

Augustine Thottakara (ed.), Indian Interpretation of the Bible (Festschrift in honour of Prof. Dr. Joseph Pathrapankal, cmi), Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2000, pp. 492, Rs. 350.00, US\$22.00, ISBN: 81-86861-27-0

This work is an attempt to interpret Bible in the light of Indian philosophy, culture and spirituality. Being aware of the need and urgency of incarnating and inculturating Jesus Christ and his message into the multireligious and multi-cultural context of India, the competent contributors of the essays to this book try to analyse biblical books and themes using Indian theological language, concepts and symbols. In this process they also take into consideration the particular economic, social, political and religious milieu of India. The sub-continent is beset with problems of poverty, illiteracy, superstitions, unjust structures of the society, religious intolerance, etc. It is in this India of religious pluralism, cultural diversity, rich spiritual heritage, but at the same time an India that faces existential problems of huge magnitudes, that one has to present the Bible as the message of hope and salvation. Revelation of God, the response of man to this revelation, the expression of this response in worship, in the daily lived life, in the interpretation of the Word, in theology, in the religious symbols and artforms, patterns of behaviour, etc. are all intimately related to the particular culture in which these things happen. With these factors in mind, the authors try to give Indian interpretations to some of the important biblical texts and themes.

The twenty-one essays of this volume treat a variety of biblical themes in the Indian context: "God-Concept in India and in Isreal" (Pascal Koroth), "Biblical Hermeneutics: An Indian Approach" (Thomas Manickam), "The Encounter of Semitic/Jewish and Indian Cultures" (Joseph Pandiappallil), "Indian Sruti and Christian Revelation" (Lucius Nereparampil), "Vedic Vak and Johannine Logos" (Antony Edanad), "An Indian Problem of Evil: The Caste System. A Dalit Reading of the Book of Job", O. Susaimanickam), "Universalism in the Psalms" (R.J. Raja), "The Book of Wisdom and JnanaMarga" (T.A. Joseph), "Dalit Reading of the Prophetic Writings" (George Kaniarakath), "The Prophets of Israel and the Rsis India" (Meagher Paddy), "The Biblical Spirit of God and the Concept of Antaryamin" (Varghese Mathai), "Celebration and Biblical Hermeneutics" (Paulachan

Kochappilly), "The One Incarnation of Christianity and the Many Avatars of Hinduism"

(Tord Fornberg), "The Parables of Jesus: The Path to Realizational Knowledge of God" (V.F. Vineeth), "Discipleship in the Gospel and the Guru-Sishya Relationship", (Sam P. Mathew), "Mt.4.1-11: An Indian ReReading" (Augustine Mulloor), "A Case for "the Least and the Last" in God's Kingdom: Matt.21:1-16" (MJ. Joseph), "Caesar Augustus (Lk. 2:1): Jesus' Nativity and Politics" (L. Legrand), "Exousia of Jesus and Ahimsa of Gandhi", (Jacob Naluparayil), "Law - A Liberating Reality in the Pauline Writings and in the Yajnavalkya-Smṛiti" (Varghese Koluthara), "The Scars are the Proof: Reflections on the Proclamation of Christ in Asia" (Jacob Theckanath).

Prof. Paul Kalluveetil has done an excellent study of the important works of Pathrapankal. Rt. Rev. Dr. Alphonsus Mathias, Archbishop emeritus of Bangalore, has written a very powerful Foreword to this work. These two essays really enhance the merit and worth of the work. Archbishop Mathias in his Foreword says:

Much has been written and said in India about the nature, need, scope and relevance of inculturation, but no radical change has come about so far. Indian Church still appears in western garb, thinks in western categories and mostly maintains a western life-style, constantly sustained by western financial aids. I consider the efforts that have been done in the field of inculturation so far, as has already been mentioned earlier, only as feeble and weak attempts of some individuals. What has been said and written in this regard in India mainly concerns about liturgical inculturation and indigenization of worship. Inculturation of the Word is also equally important. Bible and biblical themes should be presented to Indians in a language and terminology, which the Indians can understand. Relevance of the Bible and its message should be clearly spelt out in the multi-religious context of India and in the specific economic, social and political situations of India.

This book is an attempt to fill up this gap.

Review Editors