

TENACH OPNIEUW (SUMMARY) 2006

SUMMARY

The subject of this study in Biblical Theology is the question how biblical scriptures, in particular Old Testament and New Testament, are interconnected. It is a question that arises from the reading of Scripture itself, not only as a purely theoretical issue but it is also a practical question. The author is a minister of the Church. Every Sunday the Bible, opened and read from the lectern, is supposed to be at the heart of worship. Around this one book with its wide variety of voices, literary genres and traditions, the Messianic community gathers in the expectation that in all their diversity these voices speak within one particular, unique context.

The subject of the internal coherence of the various books of Scripture is one of the most complicated matters of biblical theology. It touches on all exegetical and systematic aspects of theology. Developing a theoretical model runs the risk of reducing the matter to a purely abstract problem. Once the 'solution' has been found it could then be uncritically imposed upon the actual texts. In this study we would like to try and avoid that. That is why we focussed on one book: the Gospel of Luke. We posed, so to speak, the question of the unity of Scripture to Luke himself. How did his Bible (the 'Old Testament,' Greek and Hebrew) function when he composed his Gospel? Within what sort of framework did he read his Bible? What are the points on which in particular he focuses? The reason why we put this question to Luke is curiosity, raised by an exegetical study by Frans H. Breukelman in which he convincingly argues that Luke draws on the Old Testament as the exclusive framework within which he allows Jesus to appear.

In Part One of this study we discuss a number of representative pericopes of the Gospel in order to find out how Luke's message of 'The Anointed of the Lord' relates to the message of 'Moses and the Prophets.' The result could help us to understand how Luke himself read and interpreted Scripture. We focussed in particular on the way he treats the typical Old Testament topic of the Temple. Starting from a number of pericopes in which the Temple plays a central role (1:5-25, 2:22-52, 19:45-48 and 24:53) we found that the Temple to some extent determines the structure of Luke's Gospel. It is the location deliberately chosen by Luke as the appropriate context of Jesus' appearance.

Next we had a close look at the Prologue (1:1-4), the 'Overture' (1:5 - 2:40), the 'Finale' (24), the Parables of the 'Good Samaritan'(10:25-38) and 'Lazarus and Dives' (16:19-31) and Jesus' appearance in the

Synagogue (4:14-30). Reading through the text of Luke we noticed two perspectives: an 'Old Testament' perspective of the Gospel and a Gospel perspective of the Old Testament. In the first perspective Jesus appears within the framework of the Old Testament (Tenakh), the Old Testament elucidating the message of the Gospel. In the second perspective Tenakh appears within the framework of the message about the Anointed One, Jesus, himself opening and explaining Tenakh. Both perspectives affect each other dynamically, thus creating a mutual relationship. They cannot be separated but they may be distinguished one from the other. It is, however, remarkable that none of them ever appears in an absolute way. All through the Gospel they are heard together.

In Part Two we discussed the coherence of Scripture in view of systematic theology. In need of a theological definition of the specific character of Scripture we accepted Karl Barth's doctrine of Scripture as Testimony. In Scripture we hear a great variety of voices, but they all testify about one Word and one Action. Starting from this characteristic of Scripture we were able to describe the inner coherence of Scripture, using the results of the exegetical research in Part One. Basic words and biblical concepts and in particular what K. H. Miskotte termed 'the method of the Name' were our main guiding principles. If there is one place where the coherence of the Scriptures becomes evident it is in the One who is therein testified. This simplicity (oneness) of the Name creates the internal coherence (YHWH ECHAD); unity through simplicity! In the Gospel of Luke it is Jesus, the Anointed One, himself who by going his way shows us the way.

In the Conclusion we combined the results of Part One and Part Two. The question was whether it could be appropriate to talk about a 'Messianic Credit' of the Gospel as a 'credit' that cannot exist apart from the Anointed One himself and is neither qualitative nor quantitative. It ought to be – we argued – a 'Credit' that confirms the unity of Scripture. We found it in the Anointed One himself, in the way he makes us hear and see the testimony of Moses and the Prophets as a *true* testimony. That is exactly what Luke had in mind when in the Prologue he wrote to Theophilus: "that you may know the truth concerning the things of which you have been taught."

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