

Westermann manages to combine meticulously detailed scholarship with a broader concern for the meaning of the text for the Church and modern man.

Some of Westermann's distinctive viewpoints may already be familiar to English readers from his volume on *Creation*, also translated by John J. Scullion and published by SPCK in 1974. One thinks, for example, of his insistence that Genesis 1–3 have traditionally been read too much in isolation from their broader context in Genesis 1–11. Cain's murder of Abel in chapter 4 is as much an expression of the Fall (though Westermann prefers not to use this term) as the story of the expulsion from Paradise in Genesis 3. The neglect of this fact within the Church has led to an excessively individualistic understanding of sin which ignored its social dimension.

In a short review one cannot note all the positions taken by this vast work but a few random points may be mentioned. In Genesis 1 he thinks it inappropriate to ask whether there is a doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*; the question would not have occurred. In Genesis 1 : 26f. he rightly argues that man's being made in the image of God refers neither exclusively to his spiritual nature (as Christian theology traditionally affirmed) nor simply to a physical likeness but to both, since the Hebrews saw man as a psycho-physical totality. In his discussion of the strange story in Genesis 6:1–4 about the sons of (the) God(s) and the daughters of men, Westermann holds that the former are gods rather than angels (the view that they are human is now almost universally rejected). On a couple of points of translation it may be noted that in Genesis 1:2 he renders *ruah 'elohim* as "God's Spirit", rightly in my view, whilst in Genesis 6:14, in the account of the construction of Noah's ark, he resists the temptation to emend *qinnim* "rooms" (lit. "nests") to *qanim* "reeds".

It may seem churlish to criticize such a magnificent piece of work but there are occasions when Westermann's exegesis fails to carry conviction. In Genesis 1:26 God's words "Let us make man" are taken as a plural of deliberation but the evidence for the existence of such a construction is not entirely clear. It is more natural to see an address to the heavenly court (cf. Genesis 3:22, Isaiah 6:8, Job 38:7, Psalm 8:6, ET 5). Again, Westermann's claim that Cain is not the eponymous ancestor of the Kenites is surely wrong, since the same word Cain (in Hebrew) is used to denote the Kenites in Numbers 24:22 and Judges 4:11, and the nomadic lifestyle to which Cain is doomed corresponds with that of the Kenites. Again, I am unconvinced by Westermann's attempt to play down the parallels between the antediluvian heroes of Genesis 5 and those of the Sumerian king-list. Can it be simply coincidence that Enoch, the seventh in the biblical series, lives 365 years when the seventh in the Sumerian list, Enmeduranki, was associated with Sippar, the city of the *sun-god*? Also, Westermann occasionally makes dogmatic statements that require further justification, as when he states that not even the biblical writers intended the seven days of creation to be taken literally (p. 90) or Eden to be equated with a specific geographical location, in spite of the references to the actual rivers Tigris and Euphrates in Genesis 2:14 (p. 216).

Nevertheless, this is a fine piece of work that should be in every theological library. The price may be prohibitive for some people, so a paperback edition would be a good idea. The translation is in general well done, although there is an unfortunately high number of minor errors and misprints.

JOHN DAY

THE GOOD NEWS ACCORDING TO LUKE by Eduard Schweizer (translated by David E. Green). SPCK, London, 1984. Pp. xvi + 392. Hb.

Professor Schweizer, who retired from the University of Zurich in 1979, has made many distinguished contributions to New Testament scholarship and English-speaking readers can count themselves fortunate that most of them have been well translated for their benefit. His writings include a set of three commentaries on the synoptic Gospels which appeared originally in the German series *Das Neue Testament Deutsch* which is

intended to be non-technical and suitable especially for preachers. Professor Schweizer would appear to be the right choice for this task, since he preaches expository sermons regularly and puts the substance of his commentaries to practical testing in the pulpit. The commentary on Luke is the last of this series and it displays the characteristics that we have come to expect from the earlier ones which were also published by SPCK. In each case the commentary is on short paragraphs of the text with an introduction dealing with the general structure and any critical questions, a brief verse-by-verse comment, and a closing section which brings out the contemporary significance of the passage. The style is fairly taut as there is a lot of material to be covered in a comparatively short space, and this means that the commentary does not flow as easily as might have been hoped. Further, it is clear that the author is unwilling to repeat at length what he has already written on the parallel passages in the other Gospels, and this means that the commentary will not stand on its own as a full companion to study of Luke.

In his brief introduction Schweizer makes it clear that he accepts the two-document theory of the origin of the Gospel, but he holds that the form of Q used by Luke had undergone some development as a result of being combined with other written source material (L) to form a primitive gospel which Luke then incorporated into Mark's structure. He argues that Luke did not know Mt., and he holds that 'Luke' is not Paul's companion of that name but an unknown Christian who wrote c. AD 80. He suggests that Luke is not too clear in his teaching about the person of Jesus and the relation of salvation to his death, but he sees in this a reflection of the way in which Jesus himself pointed to the mystery of the kingdom of God and his own person. This does not mean that Luke is vague about the importance of history. On the contrary, 'however uncertain the historical details may be, this account differs totally from all the myths that merely embody eternal timeless truth in narrative form; for Luke always points clearly to Jesus of Nazareth, who lived, died, and rose again at a particular time in a particular place (384 f.). Nevertheless, Schweizer holds that Luke knows nothing of a divine plan of sacred history leading up to Jesus and then on to the consummation which unfolds according to some kind of law accessible to human knowledge. He disagrees with Conzelmann's view of Jesus as the midpoint of history and finds rather that the present age since the coming of Jesus and the future age belong together as the period of fulfilment for Luke; the stress is placed on responsible Christian living in the light of the consummation. His general approach to Luke is developed in his short, independent booklet *Luke: A Challenge to present Theology*.

Throughout the commentary Schweizer offers many interesting comments on points of detail, especially in regard to the separation of tradition from redaction, which will be of interest to the scholar. His exegesis, however, is selective, and it will be disappointing to the reader who wants a full treatment of the text. Perusal of this work has strengthened my conviction that, even if it involves some repetition, commentaries on the synoptic Gospels should be self-contained. The result is that I find this commentary to be less satisfying than Schweizer's other works on the synoptic Gospels. This is a pity for the author has a lot of interesting things to say and clearly writes out of a real love and sympathy for this Gospel.

I. HOWARD MARSHALL

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN THE TEACHING OF JESUS edited by Bruce Chilton.
Issues in Religion and Theology 5. Pp. xii + 162. S.P.C.K. £3.50.

This, the fifth volume, in the series *Issues in Religion and Theology* follows the pattern of its predecessors: an editor has chosen a number of essays and excerpts (here, eight in all) on a topic, and introduced them with an essay explaining how the problem has been dealt with over a period of time, down to the present day; he has then added a select bibliography to help the reader find his way to further reading.