essentially western missionary faith. In recent theology Christ is presented as the Son of Man, who suffers and associates himself with the poor, the outcastes, the prostitutes, the prisoners. This Christ does not come from outwith Asia. The new theology of Asia brings together liberation and inculturation.

The book is a useful introduction. A much weightier book would be required to do justice to each of the subjects here treated but like other recent books its most important contribution is to question the traditional way of doing theology in the west.

ALISTAIR KEE

THE CONCEPT OF PURITY AT QUMRAN AND IN THE LETTERS OF PAUL by Michael Newton. *Cambridge University Press.* Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 53. 1985. pp. 171. £17.50 (Hardcover).

This is a valuable book, for its informative clarity and balance, and for its contribution to our understanding of Qumran, Paul and ourselves. Newton begins with an account of the idea of purity in the sect, where it was all-important; for the men of Qumran sought to build, and to be, a community of perfect purity, as a necessary alternative to the Israel centred upon a defiled and discredited Temple. The sect 'did not distinguish' forms of purity 'as either ritual or moral but saw impurity as deriving ultimately from some form or other of immorality'. They used the term *niddah* for such impurity. Originally meaning menstrual, then sexual impurity in general, the word had both moral and ritual implications; and it is essential to grasp that not only for the sect but for ancient Judaism generally—and indeed widely elsewhere—the ritual and moral elements within the concept of purity are indivisible. In the Judaeo-Christian tradition the sect was remarkable for strengthening both elements by its developed sense that moral transgression brought uncleanness.

The ardour of the Qumran members for a community cleansed of all contamination, shown in the rigour of its rules for temporary or permanent exclusion of offenders, derives from their sense of the presence of God in the Temple which they constituted, and from their prior sense of of the utter impossibility of God's toleration in his presence of anyone or anything impure.

This conviction, or fundamental sense, of the awful purity of God is the clue to religious preoccupation with purity. Newton explains clearly the chief ways in which the sect implemented this feeling and conviction and goes on to show that Paul regarded the Christian community as the Temple of God, and applied to that community a concept of purity in a manner modelled on the purity regulations governing the conduct of the Jerusalem Temple. In this connection 'cultic language is used by Paul in order to elucidate the community's self-understanding and the language of purity permeates Paul's writing and is by no means 'occasional'.' Further, Paul in his teaching on the 'in-dwelling of the Spirit' is 'expressing the view that God's Spirit, which had its special dwelling in the sanctuary of the Jerusalem Temple, now lives within the Church, which is described by Paul as God's Temple.' But did Paul believe (as the Qumran sect did) that God's presence had departed from the Temple, as this seems to imply? Luke in his gospel (1:1—22) implies that he himself, and in Acts 22:17f that Paul believed that God still 'dwelt in' the Temple, even though he taught the Corinthians that his Spirit dwelt within them (1 Cor. 3:16) and 'we are the Temple of the living God'. (Incidentally, as there is no room for idols in the Temple of the real God (cf. 2 Cor. 6:16), so there cannot be in the Church as Temple, i.e. in its members; but Paul does not use the idea of idols retained in the minds or hearts of some pretended adherents, a phenomenon known to the Qumran sect, as in IQS 2:11 where 'the idols of his heart' are the guilty secret reservations of the dishonest neophyte.)

In Paul the concept of the Church as the Temple is extended to include the idea that as such it 'is ministered to in a priestly manner by its members' and receives offerings in the form of converts, who are living sacrifices. Along with these doctrines went the conviction

that 'this new Temple was subject to the requirements of purity that would ensure the retention of the divine presence'. For this reason Paul expressed membership of the Church in terms of purity: some association with unbelievers was unavoidable in daily life, but impurity in believers could not be tolerated for a moment, for it would mean an impure Temple, and consequent loss of the divine presence.

Newton's presentation is well balanced, for he sees that 'the concept of purity is not the one central concern of his letters. 'Paul uses it when it suits him. 'Just as the rabbis preserved, elaborated and extended the cultic symbols of cleanness and uncleanness after the destruction of the Temple, so Paul, after the earthly Temple had been made redundant by the saving act of Christ, applied the same symbolism to the life of the Christian community'. It seems reasonable to argue, as we have seen, that Paul did not always think of the Temple as having been replaced and made redundant, as Newton appears to think; but this excellent book helps us to understand a hitherto relatively neglected but revealing aspect of Paul's thought.

A.R.C. LEANEY

PHILOSOPHY FOR UNDERSTANDING THEOLOGY by Diogenes Allen. *SCM.*, **1985. £9.50**

Diogenes Allen, who is Professor of Philosophy at Princeton Seminary, has in this work provided us with a book that is both readable and comprehensive. Thus the whole sweep of western philosophy is surveyed from the Pre-Socratics to the present day, and, though the exposition is thus inevitably sometimes concentrated, it is always an enriching rather than an obfuscating density. Indeed, some of the thumb-nail sketches are the most rewarding bits of the book, for example his exposition of Plotinus or his account of the relation between Fichte and Kant. Its overall balance can easily be gauged by the fact that three chapters are devoted to the Platonic tradition, three to the Aristotelian and only one each to Kant, Hegel and all the major modern philosophical movements.

The front cover has a picture of a bespectacled bust of Aristotle reading Karl Barth. One might use this to illustrate a tension in the work. Are we being offered a history of philosophers who showed interest in theological issues (as this might suggest), or was the intention rather to provide some account of the influence that philosophers have had on theology, irrespective of their interests (as perhaps the title suggests)? Allen has not, I think, satisfactorily resolved this question, and so one feels that sometimes he has now one objective in view and now the other. For example, he begins his exposition of Plato by taking the *Timaeus,* which was the most influential of his dialogues for theology but certainly philosophically not the most important, or again Gregory of Nyssa's Letter 38 is quoted to illustrate the use to which Aristotelian logic was put. This would seem to indicate the latter aim. But his account of Descartes and beyond is much more straightforwardly expositional, without very much of an attempt to identify where their impact was felt, which suggests that it was the former objective that finally prevailed. But even in the medieval period we find him expounding the various arguments about universals without any clear explanation of why they were important for theology, for example with Roscelin and William of Champaux offering in consequence opposed accounts of the Trinity.

This I hasten to add is not in any sense intended seriously to undermine the value of the book. One cannot help but admire the breadth of Allen's learning and the clarity of his exposition. But it is to draw attention to the methodological problems in embarking upon what he set out to achieve. So, for example, there is the argument mentioned above for starting one's exposition of Plato with the *Timaeus,* but the net result is that Allen's account of the theory of Forms is bound to be much harder for the novice to follow. He begins by interpreting them as mathematical ratios, which in terms of Plato's later period makes some sense, but the Forms are so much easier to comprehend with the earlier