

BOOK REVIEW

Beyond Old and New Perspectives on Paul Reflections on the Work of Douglas Campbell

Chris Tilling (Ed.)

Cascade Books, Eugene Oregon, 2014, 341p,

ISBN: 13: 978-1-62564-173-1, USD 33.30

The volume edited by Chris Tilling contains 15 studies about the Pauline vision on the justification of the first eight chapters from the Epistle to Romans. Old and new is referring to the way in which Protestant theology perceive the salvation problem by its representatives: Luther, Calvin and Melancton, following the anti-Judaic line of salvation by faith. The book presents discussion developed during two conferences in Great Britain (at King's College and St. Mellitus College) and USA (Duke University) in 2011 and respectively in 2012, which deepen Professor Douglas Campbell's claims ('thesis').

The first part of the volume contains eight studies from the sphere of Systematic and Historical Theology, in which six professors remake the way of incomplete understanding of Pauline argumentation regarding the justification, starting from now to the IVth century. The retrospection of receiving the teaching to correcting/justifying in the Lutheran Protestantism is pertinently achieved by A.J. Torrance and G. Tomlin, after which appears the excursus made by Professor Campbell who straightens the research to the historical roots, by the Arian controversy from the IVth century. Despite the fact, that the research goes to 'old' we have in the studies of Chris Tilling, J. Warren Smith and David Hilborn the 'newly' patristic demonstrated by the appeal to the writings of Athanasius the Great and Cyril of Alexandria. The studies of the renowned professors re-discover for the western Theology the patristic interpretation, in a Socratic (or heuristic) conversation, similar to the discussion between the master and the disciple. That's why, even the book's structure betray a research with forming tendency, because at the end of each study Professor Campbell clears some presuppositions and concepts deviated from the analysed confessional document which is analysed: the Theology volume '*The Deliverance of God*' (Eerdmans, Grand Rapid, 2009).

The study of Kate Bowler, entitled '*The Legal Mind of American Christianity*' requests an open answer by the professor : "*The Legal Mind of American Christianity*" [...] *the current majority reading of Romans, chapter 1-4, must strike its readers as shockingly and inappropriately overconfident- one destined in its hubris for a terrible fall*" (p.130). Hubris in Greek means daring,

or impertinence. The referring is not a characterisation of most Americans but regards the daring on searching the beginning of teaching, on justification by the thinking of Luther and other Protestant leaders, before analysing the Arian and Pelagiane collations with the Orthodox regarding Christ the embodied Son of God or even „*the sense of Augustinian fragility*” (p. 130).

The second part of the volume contains seven studies approaching Greek oratorical similitudes („*Beyond Reasonable Hope of Recognition? Prosopopoeia in Romans 1.18-3.18*”) and also Greek terms used by The Apostle Paul in his Epistle to Romans *Dikaio* and *Pistis Christou*.

Analysing Romans 1.16-17 Campbell affirms that here is defined the Gospel, and in Romans 5-8 is explained ‘the good news’ by the co-operation of the Holy Trinity to the soteriological act. The use of quotations from Psalms and Habakkuk represent just a prologue to define the work of God toward people. Both pagans (Gentiles) and Jews have sinned in front of the divine majesty. For pagans becoming conscious of the sin state is achieved by the natural moral law (Romans 1.19-20) while for Jews by the orders of the Law. However, says Professor Campbell, is not Moses who gave the liberation but Jesus Christ, who mediated for that ‘good news’ applied in fact. Christ is the new Adam. He changes the nature and the relation with God and the creation. Professor Campbell claims that we have an anthropological interpretation of salvation. Maybe a lecture of the work of father Dumitru Stăniloae, ‘Jesus Christ or man’s restoration’ (Sibiu, 1943), would underline more intensely this soteriological aspect. The new perspective of Saint Paul is that not only the faith in Christ is sufficient, but has to be accompanied by facts. Facts/works that don’t correspond to the ‘Law’s facts’ from the legalist Jewish expression (Galatians 2.15-16), but works with love in the name of Christ. Is beclouded understood that *sola fide* doctrine undertakes gradations on the basis of Oriental patristic research.

The book’s structure stimulates to lecture any person wishing to know the Pauline soteriology, being conceived in resonance with the monograph of Wagner Ross, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul ‘In Concert’ in the Letter to the Romans* (NovTSup 101, Leiden, Brill, 2002).

The two annexes help us to follow the thinking trajectory of Professor Campbell, and the development of a revealing soteriology, in contrast with the concept of salvation ‘history’.

The dense content of the studies is completed by a careful presentation of the volume’s form, which contains Biblical and of modern authors’ indexes, and also an index of the approached main theological themes.

We warmly recommend the lecture of this volume of studies, being convinced that what is new doesn’t spoil the old fundament but gives a new value, existential.

Fr. Dr. Ilie Melniciuc Puică

*Faculty of Orthodox Theology
‘Al. I. Cuza’ University, Iasi*