

## BOOK REVIEWS

Antony Edanad, *Christian Existence and the New Covenant*, Dharmaram Publications, Bangalore, India 1987, pp. XIII + 342 paper.

The book is a scholarly study of the 1 John (Jn) in two parts, one a thorough theological analysis of the new covenant prophecies of Jeremiah, Ezechiel and II Isaiah and the other an exposition of the important themes which are the fulfilment of the new-covenantal promises of the Old Testament (OT) prophecies.

The main aim of Part I, which consists of three chapters, is to expose clearly the specific new-covenantal promises in the prophecies as the unilateral promise and the supreme eschatological blessings which were to be realized in the forgiveness of sins, in the God given knowledge and in granting a new heart. The new heart has to be the foundation of true religious life. The new covenant demands an interior renewal; and the servant of Yahweh in II Isaiah is shown as the personification of the new covenant.

Part II consists of four chapters in which the author makes a thorough analysis of 1 Jn from the new covenant perspective in the OT. The important theological themes discussed in this section are : forgiveness of sins (ch. 4), the interior renewal of the believer and the dynamic principles of Christian life (ch. 5) communion with God and Christian life as its response (ch. 6). In conclusion (ch. 7) a general synthesis is given. It also includes a list of pertinent parallels found in 1 Jn and Jn 13 : 31 - 17 : 26.

This work clearly presents the correspondences, both literary and thematic, between 1 Jn and the covenantal promises of the OT prophecies. The 1 Jn interprets the economy of salvation as the fulfilment of the new-covenantal promises in the eschatological time. The new element of 1 Jn is its Christological accent. The new-covenantal promises were realized in and through the person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. This Christological accent is absent in the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezechiel. The basic vision of 1 Jn is the Christian conduct as the effective response to God who has interiorly transformed the believers.

In his exposition Edanad make use of other relevant New Testament texts and extra biblical literature and enriches it in the light of modern

Johannine literature. It could have been, however, further enriched with the fruits of the patristic exegesis. The author states that 1 Jn defended his true faith in Jesus Christ, the son of God against the heretics (p. 254), but he does not make clear who these heretics are. Were they Jewish Christians who were reluctant to acknowledge the divine identity of Jesus? If it were so, it could explain the complete absence of the term "New-covenant" in 1 Jn?

These points are of course minor issues. The book as a whole is well organized, and is written in a simple and lucid style though it is an exegetical work. It has a rich, comprehensive and well chosen bibliography which is well classified. The index of biblical and extrabiblical texts, the index of authors and the subjects also are very useful. This is an excellent study of exceptional insight and coherence. The author is keen to bring out the theological meaning of Christian existence in its concrete situation. His clarity, perception and untiring efforts to discover the depth of the meaning of the text deserves special mention. As the title indicates this work forces the reader to re-discover the new-covenantal dimension of his own being and having.

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