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Der Betende Jesus Als Heilsmittler Nach Lukas

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to have deliberately a single thesis to develop because the authors or contributors freely wrote on the topics assigned to them, although the topics are not unrelated to each other. By not having a thesis, the organizers wisely avoided prejudging the outcome of the discussion. However, insofar as the theme is concerned, the book succeeds in shedding light on the attitudes of Asian and American intellectuals toward the American Revolution and what it means to them, even if a few of the papers are utterly unpersuasive and uninteresting from beginning to end.

Leslie E. Bauzon

DER BETENDE JESUS ALS HEILSMITTLER NACH LUKAS. By Ludger Feldkämper, S.V.D., Veröffentlichungen des Missionspriesterseminars St. Augustin bei Bonn, 29, Steyler Verlag, 1978.

Of late many books and articles have been published on the topic of prayer, presumably because of what was called a "crisis of prayer." Not all these publications have been of the same quality.

It has always been clear that prayer was a central theme in the gospel of Luke. For Luke prayer was a "to be or not to be" question for a Christian. A number of monographs have appeared on the subject of "Prayer in Luke," (e.g. W. Ott and L. Monloubou). It cannot be said, however, that these studies were complete and comprehensive.

Fr. Feldkämper has filled this gap in a superb way. He submitted all the Lukan texts (or at least nearly all!) to a rigorous diachronic and synchronic study. We read his book with a growing admiration for his skill in literary and compositional analysis. We were happy to see how much attention he paid to those Lukan texts in which it is said that Jesus prays, without any direct indication of the content of that prayer. Usually exegetes were content to say that according to Luke Jesus prayed, even spent a whole night in prayer at decisive turning points in His life. Fr. Feldkämper shows how these texts function in the context of Luke's composition. The content and the meaning of Jesus' prayer is drawn from the immediate context and from the wider context of the total work of the third evangelist. Thus Fr. Feldkämper manages to fill in, so to speak, the content of these prayers of Jesus. It becomes clear that Jesus prays as the "Heilsmittler," to use the phrase from the title of the book. Jesus prays as the mediator of salvation, and particularly as the *suffering* mediator of salvation. At the same time he was not only the model of prayer for his followers. He was also He who enabled them to pray, that is, He was the mediator of prayer too.

It would be impossible to discuss in this review in any detail Fr. Feldkämper's exegesis of every single Lukan text about prayer without doing injustice

to the very meticulous literary and compositional analysis of these texts. Rarely does one find such a refined feeling for every nuance of a text.

We only want to give one sample to whet the taste of the readers of this periodical. Commenting on Luke 5:16, Fr. Feldkämper shows that this text of Jesus' prayer functions like the pivot of the context. The immediate frame of this prayer verse is formed by one generalizing statement about the desire of the people for salvation (Luke 5:15), and another generalizing statement about the work of Jesus in word and action. The pericopes which precede and follow these framing texts (Luke 5:12-14 and 5:18-26) illustrate and interpret this power of Jesus. Ultimately both these pericopes (the first one implicitly and the second one explicitly) speak of the forgiveness of sins granted by God through Jesus. Naturally, this leads to the question about and the recognition of *Who He is*. Jesus acts with God's own authority for the salvation of man; Luke 5:16 about Jesus praying in this pivotal position, expresses that He does so as He who prays (*Der Retende*). Through and in prayer He Who is recognized as the Lord and Who is Spirit-filled is totally turned to God and to man. The theological and anthropological perspectives of his person become one in prayer.

Fr. Feldkämper is not satisfied with the careful analysis of such a text itself. He also traces the compositional connection of the text with all other prayer texts. He indicates the whole trajectory of Lukan development. That is why at the end of the book, one is practically forced to read once more every single text in the light of the total picture.

At the same time the author shows that Luke points forward to the situation of the missionary church in the Acts, where texts about the prayer of the early Christians also abound. Already in the gospel, Luke, through his presentation by means of typology and terminology, has "den betende Jesus in die Situation der Kirche hineingezeichnet."

No one could miss the pastoral and spiritual importance of this study. Rarely, if ever, has such a fine study been published in recent years on an actual topic as prayer. We hope that with this review we can encourage more people to read and study this book for it would be a real pity if this would become just another among many doctoral theses which are ultimately sold for waste paper! This book is too brilliant to be ignored and forgotten; it could well become a classic.

Does that mean that we have nothing negative to say? A reviewer would not be a reviewer if he had nothing to gripe about! We are a little surprised that Fr. Feldkämper never gives the same careful attention to Luke 18:1-8 and 18:9-14. Perhaps W. Ott, in his study of the prayer-paranesis of Luke, restricted himself too much to this and similar texts. Fr. Feldkämper rightly focused his study on the much neglected texts about Jesus' own prayer. But does the result of his magnificent study not prove that he should not have neglected an exegesis of texts about *our* prayer, the prayer of the

Christians? In fact, he does comment on such prayers in the book of Acts. But why then practically ignore the text of Luke 18 and the very interesting text on prayer in the conclusion of Luke's eschatological discourse in 21:36? Fr. Feldkämper strongly rejects the view of W. Ott that the life-situation of Luke's prayer paranesis was the postponement of the parousia. We regret all the more that he did not comment extensively on the texts just mentioned. They seem precisely to have been written in reply to the problem of the postponement of the parousia. There can be no doubt that both these texts are dealing with the particular Lukan view on eschatology. If Father Feldkämper had used his excellent method on these texts, he might have been forced to speak a little more clearly on the Christian experience in Luke's time which would account for Luke's special concern with prayer. Besides, Fr. Feldkämper says on page 337 that the Christians are told to pray in Luke's gospel for *das Nicht-Versagen auf den Weg*. We would have liked him to develop this a little more. After all, does Luke's theology of the Way have something to do with the awareness of a history-in-the-world-to-come? Does Luke not write part of this history, which is also a history of prayer, and of the Holy Spirit given in answer to prayer?

Then we have some more critical remarks about a few details. On page 73 Father Feldkämper says that the picture of the Pharisees in Luke 13:31-33 and of Gamaliel in Acts 5:34 is positive. That is, indeed, the usual interpretation. We believe that L.T. Johnson in his book, *The Literary Function of Possessions in Luke-Acts*, has proved that in the context of Luke's theology of the Way, the vision of the Pharisees and of Gamaliel in these texts is very negative.

On pages 93-94, Fr. Feldkämper says that Luke was less interested in the Twelve, as the Twelve, than the other evangelists. We feel that in the context of his saving historical view, Luke is even more interested in the Twelve than the others. It is not the number of times he mentions them that is decisive, but rather the way they function in his ecclesiology.

Fr. Feldkämper says on page 132 that in the transfiguration text the three companions of Jesus have not understood (*nicht verstanden*) what is really meant, namely the mystery of suffering. We believe that he rather should have said that they did not hear it at all. In fact, on page 141 Fr. Feldkämper writes himself that being asleep, they had not "participated" in what happened up to that point. This is important for Luke's view on the relationship of the Twelve to the earthly Jesus. Schuyler Brown has shown how peculiar the Lukan idea of the faith of the Twelve is. Fr. Feldkämper should have heeded this a little more.

On the pages 253-54, Fr. Feldkämper speaks about the function of the two "criminals" in the scene of Jesus' crucifixion. Does he really think that this specific Lukan term no longer refers to the zealots, as the term "robbers" in Mark and Luke did? Would it not have been better to ask why Luke used

a different term for the same people? Or should we think that Luke was a man who lived in the Roman empire in the first century without having any idea why such people were crucified? Today's experience can help us a little. Such people receive all kinds of bad names from those whom they oppose. "Verbrecher" (criminal) has often been very current. But can we explain the function of the two criminals in Luke's passion narrative without a reference to the two swords of Luke 22:38, in a text that looks like an introduction to the passion narrative?

These slight disagreements or these few questions do not diminish in any way our deep admiration for the total achievement of Fr. Feldkampfer. Would it not be unreal if two biblical scholars agree on every detail in such a comprehensive study!

We believe that the publishers of Steyler Verlag should also be congratulated for their presentation of this book. The misprints are very few and far between. Finally we want to express the hope that the Philippine Province of S.V.D. will make this study available in a more popular form for a wider reading public. There is a real need for it.

John Linskens, CICM