

experience and administration. This time, however, he concentrates solely on baptism as set forth in the 1549 and 1552 Prayer Books. Jeanes once again observes how Cranmer's service is designed to solicit the people's response of faith.

It is difficult to know how to interact with this book. As mentioned above, it is fairly inaccessible and not argumentatively clear. It is not best categorised as an historical study, for, though Jeanes is attentive to historical influences and sources, he does not give readers much insight into the times and circumstances of these. Nor is the book conceptual; while aware of the issues, Jeanes is a bit brisk when it comes to theological and philosophical analysis. The work is perhaps best understood as a documentary study. The author is most often concerned with establishing the sources and simply highlighting their contents. Much of the synthesis and understanding are left to the reader.

Signs of God's Promise is thus a resource that can be consulted with benefit by those interested in which texts are important for an understanding Cranmer's sacramentology. Jeanes has provided readers with an authoritative outline of the key documents. After directing our attention to those key sources, he constructs the documentary development of Cranmer's thought and liturgies. But, as most of the energy is directed toward mere documentation, the burden falls on readers of gaining a substantial grasp of their theological, liturgical and historical significance.

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The Suffering of the Impassible God: The Dialectics of Patristic Thought, Paul L. Gavrilyuk. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. xii + 210 pages, £23.00, ISBN: 0-19-9297-11-8

This stimulating volume explores several Christological controversies in order to defend the patristic consensus on divine impassibility against its contemporary detractors. More specifically, Gavrilyuk aims to show that what he calls the 'Theory of Theology's Fall into Hellenistic Philosophy' in relation to divine impassibility is mistaken.

He outlines the theory in five points:

(1) divine impassibility is an attribute of God in Greek and Hellenistic philosophy; (2) divine impassibility was adopted by the early Fathers uncritically from the philosophers; (3) divine impassibility does not leave room for any sound account of divine emotions and divine involvement in history, as attested in the Bible; (4) divine impassibility is incompatible with the revelation of the suffering God in Jesus Christ; (5) the latter fact was recognized by a minority group of theologians who affirmed that God is passible, going against the majority opinion (5, 176).

In chapter one, he tackles points 1 and 2 by arguing that they misrepresent both the Greek philosophers and the Scriptures. The Epicureans, Stoics, and Middle Platonists held to diverse and conflicting accounts of the divine nature, whilst the Bible contains material that points in the direction of divine impassibility as well as texts that ascribe emotions to God by virtue of anthropopathism. In chapter two, he addresses points 2 and 3, demonstrating that in patristic thought impassibility serves to distance the Creator God from the all too passible gods of pagan mythology, that it is an apophatic qualifier safeguarding God's divinity and transcendence, and that it is consistent with certain carefully nuanced, emotionally coloured characteristics such as love, mercy, compassion, and even anger. Underlying each of these is the biblical Creator-creature distinction.

The heart of the book is chapters three to six, where Gavrilyuk refutes points 4 to 5 of the Fall Thesis by examining various Christological controversies: Docetism in the second century, Patripassianism in the third, Arianism in the fourth, and Nestorianism in the fifth. He plausibly argues that at the heart of each of the controversies was the issue of the impassibility of God, and his relation to the passible world of creatures. Against the first three errors, the fathers maintained that in the incarnation the Word participated fully in the human experiences of birth, suffering and death; the Father did not become incarnate, nor did he suffer; and the Word who became incarnate was coequal with God, and not a passible inferior to the impassible High God. However, a full conceptual analysis of how the impassible God was able to suffer in the flesh awaited Cyril's of Alexandria's response to the Nestorian controversy.

Following Theodore of Mopsuestia, and in order to protect divine impassibility, Nestorius argued that in the incarnate Christ there were

two subjects: one in the form of God, who was impassible, and one in the form of a slave, who was passible. The Creator-creature distinction must govern the relationship of Christ's divine and human natures. Against this, Cyril maintained the unity of the incarnate Word: the one in the form of God remained the same one as he humbled himself to take on the form of a slave. The impassible Word emptied himself when he took on flesh, and in his flesh (and his rational soul) he suffered. Nevertheless, he remained fully divine, and in his divine nature remained impassible throughout the incarnation: the bare Word could not suffer, yet as a man he did. The presence of the Word meant that unlike all other human suffering, his was always freely chosen, and it was never overwhelming: Christ endured suffering out of compassion for the human race and conquered it. His suffering was never less than human, but it was never merely human. The incarnate Word suffered impassibly.

Throughout, Gavrilyuk's arguments are careful and nuanced, and he commands an impressive range of primary texts and secondary scholarship. Nevertheless, the elegance of his prose, and the clarity of his exposition mean that the argument is never hard to follow.

For a full dogmatic account of the issue of God's (im)passibility, more engagement with the biblical text would be required, particularly given the importance of Scriptural interpretation for the Fathers themselves. Gavrilyuk does outline Cyril's use of his favourite text, Philippians 2:5-11 and shows its relevance for the issue at hand, but he does not offer a full evaluation of whether the text can sustain the weight of demonstrating divine impassibility in the incarnation.

In chapter one, as we have seen, he argues that the Scriptures contain anti-anthropomorphic and anti-anthropopathic tendencies alongside descriptions of God's emotions. To do this, he lists 'an imposing number of biblical passages that present conflicting views about divine (im)passibility and (im)mutability' (38), rightly arguing that these texts must be interpreted canonically, as a coherent whole. In a fascinating argument, he demonstrates how the LXX has a tendency towards anti-anthropopathic and anti-anthropomorphic translations of some (though not all) of the key Hebrew texts that predicate emotions and actions of God such as grief and repentance. He then examines the contribution of Philo, a pre-Christian Jewish exegete who argued for divine impassibility, and for whom 'there are

two principal positions laid down with respect to the great cause of all things: one that God is not as a man [Num. 23:19; cf. Hos. 11:9]; the other that God is as a man [Deut. 8:5] (43, quoting *Quod deus sit immutabilis* 53). Thus, he claims to demonstrate that there is a tendency away from anthropomorphism and anthropopathism *within* pre-Christian Judaism, and that this tendency in the fathers is therefore not solely due to Hellenistic influence.

However, although this reviewer is persuaded that the Scriptures teach divine impassibility, Gavriilyuk fails to sustain his case fully. In order to do so, he would have needed not simply to list 'conflicting' texts, and assert their canonical coherence, but also to have exegeted at least some of them, and demonstrated that an impassibilist integration provides the most coherent account of the data. In dealing with the LXX, he also would need to address the possibilities that in their anti-anthropopathic tendencies, the translators were motivated by an alien philosophical framework brought to the Scriptures rather than by Scripture itself, and that the fathers, who worked from the LXX rather than the Hebrew original, were not misled into a doctrine of divine impassibility by the translation they were using, and that if they had had access to the text we now have, they would have been theopaschites.

Nevertheless, within the confines of a study that is primarily historical rather than exegetical and doctrinal, Gavriilyuk succeeds admirably in defending the fathers from the charge that their God was held captive by alien philosophical constraints, and in showing the importance of Cyril's affirmation that the Word suffered impassibly in the flesh he had assumed.

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Reforming or Conforming? Post-Conservative Evangelicals and the Emerging Church, Gary L. W. Johnson and Ronald N. Gleason, eds. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008. 300 pages, \$20.00, ISBN: 978-1-4335-0118-0 (ISBN-10 1-4335-0118-X)

This book is a collection of twelve essays, plus an introduction by