow remarry, she would in effect become subject again to the law forbidding adultery. But such a conclusion, however logical, presses the analogy beyond Paul's point. The apostle *ends* the analogy with the widow's freedom to remarry, saying nothing of any subsequent relationship to the law should she do so. In the same passage, Paul says of Christians that they have "died to the law" in order that they might belong to "another" (7:4). Here Christ appears to be an alternative not simply to life in the "flesh" (the "flesh" is not even mentioned before 7:5), but *to the law itself*. To use Paul's analogy, a fresh relation with the law would entail marriage to two husbands! In Rom 7:6, Paul repeats that Christians have been released from the law—with no hint that the discharge was enjoyed only during a brief period of transition. How Paul's various statements of Christian freedom from the law are to be combined with his claims of their continuing moral obligations remains a perennial problem for his interpreters. But nowhere does he suggest a resolution by which the purported freedom is momentary, nor the continuing obligation the result of a *reconstituted* subjection to the law.

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Carroll, James. *Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews: A History*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2001. xii + 756 pp. Hardcover, \$28.00.

Constantine's Sword is a history of the Christian cross interlaced with personal vignettes from James Carroll's own life, a mixture of personal confession, personal anguish over the contempt for Jews, which he witnessed since early childhood, and a history of the church's sins. A former Catholic priest and the son of an American general of Irish descent and a devout Catholic mother, Carroll is deeply tormented by the cross planted at Auschwitz. It was the cross, he says, which caused him to become a priest, but it was the cross at Auschwitz that caused him to leave the priesthood. Though he claims to be Catholic and a Christian, many will question