

apostle in the second century is un-Pauline. E. A. Clark contends, against M. Ritter, that Chrysostom's social ethics are heavily influenced by late Empire social stratification and may, ultimately, be more dependent on utopian readings of Genesis than on Paul. R. A. Markus wishes to have a more nuanced explanation of Augustine's dependence on Paul than that presented by Studer, since Augustine seems to have grown in his understanding of the apostle by continuous rereadings. This fact is also at the heart of William S. Babcock's comments on Fredriksen's essay. According to Babcock, Augustine shifts from a view of the human soul as capable, "with perfect ease," to rightly order life, a view well within the classical tradition, to a view of the self as bound to lust, so that only God's grace is responsible for the good done by any human, a quite unclassical view.

All the essays and the comments of the respondents are well documented (the notes take over 100 pages). The volume includes a rather well-selected bibliography, an index of biblical references, and an index of modern authors. There is no question that it offers a timely reappraisal of the Pauline influence on early Christianity. However, a collection of essays hardly carries a consistent argument, even when the papers were part of a well-planned conference. This collection may well serve to deal a final blow to the influential views of von Harnack and Bauer that Paul's letters had been popular only with the enthusiastic and gnostic versions of Christianity, and that Paul had been misunderstood and forgotten except by Marcion, who, even though he also misunderstood him, rescued the apostle for the "orthodox." Also discredited is Luther's definition of what is "Pauline," which guided the research of von Harnack, Bauer, and their followers.

St. Mary's College  
Notre Dame, IN 46556-5001

HEROLD WEISS

Blomberg, Craig L. *Interpreting the Parables*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1990. 334 pp. Paperback, \$19.95.

The author presents two purposes for writing yet another book on the parables. He intends to report on the current status of parable scholarship and to challenge the dominant approaches to the interpretation of the parables in vogue today.

Scholars today generally agree with Juelicher in rejecting the allegorical interpretation of parables and in accepting the principle that a parable has only one main point. In addition allegorical elements in the parables are said to be later additions of the church and not belonging to

the authentic layer going back to Jesus. Blomberg contends that Juelicher goes too far on both counts.

Blomberg bases his disagreement with Juelicher's position on evidence from rabbinic parables. He faults Juelicher because of his dependence on Greek models, i.e., on Aristotle, rather than on the contemporaries of Jesus in the Jewish world. While the rabbinic parables date from a later period, their static nature through the centuries would indicate that what we see in them would have been present at the time of Jesus. While they are different from the parables of Jesus, these rabbinic parables almost always include allegorical elements. Juelicher's approach then appears too theoretical and irrelevant with respect to the parables of Jesus.

Blomberg rejects the form-critical proposition that each parable must have only one main point. He upholds the authenticity of the parables and their transmission by memorization. Blomberg also rejects redaction criticism's claim that the records have been so modified that contradiction and different theologies result. The differences, he claims, are minor compared the larger body of material involved.

In part II Blomberg deals with the meaning and significance of each of the parables. He deals with three-point (including the complex type where there may be more than three characters but one of the subordinate roles is illustrated with multiple examples), two-point, and one-point parables. Examples of these are: three-point—shepherd, lost sheep, ninety-nine sheep; three-point complex—priest-Levite, Samaritan, wounded man; two point—Pharisee and publican; one point—pearl of great price. The final chapter deals with the theology of the parables.

Blomberg's significant contribution may be in his classification of the parables according to the points that are made. He suggests that the details of the parables often portray unrealistic and atypical behavior, such as the father's watching for the prodigal son to return or the shepherd's going after one sheep. For him this stretching of reality points to the need for the use of allegory in the understanding of the parable, that is, the reference is not to an ordinary person but to God Himself.

On the theology of the parables, the emphasis is on the kingdom of God. However, Blomberg points to the veiled Christological issues they raise. By claiming to take upon himself divine prerogatives, e.g., forgiving sins, sowing divine seed, making judgment over men, and claiming to be the bridegroom, good shepherd, returning king, lord of the vineyard, etc., Christ puts himself on the level of God.

Blomberg writes clearly in setting forth points both for and against a position and makes some significant critiques of the current approaches to parable interpretation. He has presented evidence to question the position of the consensus regarding the view that a parable has only one

point and that a parable cannot be originally from Jesus if allegorical elements are present. However, it seems to me it does not necessarily hold that because there are three or two characters, or even one, it means that the parable has three or two points, or one. It is possible to look at the parable of the lost sheep as pointing to the great value that Jesus places upon the lost without necessarily saying there are three points to the parable. And is it necessarily allegorical to say that the shepherd in the parable points to Jesus? It seems to me that allegory as generally used deals with a much more extended and consistent application of symbols. What we have in this case is an illustration of a point.

However, we can thank Blomberg for pointing up weaknesses in current positions and suggesting new ways of looking at parables.

Chico, CA 95926

SAKAE KUBO

Brooks, Roger. *The Spirit of the Ten Commandments: Shattering the Myth of Rabbinic Legalism*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1990. xiv + 199. \$21.95.

Confronted by a variety of student opinion on the meaning of Jewish law (*halakhah*), which compared it to Catholic casuistry, and contrasted it with Christian spirituality, Brooks sets out to clarify the day-to-day practice of Jewish law as the purveyor of morality, ethics and spirituality.

Contrasting Rabbinic Judaism with the notion of Pharisaic adherence to the letter of the law, Brooks gives a picture of the halakhic process which perceives the authority of law to come not only from Scripture, but from moral example and the entire halakhic process in which the Rabbis engaged.

This halakhic process, or legal discourse, in which diversity of opinion is common, gained contemporary relevance through consideration of a particular case, thus the casuistic character of Jewish Law. The discourse also advanced the student to new levels of holiness in act and intellect by seeking to educate and win the mind. In other words, a special kind of understanding came from involvement in the halakhic process and the heuristically derived insights. The practical grasp of one's duties in specific cases resulted from it.

In chapters three, four, and five, entitled: "In Search of the Rabbinic Agenda Within Scripture," "In Search of the Rabbinic Meaning of Scripture," and "In Search of Rabbinic Authority," Brooks explains several vital points by examples of rabbinic teaching.

The first is that the relation of sources of authority, the balance of ethical and theological issues, and the practical needs of legal interpretation express the goals of the Talmud. The second point is that