

Reviews

TRADITION AND DESIGN IN LUKE'S GOSPEL, by John Drury, *Darton, Longman and Todd*, London, 1976. xiii & 208 pp. £3.95. paper.

In 1973 John Drury produced an admirable little commentary on Luke's Gospel which was published by Collins Fontana, but it would seem that the book that he really wanted to write was this much more scholarly account of the structure and theology of Luke's Gospel—not Acts, Luke's second volume, which Drury leaves alone perhaps because Drury's theories would not apply to Acts. Drury begins by saying that source—form— and redaction—criticism have become moribund and that a new step forward is required. This is, however, a rather tendentious claim as the book is a combination of source and redaction criticism. He suggests that this step forward would be to relate the Gospels to the literature which was being produced in the first century. He asserts—against C. K. Barrett and others—that Luke's Gospel is fundamentally Jewish in character and that the relevant literature with which Luke should be related is Jewish interpretations, developments and adaptations of scripture, in other words *midrash*. Drury, then, tries to show that Luke is a midrashic commentary on the Old Testament, on Mark, and on Matthew. Luke was, says Drury, "one of the greatest narrative Midrashists". Analysing the place of the Old Testament in Luke is not an original thing to do, Martin Rese did this in a rather restricted way in *Alttestamentliche Motive in der Christologie des Lukas* (Bonn 1965), but Drury traces all kinds of parallels with the Septuagint version of the Old Testament especially in the Infancy Narrative after which, says Drury, the influence of the Old Testament declines. The image, then, is of Luke midrashing away like crazy on the Old Testament and fabricating stories to fulfil a theological need. Drury values the stories very highly as a form of theological metaphor but his historical scepti-

cism is considerable on, among other things, the infancy narrative and the post-resurrection appearance at Emmaus. Drury does not quite say it explicitly, but it is clear that he does not think that Jesus was born in Bethlehem (is nothing sacred?). Luke got that from Matthew, and Matthew thought that it must be so because Malachai 5.2 had predicted it. And in order to get Mary and Joseph down to Bethlehem from Nazareth Luke had to invent a census of which there is no contemporary record. Now much of this may be true, but how can we know? Drawing parallels with the Septuagint is no guarantee of historical unreliability. The story of the temptations of Jesus in the desert is an obvious midrash on texts from Deuteronomy, but does that mean that there is no historical basis for them? Mary (Mariam in Greek), as Drury points out in his commentary of three years ago, was the name of the sister of Moses, and Jesus (Joshua) was the name of the man who led the Jews into the promised land, but are these parallels an example of midrash with no historical substance for the people who carry the names in the New Testament? This *reduction ad absurdum* shows that drawing parallels between the Gospels and the Septuagint does not solve all our problems particularly as much of Jesus' own teaching is a midrash on the Old Testament.

Readers who are familiar with New Testament studies will already have noticed one oddity. Drury abandons and vigorously attacks belief in the existence of Q (a hypothetical source book of the sayings of Jesus that Matthew and Luke have in common but which are not found in Mark). He supposes that Matthew copied Mark, that Luke copied them both and, moreover, that Luke applied his midrashic technique to Mark and Matthew. This is the most plausible attack on Q that I

have read but I am not sure that it solves all the difficulties in dispensing with that hypothesis. Because Drury thinks that Luke copied Matthew he dates Luke very late, early in the second century (then why didn't Luke extend Acts to take in the end of the first century?). He likens Luke's theology to that of the Deutero-Pauline letters because they each domesticate the severity of Paul's gospel, in Luke's case by giving Christianity a history with a past. Luke's model historian is

the Old Testament Deuteronomist and Drury tries to show how Luke 9:51–18:14 builds original material and material from Matthew onto a structure derived from Deuteronomy. Whatever one makes of Drury's arguments, and I find them impressive but not always convincing, this is a most important contribution to the study of an evangelist who has not found too much favour recently with theologians.

GEOFFREY TURNER

THE USES OF SCRIPTURE IN RECENT THEOLOGY, by David H. Kelsey. SCM Press, London, 1975. 227 pp. £5.50.

As its title implies, this is a purely factual investigation into how scripture has been used by half-a-dozen recent theologians in the reformed tradition. It makes no attempt to suggest, on the author's own count, how scripture should be used in theology, though it does point out limitations and illogicalities in the uses made by the theologians whose work is examined. The author is interested not primarily in the theologians themselves, but in their use of scriptures as types or examples of a wide spectrum of uses; this is why he includes B B Warfield, a Princeton theologian of the late nineteenth century, whom he takes as exemplifying the theory of plenary verbal inspiration.

Professor Kelsey asks of each of the theologians chosen a set of questions about their use of scripture. What aspect of scripture is authoritative: concepts, history, symbols or doctrines? What makes this authoritative? What is the logical force of this authoritativeness? The diversity of the answers shows the importance of these questions in attempting to construct a theology which is both based on scripture and relevant to modern man. Broadly speaking the theologians examined fall into three classes. There are

those who stick on the level of words or concepts, the sort of approach popularised by Kittel's TWNT, and often liable to the criticisms of James Barr. A newer school of theologians stresses the importance of biblical narrative, since scripture is "the self-revelation of God in historical events". A third school prescind almost entirely from history and concentrates on symbols which occasion an encounter now between the believer and the Lord, so that it becomes entirely unimportant whether the Bible claims to be talking about public events or not. This final position is that of Bultmann, and an interesting exposition of his Heideggerian approach to biblical statements and their logic is one of the clearest I have met (p. 78ff). Another less extreme, representative of this point of view is Paul Tillich.

Perhaps the most interesting observation (p. 206) is that the way scripture is treated by each of these theologians depends on the theological position of each, which in turn is shaped by a prior decision of what Christianity is about. And what does this say about the authority of scripture? The questions asked are profoundly challenging, and the evidence is presented with clarity and good humour.

HENRY WANSBROUGH

PAUL'S LETTERS FROM PRISON, Commentary by G.B. Caird. Q.U.P., 1976. 224 pp. £2.25

This commentary, we are told, appears without the text of the Letters for reasons of economy and to facilitate references to other versions than the RSV. The type and format are small; but let no one think that this is an insignificant commentary.

Rather it is a splendid example of what thorough and patient scholarship can accomplish; and it is refreshing to read that the first three chapters of Ephesians are an almost continuous prayer (page 31) or that the heart of Paul's theology is con-