

intertwined with one's own theology to create authority and authenticity in pastoral ministry.

This short but substantive final chapter is an apt conclusion to a volume entitled *A Theology for the Church*, for here Mohler sums up exactly why, when it comes to theology and church, what God has joined together, let no man put asunder. This conclusion is well summarized in its potent and pithy opening and closing sentences: "Every pastor is called to be a theologian. . . . The pastor who is no theologian is no pastor." I could not agree more!

A Review Essay of *The Messiah in Early Judaism and Christianity*. Edited by Magnus Zetterholm. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007. 188 pages. Softcover, \$18.00.

The Messiah in Early Judaism and Christianity is a collection of lectures initially presented at a conference hosted by the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies at Lund University in May 2006. Invited scholars Adela and John Collins from Yale University shared the platform with three Fellows from Lund University: Magnus Zetterholm, Jan-Eric Steppa, and Karin Hedner-Zetterholm. They "presented an overview of aspects of the development of messianism from the period of ancient Israelite religion to the patristic period and also covered several social-historical contexts—early Judaism, the early Jesus movement, rabbinic Judaism, and emerging Christianity" (ix). Subsequently, five very succinct essays, along with an editor's introduction, are joined together to form *The Messiah in Early Judaism and Christianity*. Furthermore, the book provides a timeline of significant events, a map, and a glossary of terms designed with the student in mind as well as a bibliography and a couple of indexes.

In his introduction, Magnus Zetterholm, Research Fellow in New Testament Studies at Lund University, briefly orients the reader to various transformations about Messiah over the centuries. Beginning with ancient Israel's concept of "the anointed one" as a human fallible figure, unlike other Near Eastern royal ideology, Zetterholm points out that the concept of "Messiah" was transformed due to "the trauma caused by the fall of Jerusalem in 587/586 BCE, and the subsequent deportation of the population" (xxi). This dismantling of David's dynasty and his kingdom, "called for a hermeneutical reinterpretation of the whole idea of a Davidic kingdom" (xxi) that eventually "caused the messianic idea to develop along new lines" (xxii). Thus *The Messiah in Early Judaism and Christianity* "provides," according to Zetterholm, "a *comprehensive diachronic introduction* to the emergence and early development of some of the vital aspects of

messianism in Judaism and Christianity in several sociohistorical contexts” (emphasis is mine; xxvi).

Zetterholm’s comprehensive diachronic introduction about the Messiah begins with an overview of “Pre-Christian Jewish Messianism” (1–20) evident in the Old Testament and second temple literature. In chapter one, John Collins, professor of Old Testament Criticism and Interpretation at Yale, begins with a presentation of the origin of Jewish messianism via a simple definition of the term “messiah,” a simple explanation of ancient Near Eastern royal ideology, and a simple description of God’s promise to David (2 Sam 7). Ultimately Collins argues that scant traces of Ancient Near East royal ideology evident in Psalms 2, 45, and 110 may suggest something more than hyperbole. Yet 2 Samuel clearly “acknowledges the humanity of the king” (3).

Collins then moves to the less than uniform development of messianism presented in the prophets, the LXX, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, and Josephus. First, messianic expectations in Isaiah 7:14, 11:1–9; Jeremiah 23:6, 33:14–16; and Zechariah 3:8, 6:12 are presented ever so briefly. Second, developments in the LXX advanced little except perhaps in the translations of Amos 4:13 and Psalm 2. Yet the third group of literature, the Dead Sea Scrolls, was another matter. Collins discusses the branch of David (4Q285, 4Q252, 4Q174), the concept of two messiahs (in 1QS, 1QSa, CD), and several controversial texts (4Q246, 4Q521, 4Q541). Ultimately, the clearest picture presented of the Davidic messiah is that He is a mighty warrior who drives out the Gentiles. In fact, Josephus identifies several messianic pretenders that mirror the portrait of a mighty warrior. Yet there is an overwhelming expectation of two Messiahs at Qumran: a priestly messiah and a regal messiah. Finally, while discussing Messiah and Son of Man, Collin reveals the Son of Man to be a sort of preexistent heavenly figure (angelic like) who is called Messiah (*1 Enoch*; cf. 11Q13). In conclusion, “The hope for the restoration of Davidic kingship was standard,” says Collins, “but it is impossible to say how active or important it was at any given time” (20).

Zetterholm’s comprehensive diachronic introduction about Messiah continues in chapters two and three with an examination of Messiah in the synoptic Gospels and then Paul. In chapter two, “The Messiah as Son of God in the Synoptic Gospels” (21–55), Adela Collins, Professor of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation at Yale, focuses attention on the epithet “Son of God.” After a seemingly lengthy discussion of Mark, in comparison to the discussions in Matthew and Luke, she concludes that the portrayal of Jesus as Son of God is ambiguous. Yet within her discussions of Mark’s presentation of Messiah, she muses, “In the account of the baptism of Jesus (Mark 1:9–11), his messiahship and divine sonship are strongly

implied,” and latter that “a shared assumption that ‘the Messiah’ and ‘the Son of Man’ are equivalent” (23, 24–26; Mark 14:53–65). Matthew and Luke portray Jesus as Son of God in a stronger sense: He has no father and, He is miraculously conceived (Matt 1:18–25; Luke 1:31–33). Thus she concludes, “Jesus is ‘Son of God’ in a stronger sense than in Mark. The narratives in Matthew and Luke do not imply preexistence, but the notion of virginal conception was easily combined with ideas about preexistence and incarnation later on” (31). “Among the Gospels,” avers Collins, “it is only in John that the idea of incarnation is explicitly expressed” (32).

In chapter three, “Paul and the Missing Messiah” (33–55), Magnus Zetterholm, argues that in Pauline material, “any tendency to stress the messiahship of Jesus has vanished into thin air” and that “the word *christos*, ‘Christ,’ (about two hundred times), . . . has become a proper name and that it has lost its messianic overtones almost entirely” (37). Unlike in the Gospels, the “fundamental confession was not, as Peter’s was, ‘Jesus is the Messiah,’ but ‘Jesus is Lord’” (37–39; 1 Cor 6:14, 2 Cor 4:14, Rom 4:24, Phil 2:5–11). The reason for this, according to Zetterholm, was because of Paul’s mission to non-Jewish believers. “Instead of emphasizing the role that Jesus had in a Jewish context—as the Messiah of Israel—Paul stressed an aspect of Jesus; messiahship that would help non-Jewish believers in Jesus to focus on their own ethnic identity and social situation” (48–52; Rom 3:28; Gal 2:1–10, 16; 1 Cor 7:17–18). Paul does not deny Jesus’ messiahship, he merely de-emphasizes it so that he might provide non-Jewish believers “with a role model that would make it possible for them to accept the prevalent situation as well as their ethnic identity” (55).

Zetterholm’s comprehensive diachronic introduction to Messiah concludes in chapters four and five with the exploration of Messiah in Rabbinic literature and in the post-apostolic church. In chapter four, “Elijah and the Messiah as Spokesmen of Rabbinic Ideology” (57–78), Karin Hedner–Zetterholm, Research Fellow in Jewish Studies at Lund University, explores the similarities between Messiah and Elijah the Prophet in Rabbinic literature (57). After providing a brief survey of messianism in Rabbinic literature (58–62), she explores the concept of Messiah and Elijah in the Mishnah and concludes that there is “a general lack of interest and a relatively insignificant role assigned to them” (67). She then explores the Messiah and Elijah in the Babylonian Talmud and concludes that “both Elijah and the Messiah prove useful in promoting the rabbinic worldview; the Messiah by making his own arrival dependant on observance of the Torah, and Elijah by providing divine affirmation of rabbinic ideology” (78).

In chapter five, “The Reception of Messianism and the Worship of Christ in the Post-Apostolic Church,” Jan-Eric Steppa, Researcher in

Church History at Lund University, shows special attention was given to demonstrate Christianity's legitimacy within the Roman world. The early church experienced opposition from Pliny the Younger, Tacitus, and Suetonius. Early church fathers like Tertullian and Justin Martyr, then later, Celsus and Origen were instrumental in demonstrating how Christianity was dependent on Hebrew Scriptures and even "rested on the fulfillment of the ancient Jewish prophecies in Jesus Christ." In conclusion, "messianism," according to Steppa, "was the fundament for the justification and credibility of Christianity among the Romans as a religion worthy of acknowledgment and respect" (114).

Furthermore, Steppa discusses the concept of a future messianic kingdom. The future coming and reign of messiah for a thousand years advocated by Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian (cf. Rev 20:1–6, 4; Ezra 7:26–28, 12:32–34; 2 Baruch 29:5–8) was "increasingly denied legitimacy within the orthodox framework" by those like Jerome (94). As Steppa understands it, "if Christ really was the Messiah, all prophecies would have been fulfilled, and the hope for an earthly Jerusalem could not be considered as anything but completely vain. Thus," according to Steppa, "a spiritual interpretation of the promises of the Holy Land was necessary if the Christian belief in Jesus as the Messiah was to be maintained" (114).

The Messiah in Early Judaism and Christianity is to be praised for its succinct presentation of current thoughts about Messiah. Yet its succinctness presents shortcomings. First, it falls short of its comprehensive diachronic introduction because it fails to address the royal-priesthood of Messiah in Hebrews and the confession of Jesus as Messiah in the Johannine epistles (just to cite two examples). Second, the succinct discussions sometimes lead to less than fair conclusions. Such as, Steppa's statements that "if Christ really was the Messiah, all prophecies would have been fulfilled," and later that the evidence renders "the hopes for a future earthly messianic kingdom fatally obsolete" (116). Steppa ignores recent discussions that argue differently. Readers need to be aware that overly simplistic conclusions exist in the book. Finally, Adela and John Collin's presentations are presented far more extensively in their most recent work *King and Messiah as Son of God: Divine, Human, and Angelic Messianic Figures in Biblical and Related Literature* (Eerdmans 2008). Nevertheless, *The Messiah in Early Judaism and Christianity* is to be commended for the variety of pictures, however briefly they were presented, about how the concept of Messiah has developed over the centuries.

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