ST MARK'S LIBRARY GAZETTE

ISSUE NUMBER ONE

Contents

St Mark's Library Gazette

Editor's Introduction and Library Update

When Carole and I took over the role of Church Librarian (job sharing) in 2024, one of the tasks that we were given was to continue to develop the online theology library. For those of you who may be unfamiliar with it, it is a selection of articles that came from the time of the Centre for Radical Christianity (CRC) that was hosted by St Mark's Church, and a few that have been written in the period since CRC came to an end. It is an excellent resource, and the quality and presentation of the articles is also excellent, in no small part owing to the skilful curatorship that was provided by Nicky Woods, one of our congregants. They have been written by writers from within our Church and also from outside it, as CRC was an organisation that went wider than St Mark's in its membership. In my view, this diversity of commissioning added to the strength of the resource and it is an approach that we intend to continue using for *St Mark's Library Gazette*.

We hope that *St Mark's Library Gazette*, published on an *ad hoc* basis, will produce some articles that can be considered for inclusion in the online theology library, although this will not be a requirement for all articles. The focus of the online library is theological, though the articles do not have to be written by professional theologians. They do have to be accessible to the non- specialist, however, and that will continue to be a requirement as we move forwards. The scope of the *Gazette* is deliberately broad, reflecting the diversity of theological opinion within St Mark's church. This is already reflected in the wide range of material available in the Church library. Submissions can be in areas such as Biblical Studies, Church History, Systematic Theology, Contextual Theology, Ethics and a range of topics in Public Theology, including in Political Theology. We hope that they will reflect a plurality of theological perspectives befitting of St Mark's commitment to a living, *thinking* and loving faith. However, inclusion will require that they do not infringe on the Church's commitment to being an inclusive church.

Should you wish to submit an article for consideration, please send it to me at joe.forde@tiscali.co.uk. It can be up to 2000 words in length (and occasionally more than that) and references should be done in the Chicago number style. Book reviews are also welcome. Submissions should include a brief biography of yourself (up to 150 words) and, for longer articles, a brief abstract would also be appreciated. Articles should be formatted using the Times New Roman (14) font. Submission of an article or book review does not guarantee inclusion in either *St*

Mark's Library Gazette or the Church's online library, which will remain at the discretion of St Mark's Church. All issues of *St Mark's Library Gazette* will be subject to church ministerial oversight and final approval.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this issue of *St Mark's Library Gazette* are those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by the Library Group, the clergy or Parochial Church Council of St Mark's Church.

Library Update

We continue to add to the library catalogue and a list of books that have recently been included is contained at the end of this publication. Our approach is to seek to provide a *plurality* of perspectives on theology and related matters, befitting of a church that prides itself on its living, *thinking,* loving and inclusive approach to faith. The library is being used, with an average of 40 books out on loan at any given time. Library group members welcome any suggestions for purchasing new books; however, owing to budgetary constraints, we can't guarantee that all of them will be acquired. All books that are reviewed in *St Mark's Library Gazette* will be acquired by the Church library (subject to any budgetary constraints), and the review will be made available inside the book.

Joe Forde,
Church Librarian(job chair with Carole Forde)

The Risen Life – A Fresh Look

Part I

Author: Ian Wallis holds degrees in Biblical Studies from Sheffield (BA, PhD) and Cambridge (MLitt) Universities. Following a curacy in Armthorpe, Doncaster, and a chaplaincy at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, most of his ministry has been parish-based, serving as Rector of Houghton-le-Spring in the Diocese of Durham and Vicar of St Mark's Broomhill, Sheffield. Ian has taught New Testament and early Christian origins at Cambridge and Durham Universities, as well as on various ministry training programmes, including the Yorkshire Ministry Course where he served as Principal. Drawing on academic research and personal experience, he has spent over 30 years helping church communities relate contemporary Christian practice to the original impulse of faith embodied in Jesus. Ian has published five books and numerous shorter pieces in scholarly and popular publications. He recently returned to St Mark's as an Associate Priest Theologian.

> *Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain … If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. (1 Corinthians 15.12–14, 17–19, the New Revised Standard Version, here and throughout)*

According to the apostle Paul, Jesus' resurrection is the birth of Christian faith and grounds for hope. Yet as the apostle soon discovered, belief in the resurrection proved controversial from the outset and has remained so ever since (eg Luke 24.11; John 20.25; Acts 17.32). What are reasonable Christians to make of it today and, in particular, what can we learn from the apostle Paul?

The first thing to note is that there is no evidence Paul ever met Jesus of Nazareth and was certainly not counted among Jesus' earliest recruits. He hadn't served an apprenticeship with Jesus in a comparable way to, say, Peter, James and John or, for that matter, Mary of Magdala. This is significant for while Jesus preached and performed the emergence of the reign of God, recruiting disciples to minister alongside him, Paul preached and performed the risen Christ who summons all people to believe in him and so to participate in the salvation he embodies. This is a big difference and one of the corollaries of it is that for Paul the *real Jesus* is not Jesus of Nazareth, the historical figure he never knew, but the *risen Christ* who makes his presence felt post-mortem not through apparitions of a resuscitated or transformed corpse (Paul claims no such experiences), but through other means, as we shall see.

Interestingly, at the beginning of 1 Corinthians15, the apostle's most detailed exposition of the resurrection, Paul cites an earlier tradition he had inherited …

> *For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. (vv 3–5)*

… to which he adds further witnesses, including himself:

> *Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. (vv 6–9)*

In each case, he claims that Christ 'appeared' (*ôphthê*), implying an equivalence between the resurrection experiences, from Cephas (Peter) through to himself. Yet, when we examine the evidence for Paul's own encounter, it is described in significantly different terms to the so-called appearance traditions found in Matthew, Luke and John. In Galatians, he supplies the following biographical information, where he refers to it as a 'revelation':

> *You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. But when God, who had set me*

apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal (apokalypsai) his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles … (1.13–16)

Inquiring further into the nature of this revelation, we must expand our investigation beyond the writings attributed to Paul to embrace the Acts of the Apostles, whose author may have been a companion of the apostle for a period (cf the 'we' passages – Acts 16.10–17; 20.5–15 et al; Col 4.14). The book of Acts includes three versions of Paul's encounter with the risen Christ which are substantially the same. Here is the one from chapter 9:

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank. (9.1–9; also 22.6–11 & 26.12–18)

The key dialogue, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' … 'Who are you, Lord?' … 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' is repeated in all three accounts, underlying its importance while identifying Saul's (Paul's; cf Acts 13.9) persecution of Christians as the locus for his Christophany, his revelation of Christ. This is highly significant: Paul encounters the risen Christ in and through Christ's followers, which may supply the background for his use of 'body of Christ (*sôma Christou*)' as a metaphor for Christian community: Note his usage in 1 Corinthians 12:

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good … All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit

chooses. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ … Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. (1 Cor 12.4–7, 11, 27; also Rom 12.3–8)

In this passage, Paul seems to be suggesting that the risen Christ is reincarnated within the lives of trusting believers who are open to his presence and committed to his cause – the risen Christ inhabits their faithfulness. This is a remarkable claim, namely, that resurrection means Christ is no longer limited in space and time to the body of Jesus of Nazareth, but is universally immanent and capable of re-embodiment through faith. It comes as no surprise, therefore, to discover that for the apostle, God's spirit is thoroughly Christocentric – the essence of Christ, if you will:

Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him … If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you … For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God … Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. (Rom 8.9–26)

It is worth clarifying at this stage that, in the passages cited above and elsewhere, Paul is not theorising about Christ's risen life, but reflecting on his own experience, personally and within Christian community – experience so profound that it transformed him from persecutor of the early church to one of its leading advocates. Another misapprehension easily gained runs along the lines that by stressing the spiritual nature of resurrection over the physical, Paul is all but undermining its veracity, locating it in the realm of what we would describe today as subjective experience in contrast to objective fact. Yet this isn't a distinction the apostle draws; rather, he distinguishes between 'divine being' and 'mortal existence,' with priority in terms of authenticity and fundamentality residing firmly with the former. Two examples illustrate this delineation.

Firstly, returning to 1 Corinthians 15, towards the culmination of what is an extensive and nuanced exposition of the risen life, both Jesus' and everyone else's

(cf 'But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the *first fruits* of those who have died' v 20), Paul contrasts the physical or mortal body (*sôma psychikon*) of earthly existence with the spiritual body (*sôma pneumatikon*) of resurrection life (v 44). Clearly, body (*sôma*) in this context cannot be equated with physicality (cf 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,' v 50); rather, the meaning is closer to 'form' or the way we refer to the 'self' in common parlance – one's essence. And because risen life, animated by Christ's spirit, emerges from, yet transcends 'flesh and blood', it constitutes a mode of being in which believers are able to participate here and now.

Secondly, in Galatians 5, Paul delineates two modes of being by their outcomes – 'the works of the flesh' (*ta erga tês sarkos*, v 19) and 'the fruit of the spirit' (*ho karpos tou pneumatos*, v 22). Both modes can characterise earthly existence but are distinguished by their animating source or motivation – 'flesh' (*sarx)* here is not used anatomically but theologically, referring to a propensity, innate or acquired, towards corruption, while 'spirit' (*pneuma*) in this instance denotes the energising presence of divine vitality:

> *Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. (vv 19–25)*

What is clear from these and other passages is that for Paul Christ's resurrection is a spiritual reality that both transforms earthly existence and transcends it. For this reason, the empty tomb is never mentioned by the apostle because Jesus' resurrection isn't a past event, but an ongoing reality. Equally, there is no translocation of Jesus into heaven, no ascension (cf Luke 24.50–51; Acts 1.6–11); instead, his resurrection also serves as his exaltation (Phil 2.9–11; also John 8.28; 12.32).

All this raises important questions about the nature of Jesus' resurrection and, by implication, our understanding of the risen life more generally. Perhaps, the most pressing of these questions relates to what constitutes the self. For example,

what constitutes the essential Jesus and how does it relate to his earthly body and could that essence transcend the demise of that body? And, equally, what constitutes the essential you and me, and so forth …

Western culture has become so thoroughgoing materialist, both superficially in the sense of valuing 'stuff' and axiomatically in believing that everything is ultimately reducible to the physical (atoms, forces, fields, etc), that it is all but inconceivable to entertain the possibility that there is something more fundamental than matter. Yet Paul's experience of the risen Christ challenges these presuppositions and invites us to do likewise. In a follow-up article, I will present some of the evidence that is causing an increasing number of thinkers to conclude that physicalism has had its day and must give way to a more satisfactory account of reality.

Further Reading

Dale C Allison, *The Resurrection of Jesus: Apologetics, Polemics, History* (New York/London: T & T Clark, 2021).

Understanding the Cross of Jesus as identification and solidarity

Author: John Schofield is a retired Anglican priest who has been part of the St Mark's community since 2012. Having spent the latter part of his active ministry in clergy and Reader ministry training, formation and development, he has contributed to St Mark's' life through coordinating (and writing) materials for Lent groups and other study and learning opportunities. He was for three years the Chair of St Mark's Centre for Radical Christianity and when that closed down led on the development of the CRCOnline website, whose materials have now been incorporated into the resources section of St Mark's website to which he continues to contribute. As well as having served in four parishes, two diocesan posts and as a residentiary canon at Guildford Cathedral, he also worked in various capacities for Save the Children UK in the early years of this century.

Abstract

This article argues that the best way of understanding the atonement is in terms of God identifying with and acting in solidarity with humanity. These two concepts are interwoven, drawing on Duns Scotus. The many metaphors for what was happening in the crucifixion are outlined and particular attention is given to the picture of sacrifice, with attention paid to the argument in Hebrews that Jesus undid once and for all the notion of sacrifice. Instead, the cross is presented as God's act of solidarity with the suffering of humanity. The cross is not the purpose of Jesus' life, but results from it, being the fullest display of the love of God. Traditional salvation language is turned upside down, with an emphasis on what we are saved for, in line with Irenaeus' recognition that God became as we are that we might become as God is.

The Problem

'And when I think, that God his Son not sparing,

Sent him to die, I scarce can take it in.'

Who knows what is in 'the mind of God' (deliberately in inverted commas, recognising that I am anthropomorphising)? But I find myself increasingly unable to talk about 'God sending his Son into the world to die', which used to figure quite significantly in my preaching 40 or so years ago. Subsequently the concept of reconciliation became my prime paradigm for understanding the cross, and it is still of great importance. But I have come to recognise another way of understanding the cross. And in what follows I shall argue that the best way of approaching what has traditionally been called the Atonement is by seeing what God in Christ was doing as two interwoven concepts: identification and solidarity:

- the identification of God with humanity in the person of Jesus, whose incarnation is the perfect instantiation of God in human terms;
- the death of Jesus on the cross as solidarity rather than sacrifice.

In this view, the death of Jesus on the cross was the result of God's actions, not their purpose. These concepts are consonant with an exemplarist understanding of the atonement (in which the love of God is the key component, calling forth our amazed response), and, for me, sit alongside reconciliation as explainers, corroborating concepts, which expand our understanding.

Solidarity results from identification

Whatever the exact mechanics of the birth of Jesus, at the heart of the Christian gospel is the belief that in Jesus, God's clearest self-expression, God becomes wholly identified with God's human creation. Whether or not this demands the virgin birth, which is not attested to in either Mark or John's Gospels, and does not appear in the writings of Paul, is something on which I am ultimately happy to be agnostic. Nevertheless, that Jesus does embody the nature of God for us and as one of us is the inescapable foundation of Christian thinking and believing.

Actually there is little difference between identification and solidarity, even if one is more associated with Bethlehem and the other with Calvary; both are essential to understanding the cross.

This way of thinking is of a piece with what I take to be a Franciscan emphasis on the primacy of incarnation. The Franciscan John Duns Scotus, believed that the incarnation of God and the redemption of the world could not be a mere reaction to human sinfulness, but was in fact the free, proactive work of God from the very beginning. For only perfect love can be the motivation for incarnation, as is attested by the writer of Ephesians:

> [God] chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love (Eph 1.4[1]).

Duns Scotus saw Jesus as a revelation of this positive, proactive message: "I say that the incarnation of Christ was not foreseen as occasioned by sin, but was immediately foreseen from all eternity by God as a good more proximate to the end." God never merely reacts but always supremely and freely acts.[2]

Put as a simple paraphrase: the Crib is total identification, the Cross is total solidarity.

Metaphors associated with the Cross

There are many ways of speaking about what was happening in the crucifixion; all, course, are metaphors. Among the biblical metaphors are:

- Ransom, eg Mark 10.45: 'For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many'.
- Sin bearer: 'For our sake God made the one who knew no sin to be sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God'. (2 Cor 5.21)

[1] All Biblical references are taken from the NRSVue.
[2] See Richard Rohr, "Eager to Love" (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2014) in chapter 12 about the influence and theology of John Duns Scotus, to which I am indebted for this explication of his writings.

- Curse bearer: ‘Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us – for it is written “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”.’ (Galatians 3.13)
- Leader of a victor’s triumphant procession: ‘But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession and through us spreads in every place the fragrance that comes from knowing him.’ (2 Cor 2.14)
- Reconciler: ‘in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.’ (2 Cor 5.19)
- Sacrifice: e.g. ‘Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God’ (Ephesians 5.2). I shall discuss the question of sacrifice in a separate paragraph (below)

There are other metaphors which have been significant over time, such as the idea of Christus Victor (popularised by Gustav Aulen in the early twentieth century)[3], or Jesus as Hero, as in the medieval Dream of the Rood[4], and the development of what has become known as the theory of penal substitution, building on the writings of St Anselm and medieval concepts of justice and retribution.

Undoing Sacrifice

As Jesus enters the pages of the New Testament, his path crosses that of his cousin John, who immediately says: ‘Look, there is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.’ At once we are put into sacrifice mode, into remembering the Hebrew Scriptures’ ideas about sin offerings and the Day of Atonement. Apart from this, there is remarkably little language of sacrifice in the Gospels, and there is no evidence that Jesus himself saw the category of sacrifice as being determinative for understanding his life.

Other New Testament writers thought differently. Paul writes to the Romans: ‘all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith’. (Romans 3.23-4). And the writer of 1 Peter says (combining two metaphors):

[3] ‘Its central theme is the idea of the Atonement as a Divine conflict and victory; Christ – Christus Victor – fights against and triumphs over the evil powers of the world, the 'tyrants' under which mankind is in bondage and suffering, and in Him God reconciles the world to Himself’. *Aulén, Gustaf (2003). Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of Atonement. Translation from the original Swedish by A.G. Hebert. Eugene: Wipf and Stock.* Referenced citation from Wikipedia.

[4] ‘The poem tells a macho, Germanic version of the crucifixion, where Christ is portrayed not as a sacrificial lamb but as a warrior like Beowulf, where the hero faces his fate and embraces death for the good of his kinsfolk.’ Andrew Ziminski, “Church Going” (London: Profile Books, 2024).

‘You know that you were ransomed from the futile conduct inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or defect.’ (1 Peter 1,18-19)

While it's impossible to ignore that these pictures are in the biblical record, it is possible to look at this in a different way. In Jesus, God was pointing to the aridity of the previous system of animal and other sacrifices. God was stepping outside the sacrificial system, while appearing to be acting within it. Human sacrifice is abhorrent in the eyes of the Hebrew prophets. Yet Paul and Peter cast God as apparently putting Jesus forward as a sacrifice of atonement. But the writer of the letter to the Hebrews is strongly of the belief that Jesus undid 'once and for all' all notions of human and animal sacrifice (Hebrews 7.27, 9.12, 10.10). So Jesus’ death does put an end to sacrifice, not by being a sacrifice, but rather by an act of self-giving that points both to the ending of sacrifice and to the loving generosity of God which will stop at nothing to reach out and embrace and love and surround us, if only we would respond.

So all theological systems based on a Christianisation of the sacrificial system are erroneous. Rather, the cross is the supreme exemplar of the unconditional and uncontrolling love that God has for us. This is not to disallow the use of the word sacrifice when we speak of offering ourselves to be a living sacrifice. This draws on a different aspect of the word sacrifice: we offer ourselves to God as we are, flawed and hopeful, that we might become holy, at whatever cost to ourselves, by the action of God who pours grace on us.

Of course, responding to God’s love, and becoming the people God hopes we will become (in God’s intention for us), achieving our potentiality to the full and living out the fruit of the Spirit, certainly involves turning our backs on some things, some ways of being and behaving. But none of this has to be cast as a juridical transaction, or as God pouring his wrath on Jesus instead of on us. Such a description, owing more to medieval and feudal concepts than it does to the shadows of such a theology which can be found in the pages of the New Testament, has very little to do with the costly and continuing work of identification and solidarity, or in language that I have used a great deal in recent years, reconciliation and alignment. Rather, it brings the name of God into dishonour and disrepute. Who would want such a God, such projection of the worst negativity of human rage? If these are the terms we must work with, why would we love God? A God whose 'love' demands a blood sacrifice is a distortion of the gospel, and not a God I can love or worship. Rather, we love because ‘he [first] loved us’ (1 John 4.10). ‘Love keeps no record of wrongs’ (1 Cor 13, NIV),

but apparently God does, for God does not love unconditionally according to substitutionary theories.

The Cross as God's act of solidarity

For me, the concept of solidarity (together with its twin, identification) resonates most fully both with my own lived experience and with descriptions or images of God that are not controlled by fear or the need to appease God. Rowan Williams has used the phrase 'self-sacrificing solidarity'[5]: I think this helps with the understanding of the cross that I am exploring.

Richard Rohr put it succinctly in one of his daily meditations some years ago: 'Jesus dies "for" us not in the sense of "a substitute for us" but "in solidarity with" the suffering of all humanity since the beginning of time.'[6]

Other theologians have come to a similar conclusion. For instance, Anthony Reddie, in his book *Introducing James Cone,* writes

> The nature of Jesus' struggle in confronting the cross is expressed in very eloquent terms by the Church of England priest and Black theologian, David Isiorho, who has stated that 'Jesus died *because* of our sins and not *for* them. In invoking this statement, Isiorho is agreeing with Cone in suggesting that Jesus died in solidarity with and as one of the oppressed people of his day.[7]

Identification and solidarity reach out with hope, questioning whether we are able to turn our lives around, to face a new direction, to live in solidarity with God and with all God's creation, as God loves in solidarity with us.

All the metaphors I have mentioned demand that we acknowledge that there is a gap between us and God, between us and others, a gap we call sin. But who can deny sin and evil is in the world in which we now live - the prevalence of war, the violence within society, the anger, the hatred, the selfishness of nations, the underlying threat within rearmament and assured mutual destruction, the rape of the earth's resources, the accumulation of inordinate wealth by the few, the heating of the planet?

God's identification and solidarity with us speak powerfully into this turmoil, calling us to Godly and Christlike living.

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[5] Sadly I cannot put my finger on the exact location of this phrase, though I think it appears in one of Williams' reflections in *A Century of Poetry.*

[6] From one of his daily meditations (exact citation unsure).

[7] Anthony Reddie, "Introducing James Cone," (London: SCM Press, 2022)

Demanded by God or voluntarily accepted by Jesus?

While I can no longer subscribe to the bald statement that God sent his son to die (purpose), I would argue that God nevertheless 'allowed' it to happen (result), because God is uncontrolling love who allows us to do our worst to God and loves us still. Thomas Jay Oord writes persuasively about what he calls the 'amipotence' of God in his book The Death of Omnipotence and the Birth of Amipotence.[8]

Throughout this way of thinking there is an undertone of Johannine theology at work. It is John who tells us that 'the light [of the Word/Logos] shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it' (John1.5). It is John who has Jesus telling us: 'God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.' (John 3.16), a crucial statement for Christians of all stripes, but in which there is no mention of the need for sacrifice. And it is in John that Jesus lays down his life voluntarily. 'No one takes it [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord' (John 10.18). Does that 'no one' not include the One whom Jesus constantly refers to as his Father?

Equally compellingly, Jesus says 'I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself' (John 12.31) - a magnetic image of the love of God, if ever there was one. John's staurology is different from that which developed in the Middle Ages. It is, however, consonant with a solidarity understanding, and with an incarnational reading of the New Testament.

And John's is the Jesus who, either in triumphant shout or whispered exhalation spoke words that to me seal identification and solidarity: 'It is finished'. (John 19.30). If this is a loud cry it proclaims that Jesus has understood what he is doing/achieving; a quiet whisper suggests that Jesus has realised that whatever it was he thought he was doing in voluntarily giving up his life has been worked out in this bloody and painful death.

The Cross and Salvation language

It may be objected that this way of thinking doesn't fit easily with traditional salvation language. However, if we turn that language on its head, asking not what are we saved from but what are we saved for, then matters become clearer. In one of his writings Hans Urs von Balthasar talks about redemption not being from sin, but being about the unification of the world in itself and with God; this, he says, is the ultimate motivating cause for the incarnation … the first idea of

[8] Thomas Jay Oord, "The Death of Omnipotence and the Birth of Amipotence" (SacraSagePress.com, 2023)

the creator, existing in advance of all creation. And that brings us back to Scotus, and reminds us of an even earlier theologian, Irenaeus, who wrote that the 'Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, through his transcendent love, became what we are, that he might bring us to be what he is himself"[9]. Or, as the writer to the Hebrews reminds us, Jesus is the pioneer and as well as the perfector of our faith. (see Hebrews 12.2)

I started this essay with a verse from a hugely popular hymn; let me end it with my suggested rewriting of that same verse, which tries to encapsulate what I have been - at no small length – arguing:

> And when I think that God the Son so caring
> Was one of us, I scarce can take it in;
> Who on the cross, our nature gladly sharing,
> Showed us God's love that covers every sin;
> Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
> How great thou art.

The relevance of Marcus Borg's thinking for today

Author: Adrian Alker was educated at Upholland Grammar School in Lancashire and took a degree from Wadham College Oxford and a Masters degree at Lancaster University. After a short period of work in the Careers Service, he was ordained by Bishop David Sheppard in Liverpool Cathedral in 1979 and has served the Church of England in the dioceses of Liverpool, Carlisle, Sheffield and Leeds. He has worked as a parish priest, an Assistant Director of Post Ordination Training, and a Director of Mission before retiring from full time ministry in 2016. He served as vicar of St Mark's Broomhill for twenty years, where he founded the Centre for Radical Christianity and in 2008 was given an honorary degree by the University of Sheffield for his work in the wider community. In retirement Adrian chaired the board of trustees for the Progressive Christianity Network in Britain. His book,

[9] Irenaeus, Against the Heresies, Book 5.

'Is A Radical Church Possible?' has been widely used in groups and he is currently completing another book on the rites of passage and religion.

Ten years have passed since the untimely death of Professor Marcus Borg in January 2015 at the age of 72. Yet the influence of his writing, the remembrance of his compelling lectures and the warmth of his personality are still fresh in the minds of those who had the privilege of knowing him and thousands across the world who still value his theological insights.

Borg retired as Hundere Distinguished Professor of Religion and Culture at Oregon State University in 2007. A fellow of the Jesus Seminar in the USA and a major figure in historical Jesus research, Marcus also loved England, having studied at Mansfield College, Oxford after his time at Union Seminary in New York. Perhaps that is why he gladly accepted an invitation in 2000 to address his first English parish church audience at St Mark's Broomhill Sheffield, followed by many other engagements here and across Europe.

One of his early and relatively short books, 'Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time' gripped the imagination with its accessible account of how contemporary Jesus scholarship can be told in ways accessible to lay readers. At its heart this book, and others which followed, directed readers who found the confessed doctrines of the church about Jesus to be less compelling to a fresh and imaginative picture of Jesus, built upon solid research and a profound spirituality. In this book and in his lectures, Marcus was open about his own Lutheran church upbringing, his Sunday school picture of Jesus and his increasing questioning of the literal account of Christ's life. Central to Borg's understanding was the reality of the Spirit being the source of all that Jesus was and did. In this respect Borg remained a convinced theist. Indeed one of the books written before he died, entitled 'Convictions', brings together his life's faith journey. In that book he speaks of the mystery of God, of the significance of the Bible in its meanings, of how God seen in Jesus is passionate about justice and the poor and how Christians are called to peace and nonviolence.

In the vein of fresh interpretation, solid research foundations and attractive insights came books such as, 'Reading the Bible Again for the First Time' and 'The God We Never Knew'. Alongside his friend John Dominic Crossan, another towering figure in the knowledge of the Judeo-Christian story, came the co-authored books on the birth stories of Jesus, the last week of Jesus life and a fresh understanding of St Paul, whom Borg and Crossan describe as a radical visionary.

These books alone give good reasons why students and congregations alike would find in them an accessibility, an attractiveness and a fresh way to make sense of the Christian story.

But Marcus Borg was no polemicist in the ways in which some liberal theologians can ape their fundamentalist colleagues in a tribal loyalty to their views. Since their days at Oxford, Borg was a friend of the popular theologian N.T Wright, despite their considerable differences of view. Their resulting book, 'The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions', offers us sharply argued disagreements over many crucial issues around the life and significance of Jesus, but is also a model for how churches and scholars can debate in a context of generous understanding of the other.

In 2003 Borg wrote 'The Heart of Christianity' with its subtitle 'Rediscovering a Life of Faith'. I consider this to be one of those books which could be seen as a set of building blocks for a progressive Christian faith. Worthy to be read by those seeking confirmation or those in study groups, the book re-examines the meanings of faith, ways to read the Bible, understanding what we mean by God and the significance of Jesus. In the second part of the book, Borg looks at the implications of such foundations for living out an authentic Christian life in our contemporary world. In the preface to the book, Marcus quotes his dear wife Marianne who says that this book is "for lovers of faith and those seeking a faith to love".

There are many in our world who are seeking a faith to love and yet so often people look at the churches and their teachings and find so much which they cannot believe or accept. Another great teacher, Bishop Jack Spong, used to say that the heart will not accept what the mind rejects. In the life and work of Marcus Borg we have a teacher who asks us to use our minds and our imagination and above all to give our hearts so that we may encounter the 'More' in life.

If, for example, we take the birth stories of Jesus at their most literal and fail to see them as profound theological metaphors and symbolic stories, we are left with the childish notion that Christmas is little more than a set of fairy tales. Always Borg urges us to ask the question, "What do these stories mean?" rather than "Are they true?".

Similarly for those who seek a mature and convincing faith fit for the 21st century, Borg unpacks the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus in the context of life under the occupation of the Jewish homeland by the Roman Empire. In 'The Last Week', Borg and Crossan walk us through each day from Palm Sunday to Easter Day using the gospel of Mark as their template. Here is

an example of how Borg carefully takes the bible text for Holy Week and reveals to us new insights and meanings. It is also a reminder that Borg can challenge the notion that only conservative evangelicals are the ones who take the Bible seriously. On crucial debates such as the meaning of atonement, Borg asks "Was the death of Jesus a punishment by God for our sins or was Jesus executed because of our sins?". A question which in its profundity opens up a whole area of new thinking.

In his final book, published in 2017, entitled 'Days of Awe and Wonder: how to be a Christian in the twenty-first century', Borg draws together his own experiences of life, his extensive academic scholarship and the centrality for him of the life and teachings of Jesus. Borg invites us to go beyond our minds to the spaces of awe and wonder, where we are infused with the Spirit of God and being so transformed, we may then transform our world. Few scholars have managed to harness their extensive research to serve congregations across the world who are seeking a credible Christianity. The gifts which Marcus possessed were gentleness, reasonableness and persuasiveness. Here was a scholar in no ivory tower but a churchman, a fellow traveller, a deeply spiritual man, a seeker after truth.

And that is why Marcus Borg is relevant for us today.

My Brother's Keeper: Taking Responsibility for the Christian Right

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Modern Church] (2011), *By One Spirit: Reconciliation and Renewal in Anglican Life*, Peter Lang (2009), *The Really Useful Meditation Book*, Hodder & Stoughton (1995), *Silence in Ordinary: Contemplative living for Busy People*, Ameo Books, (forthcoming 2025). Translation: *The Little Sisters of Jesus: Following in the Footsteps of Charles de Foucault*, New City (1991)

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Abstract

MAGA comprises many professing Christians who mirror Donald Trump's need for adulation that borders on emperor worship. Donald Trump's narcissism originates in his childhood formation, particularly the influence of his father. The cult of the individual, as projected by the Christian Right, has replaced the intersubjectivity described by Daniel Hardy which is needed for society to function. The resulting leadership vacuum is to be felt as one of our own making, signalling the danger of political apathy. The causes and effect of narcissism in our leaders point to the need for exercising biblical wisdom in leadership and politics, so the Christian Right needs to be challenged theologically as well as spiritually. We are left with the question 'is God using Donald Trump to warn us of the danger it represents?'.

It has been said that when Donald Trump was asked what it was that drove him to seek election as President of the United States, for a second term, he dismissed the question as stupid. He replied, quite candidly, that his only reason for seeking the highest office in the land, was that it would make him the most famous man in the world. Donald Trump, it is also said, has no policies, or at least no policies as we might understand the meaning of the word in the context of government.[10] He has no vision for the nation, apart from an undefined 'greatness' which would be a kind of mirror image of the fame he craves. His MAGA following are that mirror. Many of them are Christians. They supply the greatness by virtue of sheer numbers and of a uniform compliance with an implicit call to worship their leader. Much of that worship is cloaked in Christian zeal and piety, as displayed in the red caps worn by these self-proclaimed dual devotees, emblazoned with the words 'Jesus is my Saviour. Trump is my President'.

[10] BBC Sounds Podcast 'Americast' 'The Trump Comeback' downloaded 25th March, 2025

For all his appeal to the Christian Right, however, Donald Trump is also a kind of Emperor Tiberius. He has an eye for justifiable reforms. Tiberius reigned from AD 14 to AD 37 and, like Trump, introduced legal reforms that were aimed to reduce corruption. He was also known for his administrative ability in ordering the nation's finances. Trump's equivalent, his Tiberius moment, is to conduct a witch hunt on federal employees to the point of dismantling government itself and throwing into question the validity of western democracy as we know it. Tiberius was also paranoid. His power motives were more subtle than those of Donald Trump even if his methods were cruder. He was known to murder his political opponents. His withdrawal from public life would, in the long term, lessen the associations of his reign with the kind of political purges that might have cast a shadow over how he would be remembered in history. In today's language he would also have been described as a narcissist.

But there is a crucial missing component in these broadly comparable political scenarios. The power force that energises Trump is the American Christian Right. They are powerful because they can play on the vanity of a man obsessed with fame in such a way as to use that particular weakness to their own ends which is to put their interpretation of Christianity at the centre of government policy.[11] In other words, Trump is being 'played' by the Christians he flatters, even if what they believe they are doing is the work of God. So Trump becomes, in that sense, God's own agent. As such, he plays on, and epitomises, the cult of the individual in American politics. As a result of his particular way of rendering down the idea of sociality, all ideas of what might be called the truth, or wisdom, or righteousness in the arena of politics have been subsumed under the persona of Donald Trump. He epitomises what for many people, especially conservative evangelical and Catholic Christians, what it means to be American. Donald Trump is a perfect distillation of the Christian American Dream. We find an echo of this rendering down in the words of S.T. Coleridge, as they apply to Christianity and the Church: 'He who begins by loving Christianity, better than truth, will proceed by loving his own sect or church better than Christianity, and end in loving himself better than all.' [12] The Christian Right appears to have lost sight of truth and of the real nature of society and only sees itself reflected in the person of the secular leader they worship.

[11] Washington Post, June 13th, 2024

[12] S.T. Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection* in The Formation of A Manly Character, London: (Taylor & Hessey, 1825) p. 101 in Daniel W. Hardy, *God's Ways With The World: Thinking and Practising Christian Faith*, (T & T Clark Ltd. 1996) p.189

The theologian, Daniel Hardy builds on the Coleridge quotation to reveal, through a discussion of what he describes as 'intersubjectivity', (and referencing Kant's individualism) how human beings have diverted the quest for knowledge from God onto human beings and how this causes the ultimate disintegration of society. The human being, or the human subject, is then left with having to build his or her own edifice for building knowledge, or what might also be termed biblical wisdom, on the mutual (often erroneous) understanding gleaned from another subject, so that a false mutuality or interdependence replaces the single source of wisdom to be found in God alone. We see the same pattern emerging in the arena of American politics, as well as in emerging trends in Europe, today. Those who want power know that the individual has replaced the need for society. Furthermore, Trump also senses that God conforms to this 'Christian' world view, as the logo on the red cap seems to imply. So it is hardly surprising that Donald Trump who, in Hardy's line of thinking, sits at the bottom of the supply chain in regard to the ultimate locus of truth, which is the individual, has such immense appeal to this large section of the American public.

The question that theologians urgently need to unpick, then, lies in understanding to what extent God is actually using Donald Trump to awaken the American people to the urgency of their predicament, that the Christian Right has in fact detached itself from the wisdom that is only to be found in God and sought to find it in themselves with Donald Trump as the visible embodiment of that false truth. It has also detached itself from society as we have grown accustomed to thinking of it. Instead, we are left with a detached citadel, an echo chamber in which Trump's followers hear only the voice of their leader from within the citadel of their collective political mind. Allowing for the fact that Hardy limits his discussion to the two main areas that impeded genuine sociality at his time of writing; on the one hand 'a warring conflict of interests' and, on the other 'a system of central planning of society by the state'[13]it is probably safe to assume that he would have seen the emperor worship of Donald Trump as equally threatening, given its direct and conscious appeal to the cult of the individual, to the way Trump is already playing into specific interests, and to how American society is ordered.

The leadership and authority vacuum which Americans now experience, along with the threat it poses to the rest of the free world, is, for those of us who do not live in the US, also one of our own making. We get the politicians we deserve – 'full of passionate intensity, or 'lacking in all conviction' as the poet

[13] Hardy, *God's Ways With the World*, p.173

Yeats would be saying.[14] The first part of the Isaiah prophecies warns of the dangers inherent in political apathy and in our tendency to become infatuated with charismatic leaders. (Is. 6:9) We, like the people the prophet describes, are becoming detached from our moorings when it comes to hearing Wisdom as the regenerative force of the Holy Spirit, leading into good sense and wise governance. We are losing sight of what Hardy would describe as the particular transcendent nature of sociality itself. We no longer 'hear,' so we no longer 'understand' in the deepest sense. This suggests that we all, as the body of Christ, need to take responsibility for Christians who see Donald Trump as a 'saviour' and ask ourselves if God is at work in the present world situation, to bring us, and not just other Christians, to our senses.

The prophet Isaiah is told that he will be speaking to a people who have inured themselves to obvious good sense and that they are beyond the point of recall, beyond hope. God, it seems, is partly responsible for this. God has allowed the situation to be as it is and in doing so obliges the people to come to terms with the fact that it is they who must change, or they will get the leaders they deserve. Being dulled to the things which make for life; life in community, life in relationships, life in God, they are set to be dominated by individuals whose primary agenda is self-gratification, specifically the gratification afforded by power.

Power is not something easily acquired. The need for it will have been realised from a very early age in the life of the one holding it, especially if they are a narcissist. The narcissist becomes what he or she is because they must justify their very existence to an often narcissistic parent. In Donald Trump's case, that parent was his father who exercised a mesmeric and at times cruel hold on both his sons. It was a case of fight for your place in a power orientated and wealthy family, or die. Donald fought. His brother, Freddy, literally died.[15] Donald learned early, from his relationship with his father, that for the narcissist anyone, and everyone, is expendable when it comes to achieving your desired ends. But for this to be possible you have no choice but to cultivate a kind of wilful ignorance in regard to how your behaviour impacts on other people and in regard to morality itself. You will learn, from necessity, that the way you project yourself will be the substance of your power. You will also learn that your charisma is seductive to those who have abrogated their responsibility for the calibre of leadership and politics of the times. This is why the Christian Right has, ironically, such a hold on politics in America. Wearing the MAGA cap obviates

[14] W.B. Yeats 'The Second Coming'

[15] Mary L. Trump, *Too Much and Never Enough: How my family created the world's most dangerous man* (Simon & Schuster, 2020)

the need for thinking about the long term, and taking responsibility for the consequences of its appeal, consequences that some are already beginning to feel at home and which, judging by the uptick in military spending, the rest of the world as a whole is becoming at times dangerously alert to.

Narcissists who want power generally have little of substance to offer the people over whom they will exercise it. They will fudge or avoid interviews, or simply manipulate the conversation, to the point of outright intimidation of leaders they hope to subdue. They will also, in order to avoid issues that are life determining for the nation, either because they do not know what to say or do, or because their agenda is fixed solely on their own power gaining priorities, or because they believe (often rightly) that their own luminous personality will persuade everyone that problems are easily solvable, or do not exist at all, invent their policies according to the perceived needs of the moment. In regard to the narcissist leader, behind all this lies the thinly disguised fact that they care nothing at all about the nation. But, as in the case of Donald Trump, their power is handed to them by a nation of mostly Christian believers. Not surprisingly, they see in Donald Trump a saviour who is the product of their own fantasy.

A religion that has ceased to question itself and its motives, as well as how it lives out its belief, is no more than a comforting and dangerous fantasy. Anything or anyone can be projected onto it, or vice versa, the two projections being simultaneously interchangeable, especially when they both align with a shared political agenda. This suggests that there is an urgent need for thinking Christians to take responsibility for the Christian Right by standing firmly and unequivocally against it, not only in the way the Christian Right in America holds the faith, but by reaching for an understanding of the politics of the day that comes with a biblical interpretation of Wisdom. Wisdom, the bible teaches, 'takes her stand at the crossroads'. So it is to all of us that Wisdom calls, inviting us to understand what it is to be shrewd…what it is to have sense.' (Prov. 8:2,4,5) But she waits to be invited. She does not impose. The equivalent way of saying this might be to say that the duty of all Christians is to examine prayerfully the politics of the day, so as to reveal and refute what we are coming to see, in the emperor worship of Donald Trump, as the idolatry of our times. God seems to have allowed this to happen and yet now, as in the time of the prophecy of Isaiah, he is asking 'Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?' The question is a rhetorical one, of course. But it is also a kind of wake-up call to the dull of hearing and understanding, as well as to all Christians. As in the time of Isaiah, it invites us to engage according to the means at our disposal, whether intellectual, spiritual, financial or practical, in resisting this, the evil of our times.

The Relevance of David Jenkins' Theology Today

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Abstract

This article is an attempt to rehabilitate David Jenkins as a theologian whose methodology and concerns have much to teach us today. Four particular areas of his thought are identified, each of which can and should inform theologians today. Jenkins was in many respects an orthodox believer but he married this with a concern to keep theology within the intellectual mainstream and in dialogue with other disciplines. All of which is applied to the Church too. The Church is not to exist in splendid isolation but its whole raison d'etre lies in its interaction with wider society.

It would be difficult to think of a theologian and bishop who had a higher profile than did David Jenkins in the 1980's. He appeared on the front of Private Eye and was represented in a Spitting Image puppet. He was the first theologian since John Robinson and *Honest to God* who managed to get the wider nation talking about the nature of belief. Jenkins' pronouncements on the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection were greeted by some with acclamation, whereas for others they were anathema. Likewise, his political involvements, particularly in the 1984 miners' strike, were received with approval and opprobrium in equal measure. As a turbulent priest he earned Margaret Thatcher's soubriquet as a "cuckoo in the nest". Yet today he is an all but forgotten figure, a footnote even in works of Anglican social theology, particularly the field in which he belongs. My overall contention is that Jenkins, through his very public career and the theology which informed it, offers a theological methodology together with particular insights

and questions which need to be heard again today. Jenkins' open, questioning approach, whilst being rooted in orthodox Christian faith, continues to provoke.

Jenkins was accused either of undermining faith or of straying beyond theological boundaries into the world of politics and public affairs. In the first case I will argue that rather than undermining faith he undermined faithlessness; that is the lazy assumption that all Christians should unquestioningly accept the given propositions of the Christian faith. Rather, faith for Jenkins, and properly for Christians today, must involve a critical pursuit of truth in which no questions are barred and where faith is itself found to be unsettling: for Jenkins, God is 'the Disturber'. On the accusation that he strays beyond the proper bounds of theology and religion, in Jenkins' eyes there are no such boundaries, since we are dealing with the universal God for whom everything is God's concern.

Hence, David Jenkins was a public theologian in two senses: he believed that the theological task must be related to issues of public concern, whether personal or social, but he was also a public theologian insofar as he was, perhaps more than any other theologian of his time, in the spotlight of publicity and political controversy. My overall contention is that Jenkins, through his very public career and the theology which informed it, offers a theological methodology together with particular insights and questions, which need to be heard again. Jenkins' open, questioning approach, whilst being rooted in orthodox Christian faith, continues to provoke.

In particular I believe that there are four ingredients of his thought of which we can make creative use today:

Firstly, he holds the necessity of an undergirding faith which is secure enough to withstand continual examination, whilst open to embracing change and development. Jenkins later refines the Chalcedonian Definition, which was his starting point in his Bampton Lectures of 1966, into a simple credal statement: 'God is. He is as he is in Jesus. So there is hope'.[16] In turn this can be interpreted as a fundamental 'pattern' or 'shape' which gives both depth and resonance to Christian belief. Jenkins thus provides Christian believers and thinkers today with a lesson in profound simplicity which allows for both development and exposition and leaves the way open for exploration and new interpretation. He provides a form of *via media* between foundationalism, in which there is a unified understanding of truth offering complete certainty, and a coherentism in which all knowledge is relative, and does so by offering an essential but dynamic Christology which gives a pattern or shape to faith, whilst not circumscribing it

[16] David E. Jenkins, *God, Jesus and Life in the Spirit* (London: SCM Press, 1988), p. 25.

in any way; not pinning it down any more than, in Jenkins' phrase, we can pin God down.

Secondly, he champions public theology. For Jenkins all theology needs to be engaged with life, both personal and structural. This will be affirmed by most public theologians today, but there is a natural tendency to wish to categorise theologians, with public or political theology as branches of a bigger tree. Jenkins makes it central because for him engagement in the secular world belongs to the essence of faith. There is no faith without foundation but nor is there faith without application, so all true theology is public theology. This is a two-edged statement. On the one hand it demands a theology which speaks beyond the academy and here Jenkins' embrace of an adapted liberation theology is central, but on the other hand it is also about the nature of theology itself. Jenkins' theology is self-aware and a precursor of theologies which take into account context and underlying power dynamics.

Thirdly, Jenkins recognises the latent but ubiquitous power dynamic that underlies institutional and personal life. Though this is now widely recognised, not least in theological study, Jenkins brings his particular experience at the World Council of Churches (1969-73) where his task might be summed up as that of seeking and analysing the power dynamics at work there, with the result that for him theology and the Church are as suspect as the rest of society. In his time at the WCC he identified many of the instances of oppression that continue to preoccupy us. Though there are many occasions when Jenkins gives the Church short shrift, for him it still remains the essential vehicle for a conscious understanding of God's work in the world. But it can only be this through an awareness of the latent distortions, oppressions and limitations that it shares with wider society. We learn from Jenkins that this is a continuing question of identification and action; that oppression has many forms and guises which need unmasking.

Fourthly, though Jenkins would not usually be seen as a spiritual theologian, he can only be properly understood as a theologian if we recognise that for him theology and spirituality are intrinsically linked. So Jenkins uses the metaphor of 'the structured space' as the meeting place between God and humanity. This enables him to square the circle of divine providence and historical contingency. But more that than, it implies a general rule for theology, one which again needs continual reiteration, that theology without spirituality is incomplete as is spirituality without theology. Jenkins proves to be an advocate and exemplar of the essential link between theology and spirituality which Mark McIntosh finds lacking when too often 'theology without spirituality becomes

ever more methodologically refined but unable to know or speak of the very mysteries at the heart of Christianity, and spirituality without theology becomes rootless, easily hijacked by individualistic consumerism'.[17] Jenkins' approach can only be understood if we discern its contemplative undergirding in which, as Jenkins puts it, 'the mystery of being human flows into the mystery of God'.[18] Any practical theology, such as practised by Jenkins, depends on this rootedness and openness to God for its empowerment.

In many ways Jenkins' theological contribution was of necessity ephemeral. His theology was related to the presenting issues of his time. Nonetheless we can see in him a way of doing theology which continues to be important. For Jenkins theology was no mere academic exercise but was a template for action and a way of being in the world. It was also essentially experimental, in accord with his linking of theology to science. For him their methods were akin in many ways. Both science and theology are concerned to take evidence, analyse it and form hypotheses which are both are prepared to amend or drop these if a more plausible theory comes along.

God's activity cannot be captured once and for all at a single moment in time. It is for Jenkins a process with a controlling repeating pattern working both 'within' and contingently as God's transcendence in the midst Again and again, Jenkins brings us back to the dynamic pattern of God's working in history, a pattern which prevents history collapsing into meaninglessness, one which can give shape and purpose to our lives. God is not at work in some parallel 'spiritual' universe, but here and now in the realities of life where we can live out a real engaged spirituality, which is intrinsically linked to the whole gamut of life - social, political and economic. We need, as Jenkins puts it, a 'radical spirituality and a radical politics'. They belong together and Jenkins' special contribution to theology is his insistence on this and his realisation of it. It is this understanding above all that he brings to our contemporary theological world, and when articulated by one who was himself 'in the midst' of events, this has its particular significance.

Elaine Graham comments on Jenkins, that he is a 'creature of the borderlands, inhabiting both worlds as a mediator'.[19] From the borderlands, from the marginal, new insights arise and creative work happens. But being on the borderlands is a reflection of the Christ who, in Bonhoeffer's words, 'lets himself

[17] Mark A. McIntosh, *Mystical Theology: The Integrity of Spirituality and Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), p.10.
[18] David E. Jenkins, *The Calling of a Cuckoo* (London: Continuum, 2002), p. 172.
[19] Elaine Graham, *Apologetics without Apology* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2017) p. 55.

be pushed out of the world onto the cross'.[20] But, paradoxically, as Bonhoeffer says, God 'must be recognised at the centre of life'.[21] All Jenkins' thought corroborates this. His theology takes him to the borderlands, to the marginalised - striking miners, children with no shoes, ailing bus services, inner-city 'no go' areas - all very practical stuff, but it is just here where the God who is pushed out of the world and onto the cross is to be found. Here Christian doctrine is never simply theoretical but always practical and comes to life as *the* way of being in the world. This lends to theology today a freedom to look outward, and Jenkins is one who helped loose theology from its ecclesiastical shackles: 'If after all, Jesus is the Son of the God of the whole world - the whole universe - then any questions which trouble the human race must be substance and subject for Christians to wrestle with'.[22] Through the ongoing underlying pattern of divine personalness identified by Jenkins, we find the freedom to explore hitherto forbidden territory. So, for instance, Marcella Althaus-Reid in her 'indecent theology' moves into the area of liberation where women, the poor, and marginalised and those who 'love differently' are affirmed; or, Kwok Pui-lan, in her *Postcolonial Imagination*, in effect reiterates Jenkins' own thought when she suggests that mainstream theology grasp liberation theology's central option for the poor, and generate new insights for theological, social, political, and economic thinking, adding that it is ideally equipped to unmask 'unequal and oppressive economic, social, and political relations'[23] ; or Marika Rose, who argues that we need 'materialist theologies', theologies rewritten from the margins, from the position of 'Christianity's excluded, abjected and disavowed others'.[24] Jenkins' personal and applied theology underlines a common refrain throughout postmodern thought.

For Jenkins faith is not some fixed deposit but a dynamic and experienced reality found in the 'space' where God and universe, God and persons, come together. The pattern is both retrieved from the past, but also rediscovered and reinterpreted afresh in our situation, something which John Caputo for one, sees as essential if Christianity is to survive.[25] Thereby faith becomes a living and vibrant adventure, rather than a backward-looking and doomed attempt to return to the supposed certainties of yesteryear. Though Jenkins has a very ambivalent view of the Church, not least because it too often seems to cling to such illusory

[20] Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers* (London: SCM Press, 1967) p. 360.
[21] Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers*, p. 312.
[22] Jenkins and Jenkins, *Free to Believe* (BBC Books, 1991) p. 11.
[23] Kwok Pui-lan, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology* (London: SCM Press, 2005) p. 20.
[24] Marika Rose, *A Theology of Failure* (New York: Fordham, 2019) p. 164.
[25] '[T]he interpretative ground on which religion has stood for several millennia has shifted underneath its feet. This has resulted in a serious crisis' (John D. Caputo, *Hermeneutics: Facts and Interpretation in the Age of Information* (London: Penguin, 2018), p. 280).

certainties, nonetheless it has its central place insofar as it finds its appropriate 'shape'. That shape (or pattern) is the divine shape, and is uniquely mediated in the person of Jesus Christ, and it is one where, as in Christ, faith and action are entwined. This means a continual critical openness to the world's agenda, and in particular to the marginalised, all those who are left out or excluded. Although the Church lives partly within its own narratives (plural), it also lives within universal narratives, and it is at the interface between Church and world, theology and other disciplines, between faith and culture, that creativity and change come. Again, it is the borderland which is crucial, and this is where Jenkins stood, and his theology still stands. He bequeaths us a synthesis of theology and spirituality which issues in a way of being and practical action.

Science and Religion: Appropriate Bedfellows?

Author: Charles Stirling FRS, CChem, FRSC, FLSW (born 1930) is an Emeritus Professor of Chemistry, at the University of Sheffield. He was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry in 1967, and a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1986; and gave the Royal Institution Christmas Lectures in 1992. He describes himself in this way: "I have the record of an academic drifter. Having taken my 1st° Degree in chemistry at St Andrews and PhD in London my first job was at Porton Down. Next I had a fellowship at Edinburgh and my first proper job as a lecturer at Queens Belfast. Thereafter I had a Readership at Kings College London and my first professorship was at Bangor. I came to Sheffield University as a professor of organic chemistry in 1990 retiring in 1998. Since retiring I have worked on the public appreciation of science and chemistry in particular giving about 400lectures in schools and interest groups. For the last 25 years St Mark's has been my spiritual home and has kindly tolerated my rather radical views of contemporary Christianity as well as providing delightful music experience and a very Welcome social community."

A substantial problem in considering this pair is the consistency of science. Very few people for example would quarrel with Newton's laws of motion or the structure of DNA, but with religion opinions are very variable particularly for example about Jesus, ranging from the simple Galilean peasant to the great king

of heaven surrounded by angels and archangels up to a total score of 10,000 x 10,000.

Another problem is that of evidence. Science takes its stand from the direct observation of earthly happenings, such as measurement of the speed of light or the mass of the earth. These would be simple examples; these numbers being veritable by measurement and observation.

Religion is a totally different matter. There is no evidence for many of the claims that are made for religion. Just to take God for example, or eternal life or heaven or hell; whereas, on the contrary, there is plenty of evidence for the effect of love, for caring, for trustworthiness for ambition or for the effects of good relationships, while there is no direct evidence for the influence of any supernatural beings in our everyday lives. In my view there is no problem with positioning ourselves as carers and influences for good in society.

Christianity never seems to bother much with communication. Walk into any church just before a service and you may be fortunate if you are greeted, but then the service will start without any explanation using the vocabulary that the Ministers or Vicars will think it is quite normal for everyone present to be familiar with. When this is mentioned to officials, they recognise the problem but do nothing about it because it is a tough one.

Scientists in a sense have an analogous problem in that what they want to communicate again uses vocabulary which may be quite unfamiliar to the listener. The growth of tele Scientists has gone part of the way to deal with this problem but often they have to be in competition with popular shows.

As usual, vocabulary is absolutely vital and much more attention needs to be given to this problem for both scientists and religionists who, as mentioned earlier, are well placed side by side rather than in the same bed.

Richard Holloway, in his excellent book entitled ‘Doubts and Loves’ called attention to the fact that much of the Christianity communicated to the general public is about gloom, despair and sin instead of being uplifting and rejoicing. I doubt if most people are walking about with a load of sin on their shoulders and what they would look for in coming to a church would be uplift and the determination to imitate Jesus and his comments on everyday life, albeit made 2000 years ago.

It is really not at all surprising that Jesus could foretell his execution because a lot of what he said was in direct contrast to much of the current opinion of his time. With regard to science, much of the attempted rebuttal of scientific

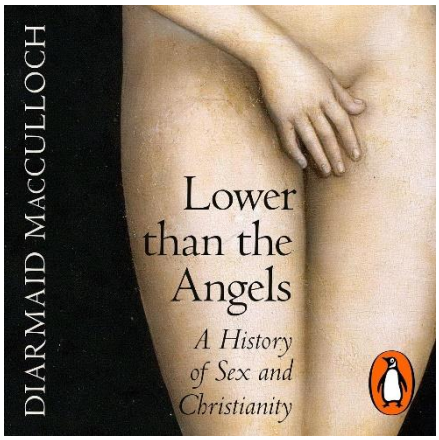
theories has been poorly shaped. Bishop Wilberforce could not put up with the theory of natural selection but his opposition was ineffectual even when facts made the situation clear.

It is really high time that these apparent enemies made their own useful contributions to society and that issues such as love, joy, hope and respect - not usually easily quantified by science - were respected for what they are. But it is also high time that understanding of the world in which we live was not dependent on dubious superstition but on the observation of facts. Religion of course must discard the repetitions of heaven and hell: the one being used to attract and the other to terrify the faithful in case they arrive there. This of course is extremely primitive and it is amazing how primitive beliefs and attitudes have persisted to the present day

Science does its best to be free from emotional constraints and reject what is perceived to be illogical and or unsupported by evidence. This makes it an unattractive bedfellow, where emotions like sympathy and brotherly love are appropriate in nearly all situations.

Book Review

Diarmaid MacCulloch: Lower than the Angels; *A History of Sex and Christianity* (London, Allen Lane, 2024).



Reviewed by: Hugh Bryant, MA, MRAeS, Dip.Theol.

(Reader in the Church in Wales). Hugh is a graduate of Oriel College, Oxford, where he studied Greats. He went on to become a solicitor specialising in Maritime Law.

This is an important and serious book. One might be tempted to liken it to a history or a museum which concentrates on a particular topic but ends up reflecting the wider history of society as a whole, seen through the prism of its view on the topic in which it specialises. For example, the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart is one of the best social history museums. It traces the social history of northern Europe since the 1880s, all seen through the prism of the history of the motorcar.

In the same way, Professor Sir Diarmaid MacCulloch traces the history and evolving theology of Christianity through the prism of its attitude to and practice of sex. It might have introduced a note of frivolity, or at least a contrived viewpoint, but if one reflects on the importance of the chosen prism, it is of the highest importance, albeit with joyful accents.

If man is made in the image of God, but God has no means of procreation, God's image will die out in a couple of generations. That matters. How we procreate, whom we procreate with, under what circumstances and subject to what rules, are all considerations of existential importance for the human race. The fact that there is also pleasure without procreation in relations between the sexes does not detract.

This large and wonderfully researched book goes through all those views, eras and collective understandings of sex which have affected Christianity since the time of the gospels, if not before – Saint Paul’s first and second letters to the Thessalonians are reckoned to be earliest, perhaps no more than 20 years after Jesus’ time on earth.

Nevertheless, one might say that this is all of merely historical importance and has no bearing on current affairs. Au contraire! In the churches of England and Wales, if no others, sex is still causing an enormous amount of difficulty and is highly topical. Sex is a live issue, within the C in W and the C of E. It is good to have a historical perspective.

Outside the church, people complain that the church is either preoccupied with sex to the exclusion of social and moral concerns, or that it promulgates standards of sexual behaviour which are wholly unrealistic in today's society. There are sexual issues involving men, women and those who ‘gender’ themselves as women and men, *mutatis mutandis*.

Against this background, MacCulloch is dauntless and fearless. He gives you what he believes to be the truth without in any way deferring to conventional or authorised views. This makes the book not only important and serious, but delightful to read.

I started putting Post-it notes wherever I found something noteworthy or an articulation of reality which was new to me. I flagged over 20 such purple passages! This is not to say that one should avoid this book on the grounds that it is too way-out to be sensible.

My feeling is that it is entirely the other way round, and that this is a book which everyone at the top of the churches needs to have read, and everyone in the pews will gain great wisdom and insight from learning the history of various evolving treatments of sexual issues and the place of women in society and the churches.

That having been said, MacCulloch seems to have a deliciously schoolboy view on matters sexual. There are no actual 'knob jokes' in this erudite tome; but I get the distinct impression that in many instances Professor MacCulloch is looking quizzically on, with one eyebrow raised, ready to smile at something scatological or bizarre. It is a happy blend of a schoolboy sense of humour and a mature, wise historian who has expertly marshalled all this raw and exciting material.

Some instances: in chapter 2, looking at the time before Jesus from 1500–300 BCE, 'Most significantly, for centuries the God of Israel enjoyed a wife, Asherah, a fruitful deity who had long been paired with leading west Asian male gods' (p.35) - and see what happened to her at p.40. Who knew? God was married.

Or as Christians in the first three centuries after Christ tended to suppress sexuality, by remaining virgins, or celibate, or otherwise ascetic, often as monks, some became eunuchs. The theologian Origen is reported to have undergone 'voluntary castration' (p.115); if one is in doubt about the mechanics of this ghastly exercise, see the picture on p.116, the caption to which reads, 'Adding later preoccupations to Origen's story, a late fifteenth-century French MS of the *Roman de la Rose* satirically [sic] depicts him emasculating himself to share a bed with nuns without arousing suspicion….'

There is a fascinating account of the origins of Christian marriage; the uneasy relationship between the church and the Song of Songs, and the implausible explanation of it as a metaphor for Christ's love for his 'bride', the church.

Regarding mechanisms, a line is traced from Adam and Eve, necessarily incestuous, through King David's polygamy - MacCulloch prefers the more precise word 'polygyny' (multiple women, as against multiple marriages) - to monogamy and divorce, and the 'marriage debt' hypothesised by St Paul in 1 Cor. 11 and Ephesians 5.

I have not encountered any other author who has adopted this fascinating viewpoint, drawing out the sexual elements in histories which one thought to be completely familiar - but previously without any mention of sex. MacCulloch shows, time and again, how much we were missing. It is a book to revisit and dip into - nearly every page contains insights and intriguing delights.

Each era - Henry VIII, Reformation, Enlightenment, Victorian revival and Tractarians, colonisation, missionaries, the period from 1900 described as 'A Century of Contraception'; Mrs Whitehouse - all are looked at as contexts for sex and the sexes.

For instance, the story of the Mothers' Union and its early Ugandan branch is a revealing and completely unexpected picture of colonial life (p.437-8).

In relation to the Oxford Movement, the 'Tractarians' of the mid-1800s, 'The self-absorbed single-sex culture of university life in Oxford inevitably drew in leading personalities of homosexual orientation, notably the vicar of the University Church, John Henry Newman.' (Fortunately this did not prevent Newman from being canonised as a saint by the Roman Catholic Church in 2019).

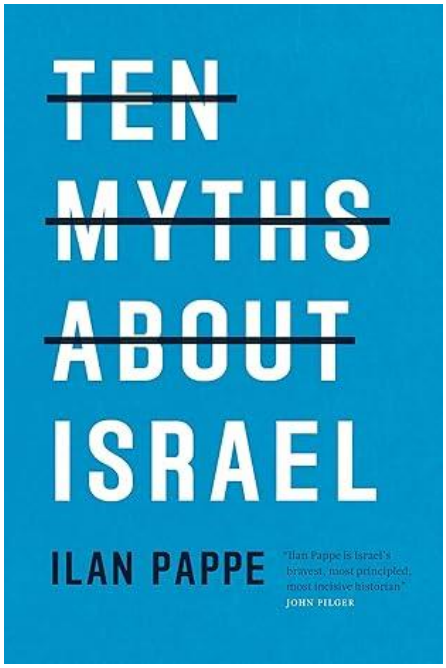
How different it will be for today's school students to refer to MacCulloch and read about all the bits which for my generation were ignored, glossed over or worse, bowdlerised.

In the Classics Lower VI we read the 'Cena Trimalchionis' (Trimalchio's Banquet) by Petronius, the Emperor Nero's 'arbiter elegantiae' - a sort of Roman influencer, in today's terms. It wasn't until we saw Fellini's 'Satyricon' that we saw the sexy bits, such as naked maidens emerging from pies. No such short change if you read MacCulloch, *De Generibus et Libidine.*

Book Review

Llan Pappe: 10 myths about Israel (London: Verso Books, 2017)

Reviewed by: Marc James is from a South Wales Valleys family and is passionate about Social Justice. He campaigns with Kairos UK for Palestinian rights and is a member of their Theology Group. A member of St Marks and resident in Sheffield since 1991, Marc is retired. Marc has in turn held professional roles in: Librarianship, Organisational Development, Data Management, Organisational Security, and he has worked for the MoD and DWP. Marc is an experienced Coach and has worked with an NHS Mental Health team coaching patients seeking employment; he now volunteers as a Therapeutic Listener. Marc is a Companion of the Northumbria Community as well as a runner, folk dancer and a Welsh language learner. He has a BA (Hons) Modern English and History (Birmingham) and an MSc in Information Systems (Hallam).



Pappe presents an analysis of ten 'myths', or what some see as historical truths about Jewish settlement in Palestine pre-1948 and the state of Israel's history since. It concentrates on the period 1919 to the present; it was written in 2018.

Pappe's mission is to apply evidence-based academic historical studies to challenge narratives propagated in support of Israeli government actions in the past and into the present. The mythical narratives propagated by Israeli politicians ignore complexity, historical facts and in some cases substitute false narrative directly contradicting fact. Israeli politicians promoting political Zionism have created myths aimed at upholding Israel's position internationally; as a Liberal democracy, within final fixed borders, willing to create a fair settlement of territory with Palestinians. The myths are tackled in historical chronological order, as used in turn by Zionists in Europe to promote settlement, in Mandate Palestine by the Jewish national leadership, in 1948 when the state of Israel was established, and in wars by Israelis politicians and their allies ever since.

The delineation of each myth is lucid and evidence that the author is both an expert academic and a teacher able to engage a wider than academic audience. No words are wasted in tackling: *1 Palestine was an empty land, 2 The Jews Were a People without a Land, 3 Zionism is Judaism, 4 Zionism is not Colonialism, 5 The Palestinians Voluntarily Left their Homeland in 1948, 6 The June 1967 was a War of 'No Choice', 7 Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East, 8 The Oslo Mythologies, 9 the Gaza Mythologies*.

Debunking each myth and establishing a counter narrative, has been shoehorned into 111 pages in 10 short chapters. Who is the debunker? Pappe, now a professor at Exeter,[i] first gained an international reputation as one of the generation of New Historians in Israel.[ii] Pappe could have used impeccable 'Sabra'[iii] credentials for a career inside Israel. However, Pappe's perspective derives from an authentic Jewish socialism never fully subverted to nationalism which has plagued mainstream Zionist politicians claiming centre left credentials. Pappe's early study was on Palestinian culture and history through family dynasties, [iv] so when Isreal's archives of the end of the Mandate period and the formation of the State of Israel were declassified, Pappe was one of the young historians to mine the material. The results of Pappe's analysis supported the by then more widely known Palestinian experience of forced population removal. His findings, published as the 'Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine',[v] and forming a chapter in this book, are widely accepted by historians outside Israel, but are not accepted by most historians with Israeli institutional appointments.

In each chapter, Pappe provides a narrative voice that is not hectoring and is sometimes very funny. His lucidity of narrative does not over simplify social and political currents. However, this relies on a reader having background knowledge of some pre and post Israeli state history, which is the profile of the most likely reader. What lifts this text way above mundane simplification,

however, is the accuracy of the outline given and Pappe's linking of his interpretation with widely accepted research by a range of renowned historians through footnotes. That said, these footnotes could have been expanded to give a clearer bridge to the research.

For Christians, Pappe, a secular Jew, provides in his first two chapters a very useful introduction to the way in which Christian ideologies and theologies were applied in the ninetieth and early twentieth century to thinking about Jews. This is set in the context of European ideological nationalism, and a political hyper focus on the 'Jewish Question' or Jewish national identity, and its corollary, a 'home land'. In chapter three is a highly structured description of all the religious versions of Judaism that have not accepted Zionism as Judaism. In contrast Pappe describe all the ways the Bible has been used by atheist Zionist thinkers and Israeli politicians to support land appropriation. Pappe details how, before nineteenth century secular Zionism, the Bible was never looked upon, or relied on by Jews, as free standing factual history. Pappe does not point out that Christians have been falling for this fallacy for a long time!

What is missing from the myth-busting in chapter two, *Zionism is Judaism*, is any treatment of post-1948 Israeli-Jewish religious identification with this proposition. The inception of Israeli religious Zionism well after the state was founded, is often linked back to Rabi Abraham Kook[vi] in pre-state Palestine. This is a real omission in that this conservative religious Zionism provides the supporting ideology for Gush Emunim,[vii] the leading Settler movement.[viii]

In the chapter on the Oslo Accord [ix] and subsequent Peace Process, Pappe shows how, in 1991, the new Israeli Labour government was spurred to engage on a Palestinian resolution with the US. The US started negotiations with Arab nations on an Arab-Israeli reconciliation process without initially involving Israelis. Pappe demonstrates how Israel used the Oslo Accord (1993) in subsequent Peace Process negotiations to demand a partition of the land in such a way that: 'Israel would decide not only how much territory it would concede but what would happen in the territory it left behind' (p.101).

This permanent Israeli control of a Palestinian State would include: no right of return to the state of Palestinian refugees; permanent, extensive Israeli Settlements; Israeli determination of what could happen in local areas; no Palestinian capital in East Jerusalem; and no Palestinians with responsibility for policing the agreement. Pappe sees the failure to agree this outline at Camp David in 2000 as a trap avoided rather than a missed opportunity for establishing peace.

Given recent history, the chapter on Gaza is hugely relevant for seeing the origins of the current war, which Pappe calls out as an ongoing Genocide with a forensically detailed argument. Pappe traces the emergence of Hamas and its rise in Gaza, based on seemingly genuine popular support, to the Intifadas, or civil actions by Palestinians against occupation and Israel's support for what they saw as religious opposition to the secular Palestinian party of opposition to Israeli rule. Once, in the early 2000s, Israel's government had come to see Hamas had developed into a popular movement, a decision to control the Palestinian population in Gaza from *outside* the strip was made by Ariel Sharon's government.[x] The necessary removal of Jewish settlers from what was never seen as part of a Greater Israel was promoted as unprompted peace making. Israel's annexing of more than half of the West Bank in subsequent years for a Greater Israel, having shown its 'peace' credentials over Gaza settlements, was tacitly ignored by the engaged Quartet (UN, US, Russia, EU).

The *external* control of the population of Gaza then became, Pappe claims, an ongoing experiment. Writing in 2018 with great precision, he describes a repeated pattern of how Hamas attacks (he cites firing rockets) 'justifies' a further systemic and overwhelming attack on the infrastructure of civil existence in Gaza, knowing that this will, in time, initiate another attack. Pappe names this systemic attrition 'incremental genocide'.[xi] Pappe (writing in 2018) was in no way condoning Hamas; he points to their theocratic fundamentalism and lethal actions against those they see as political rivals. However, he places them as a resistance movement with popular support. He makes a well-argued case that, at the present time, Hamas is more representative of Palestinian hope for an end to oppression and a more equal share of the land than the secular Fatah Palestinian Leadership in the West Bank. Pappe claims Fatah, secular and western focussed, has benefited by collaborating with Israel and connives in establishing a future Palestinian State that would be so limited as to be unbelievable.

The cumulative result of examining each historical focus as set out in these chapters is the 'sighting' of the underlying Zionist ambitions of contemporary politicians to acquire and settle all the territory of the Biblical Holy Land as a 'self-evident destiny'. This is no conspiracy theory being revealed but the result of Pappe's careful dissection of the interplay of Israel's contingent actions in relationships with its neighbours, its guarantor - the US and the EU- *and* the political ambitions of Israel's leaders.

In Pappe's last chapter, *The Settler Colonial State of Israel in the Twenty-First Century,* Israel is placed in this category. Pappe stresses two systemic attitudes applied to Palestinians by Zionists: their interests are in opposition to

those of Jews; and they can be presented - domestically and internationally- as less deserving of consideration for their rights. Pappe is not suggesting Israel is unique in applying this thinking but shows it aligns with all examples of European Settler Colonialism.

Notes

[i] https://experts.exeter.ac.uk/545-ilan-pappe/about

[ii] Benny Morris in 1988 referred to himself, Pappe, Avi Schlaim and Simha Flapan in this way to distinguish their challenge to Israeli foundational myths working with newly declassified British and Israeli government sources https://www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/atc/3280.html

[iii] A sabra is a Jew born in Israel, i.e. a core member of society. Pappe's parents were Ashkenazi European immigrants to Israel. Pappe served in the IDF in the Golan in the Yom Kippur War on 1973.

[iv] The Aristocracy: The Husaynis; A Political Biography (Jerusalem: Mossad Byalik, (Hebrew), 2003).

[v] The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine (London and New York: Oneworld, 2006). ISBN 1-85168-467-0

[vi] See https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/rabbi-abraham-isaac-kook-father-of-militant-messianic-zionism/

[vii] See https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/gush-emunim/

[viii] For a very readable account of the nexus of Settler ontology and conservative religious Zionism see; Gorenberg, Gershom. 2007. The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of the Settlements 1967-1977. ?. Holt (Macmillan)

[ix] Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oslo_Accords
The Oslo Accords are a pair of interim agreements between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO): the Oslo I Accord, signed in Washington, D.C., in 1993;[1] and the Oslo II Accord, signed in Taba, Egypt, in 1995.[2] They marked the start of the Oslo process, a peace process aimed at achieving a peace treaty based on Resolution 242 and Resolution 338 of the United Nations Security Council.

[x] On page 130 Pappe acknowledges his earlier work with Noam Chomsky on Gaza (Chomsky, Noam, Pappe, Ilan. 2011. Crisis in Gaza; Reflections on Israel's War Against the Palestinians. London/Penguin) and says he has changed from using the term 'war' on the Palestinians to incremental genocide. ..

[xi] See above note.

New acquistions into the Church Library

New acquisitions from 29/9/24 to 12/6/25.

1. Coldstream Catherine – My Years as a Nun N
2. Archbishop of Canterbury Report – Faith in the City K
3. Worthen Jeremy – Responding to God's Call F
4. Oord T/Fuller T – God After Deconstruction F
5. Alison James – Undergoing God P
6. Fife J/Gilo – Letters to a Broken Church N
7. Maunder Chris – Mary, Founder of Christianity E
8. Oord Thomas Jay – God Can't F
9. Tully Mark – An Investigation into the Lives of Jesus C
10. Coles Rev Richard – The Madness of Grief N
11. Hulme Jay – The Backwater Sermons Poems Q
12. Waxman Dov – The Israel-Palestinian Conflict H
13. Garmus Bonnie – Lessons in Chemistry P
14. Gooder Paula – The Parables B
15. Wynnejones Pat – Children, Death & Bereavement J
16. Mannix Kathryn – With the End in Mind M
17. Femor Patrick Leigh – A Time to Keep Silence F
18. Barlow Frank – Thomas Beckett D
19. MacGregor – The Image of Christ Q
20. Anderson Jeff, Maddox Mike - Graphic Bible A
21. Haig Matt - The Midnight Library O
22. Maguire Patrick and Pogrund Gabriel – Get In K
23. France-Williams A.D.A. – Ghost Ship K
24. Ritchie Hannah – Not the End of the World K
25. Boas Simon – A Beginner's Guide to Dying J
26. McGuire Bill – Hothouse Earth K
27. Davies P, Brooke G, Callaway P – The Complete World of the Dead Sea Scrolls A