

Jesus, Matthew, and the proto-rabbis. His sunny optimism (he draws the line at christology) ultimately arouses misgivings in the reader, who is reminded of Dahl's warning that any portrait of Jesus must explain how it came about that he was crucified. A slight adjustment of perspective to include an awareness of catastrophe would have strengthened the plausibility of the overall thesis.

The main chapters on divorce and Sabbath become verse-by-verse exegeses of the Matthean texts. S. contributes useful studies of the legal background in Elephantine, Ezra-Nehemiah, the Pseudepigrapha, Philo, and Qumran. He thus seeks to locate the Matthean Jesus within this spectrum. He arrives at moderate conclusions (pp. 158-59): this Jesus opposed polygamy and easy divorce; he humanized the observance of the Sabbath without abolishing it. He was thus both stringent and lenient. "Had Christian Jews not been expelled from the synagogues after A.D. 90, but remained a segment of Judaism, it is well within the realm of possibility that Jesus would have secured a place in the proto-rabbinic pantheon" (p. 159). Though burdened with methodological and apologetical-ecumenical yearnings, the work makes an interesting independent contribution to the study of biblical law.

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DAVID M. STANLEY, S.J., "*I Encountered God!*": *The Spiritual Exercises with the Gospel of Saint John* (Series III: Original Studies, Composed in English 7; St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1986). Pp. xvi + 328. N.P.

The present study is the seventh volume in a series entitled "Original Studies, Composed in English," dealing with matters related to the Jesuits or the Jesuit order and published by the Institute of Jesuit Sources. The study may best be described as an exercise in comparative literature or, more accurately, in comparative spirituality, given the author's specific focus on similarities and parallelisms in spiritual outlook between the two texts under consideration rather than on parallelisms and similarities in matters of literary composition or artistry, although the latter are certainly not ignored. As the subtitle readily indicates, the two texts in question consist of the first-century Gospel of John and the sixteenth-century *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola.

The subtitle also points directly to the essential purpose behind such a comparative study. First of all, in 1967 Fr. Stanley published, in this same series, a volume entitled *A Modern Scriptural Approach to the Spiritual Exercises*. Then, in 1982 S. proceeded to adapt the Gospel of Mark as a whole to the four weeks of the *Exercises* (*The Call to Discipleship: The Spiritual Exercises with the Gospel of Mark* [London: The Way, 1982]). The present volume represents, therefore as the preposition "with" in the subtitle once again indicates, S.'s third attempt to use the fruits and insights of modern biblical scholarship in the context of the *Spiritual Exercises* and his second adaptation of an entire Gospel to the four weeks of the *Exercises*. Thus, as in the second volume of 1982 with regard to Mark, S.'s basic purpose in this study is to use the spiritual outlook of the Fourth Gospel, given its proposed manifold and profound

similarities and parallelisms with that of the *Spiritual Exercises*, as a concrete and direct help in the undertaking of the four-week Ignatian retreat.

The basic purpose for the volume immediately points to and accounts for its fundamental tone as well. As its title readily suggests, the volume has been written in the spirit of the traditional practice of *lectio divina* (and S. conveniently includes as an appendix in this regard an earlier study of his on the nature and function of this liturgical practice), viz., a prayerful reading of the Scriptures which is meant to lead to a greater reflection on and contemplation of things divine and spiritual. Given its many proposed points of contact with Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*, such a prayerful reading of the Fourth Gospel is also seen as ultimately leading to a greater appropriation and utilization of the fundamental principles and insights of Ignatian spirituality.

At the same time, such a reading of the Gospel has as its point of departure at all times a thoroughly informed exegetical analysis of the various units in question (sixteen in all, each constituting a different chapter: 1:1-18; 2:23-3:36; 1:19-51; 2:1-11; 2:13-22; 4:4-42; 4:43-54; 6:1-7; 9:1-41; 11:1-44; 12:12-36; 13:1-30; 13:31-14:31; 18:1-19:16a; 19:16b-42; 20:1-31). In each case, S. begins by breaking down the Gospel unit into its constitutive parts and then proceeds to give a running commentary on each of these sections, using a wide variety of exegetical approaches and perspectives, e.g., textual points, synoptic comparison, questions of underlying traditions and sources, observations of a historical or cultural nature, redactional or compositional comments. Although there is no set format for the analysis of the various units and no proper overall integration of these various perspectives and approaches, the commentary is always well-informed and up-to-date (though excessively dependent on Roman Catholic commentators on the Gospel), consistently balanced and judicious (basically following mainstream Johannine scholarship), as well as clearly written and lucidly developed. As such, the study does provide a very good example of how an informed reading of the Scriptures can be of direct help to a prayerful reading of those same texts.

Given its basic purpose and fundamental interests, the volume will be of particular interest to Roman Catholic readers who are acquainted with Ignatian tradition and spirituality and, above all, to its intended audience, those engaged in the undertaking of the *Spiritual Exercises*.

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WILLIAM A. VAN ROO, S.J., *Telling about God: Vol. 1, Promise and Fulfillment* (Analecta Gregoriana 242, Facultatis Theologiae A/26; Rome: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1986). Pp. xii + 375. Paper L 50.000, \$33.00.

In *Promise and Fulfillment*, Fr. Van Roo, who taught dogma to so many of us at Rome's Gregorian University, gives the first volume of a projected three-volume work, with *The God of Christian Experience* and *The Search for Further Understanding* to follow. The key word in the title of the whole work is "telling," drawn from V.'s translation of John 1:18: "He has told us about him," a phrase translated in the *RSV*, *NEB*, and *JB* as "He has made him known." V. prefers the simplicity, strength,



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