

## BOOK REVIEW

HERIBAN, Jozeph. — RETTO ΦΡΟΝΕΙΝ Ε ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ. — Studio Esegetico su Fil 2,1-5. 6-11.

(The Right φρονεῖν and κενώσις. — Exegetical Study on Philip. II 1-5. 6-11.

We are presenting the most thorough study on the two ideas φρονεῖν and κενώσις “to mind” and “emptying” so relevant in the doctrine of Saint Paul. The author analyzes them in the eleven verses, 1-11, of the second chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians. He works on the presupposition, that he also examines, of our verses being a “hymn” existing independently before Paul made use of it. Our readers must be warned that we are not confronted with a commentary on the “hymn”, which will be monstrous as a total of 140 words will end in being explained by over 200.500 in our volume, but by scholarly research.

After the Presentation and the Summary we find a very large list of abbreviations indicating the initials of publications and collections meant to lessen the length of the quotations and references to follow. A Bibliography of twenty-eight “texts and instruments of research”, sixty-two commentaries to the Epistle to the Philippians, and three hundred forty-seven “works and articles used in the search” show the materials dealt with by the author. Browsing the pages of the book, and seeing the footnotes which in many occasions cover half, or even two-thirds of the pages in rather small print, we can verify that such a monumental bibliography is not pure make-belief.

In the Introduction (pp. 29-34), the author formulates his methodology as “trying to discover the methods followed by the scholars”, “critical analysis and evaluation of the advanced hypotheses” and verifying, putting in order and evaluating critically” the contributions attained without entering into a “new and exhaustive analysis of the materials”. Fortunately, the personality of the writer does not fade away during the research as much as this methodology might suggest.

The first chapter tackles the “General Questions on the Epistle to the Philippians”: the unity of it, the existence of some peculiar “adversaries” aimed at by St. Paul, the pastoral and religious “problematics” of the Philippians and of the missionary actuations in the place where Paul was a prisoner. The conclusion is that the letter has a thematic unity in the paranetic, or exhortatory purpose of St. Paul’s address to the Philippians; he takes into consi-

deration their lack of personal humility and of eschatological zeal and calls them to an intimate verification of the proper imitation of Jesus Christ (pp. 59-60).

The second chapter (pp. 51-101) is a search for the author of the "hymn" Phil. II 6-11. It is a redactional problem which tackles the Pauline authenticity, the author following at the scholars' grants to the "christian community"; the redactional work of St. Paul for integrating it; the organic integration of the "hymn" into the context of the epistle; the meaning and function of the textual link, Phil. II 5; the correlation of the "hymn" and the exhortation that the author concludes to be the center of the christian mentality on the imitation of Christ (p. 101).

The third chapter is devoted to the interpretation of Phil. II 5-11. A. FEUILLET is quoted: "... one of the most vigorous expressions of the great law of the imitation of Christ that regulates christian life and christian morals, something that is completely away from just an abstract code" is the conclusion shared by HERIBAN (p. 110).

Chapters IV to VII constitute a "second part" of our study, which is to be taken as the gist of it all. It takes into consideration the whole text of Phil. II 1-11 and searches thoroughly the concepts ΦΟΡΝΕΙΝ and ΚΕΝΩΣΙΣ. Surprisingly enough, another word and concept is taken up for analysis ΚΥΡΙΟΤΗΤΗ the LORDSHIP of Jesus Christ, which is not introduced in the title of the study (pp. 111-370).

The general questions on the "hymn": the literary genus, the structure and the "Sitz im Leben" (pp. 112-130), as well as the historic and religious background (pp. 131-162), leading towards an exegesis of it, located in the proper actual context (pp. 162-170) fill up the whole of the fourth chapter. The conclusions arrived at in the article 1. (p. 130) tell the whole truth: "In brief: 1. All the presumed allusions to baptism, or to the Last Supper within the christological 'hymn' are rather vague and do not have the convincing strength to demonstrate their "Sitz im Leben" one way or another. — 2. At most, in the hypothesis that we have to deal with a 'hymn' that is pre-pauline, it could be said that it should have had a primitive "Sitz im Leben" of its own within some sort of celebration of divine service at the primitive Church. — 3. Yet it would be convenient to be on guard when talking about the use of the 'hymn' during the cultural liturgy. A precise determination of the "Sitz in Leben" goes beyond the text of whatever it mean to express". Elaborations on the conflict between Satan, Adam and Christ as well as those on the "Servant of Yahweh" and His voluntary humiliations go somewhat too far. So Heriban comes to formulate the "few but fundamental concepts of christian life which he thinks St. Paul intended to teach the Philippians: 1. The duty to behave in a way worthy of the Gospel; 2. Firm-

ness and unity in the eschatological consciousness of an elimination of the 'adversaries' and of salvation of the faithful; 3. The present struggle as a special gift of God to connect the christian with the sufferings of Christ parallel to the faith in Him; and 4. The perseverance of the faithful not only in believing in Christ but in suffering for Him.

The application of the preceding conclusions to the intimate persuasion, which is meant by the verb  $\phi\omicron\pi\upsilon\epsilon\iota\upsilon\iota\upsilon$  in Philippians II 1-5, is done in chapter V (pp. 171-209) in a very thorough research analysing its foundation on four great privileges that every christian possesses: Vocation in Christ, the inspiration of charity, the community in the Spirit and the tenderness and pleasure of piety (p. 173 ss.); then fixing its content (pp. 181-191), its projection (pp. 192-202) and its efficiency in the society (pp. 203-207).

In a very similar way we find the  $\kappa\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$  of the humble Christ studied in chapter VI, (pp. 210-320). It refers to Philippians II, 5-8. It appears as a treatise by itself, having for preliminary questions the selection of a method of research, the determination of the formal structure, and the finding of the subject (pp. 210-252); proceeding to the exegetical analysis of our text denominated "kenotic" from the word 'kenosis' by searching on the divine conditions of Christ, His self-denial and His "auto-kenosis" (pp. 253-294); adding an exegetical analysis of the text "a tapeinotic", or self-humiliating, in the human realization by Christ, in His "auto-tapeinosis", and in His obedience into death upon the cross (pp. 295-315); at last concluding that St. Paul had written the section to call the Philippians to mend their "auto-sufficiency", "autoglorification", "concentration on their personal interest" and "on the demands of their social position" with the consideration of the humble Christ.

Suddenly, and unannounced in the very title of the work, comes chapter VII with a subject and title most relevant in the Epistle and in the whole mentality of St. Paul "The  $\kappa\upsilon\pi\iota\omicron\upsilon\gamma\eta$  (The Lordship) of the Christ glorified" (pp. 321-370). The interference is demanded by the real perspective of St. Paul expressly stated in Phil. II 9-11. Heriban sees the sequence as "an unsuspected and decisive twist" (p. 321), then he explains with St. Paul the exaltation of the humbled Christ to the supreme dignity and to the highest name (pp. 323-334); the universal homage to the glorified Christ of the whole cosmos in adoration and confession of the Lordship of Jesus Christ; and ends by commenting the final doxology with which the 'hymn' is rounded up. We confess that we are surprised by the statement of Heriban: "General Conclusions — 1. The philological, literary and exegetical analysis of verses 9-11 (notwithstanding the change of subject, of style, of language and of the syntax of the fragment) confirms the literary and themat-

tic unity of the christological "hymn") (p. 367). A misinterpretation has crept somewhere in the research.

The work ends with a retrospective general view that is most welcome (pp. 371-376). Three additional notes offered as appendix clarify the sense of the word  $\phi\text{PHN}$ , sketch the history of the opinions on  $\text{KENΩΣΙΣ}$ , hint a projection of the concept and its life into a world of doctrinal upheaval, and report two very recent works on the 'hymn' (pp. 377-426).

Five indexes of citations, Greek words on discussion, subjects, authors, and systematic render the use of the work handy.

Perhaps our book is an exception to the sensible statement that to judge a book by its cover is superficial, for in reality the cover is telling us very much about the author and his work. We read in the back cover that Joseph Heriban, a Salesian from Czechoslovakia, after having obtained his Licentiate in Sacred Scriptures and his Doctorate in Theology in Rome, has been "for many years a professor of biblical sciences at the Theological Studium of the Salesian Fathers in Tokyo, and of New Testament Exegesis at the Faculties of Theology of the 'Sophia' University of Tokyo and of the University 'Sapientia' of Osaka. Presently, he teaches the Exegesis of the Pauline and Catholic Epistles as well as the Greco-Biblical Language at the Pontifical Salesian University in Rome. He has authored numerous studies, articles and comments on the Pauline Epistles in Japanese language. The monumental, thorough and well assimilated accumulation of data and documentation finds its explanation in being the conscientious work of extended professorship. At times even the structures of several courses and treaties appear in what might be taken for repetitions. But all in all the work on the "hymn" is excellent.

We miss in such a lengthy and well informed study a discussion and definition of the time of the Church and of the period of the life of St. Paul when he wrote the Epistle to the Philippians and put to use, or composed the 'hymn'. The question is vital for its proper understanding. Probably the perfunctory dismissal of the early gnostic incursions into christianity through the upsurging mystery religions that the author borrows from Culmann (p. 135), should have been substituted by a careful investigation of the phenomenon that haunted St. Paul moments before his martyrdom, when he was writing to his Timothy (II Tim. III) and to the Colossians (II 16-23), that alarmed St. Peter (II Pet. II), that would creep through the Apocalypse and the Johannine letters, and from which shall start the Trinitarian and Christological heresies of later epochs.

We miss again a little reference to the voluntary acceptance of death by Isaac when he was placed on the altar by Abraham,

which the rabbinic theology stresses so much and which could be related to the "acceptance" of Jesus when dealing on His "auto-tapeinosis" (pp. 305-312), and when dealing with the enthronement of Christ (p. 321 ss.), some reference to Psalms II, LXXM, LXXXIX and CX.

The absence of a direct use of the Fathers and Doctors recognized in the Church, whose names do not appear at all in the index of authors and whose casual opinion appears to have been quoted from borrowed citations is to be deplored, when a multitudinous crowd of authors appears examined.

Heriban seems to have accepted as his guiding hypothesis that of the 'hymn' propounded by E. Lohmeyer (p. 61 ff.) somewhat too quickly. Surely, that is the prevalent fad now-a-days. But in his keen and excellent investigation to find the paranetic and pastoral use made of the 'hymn' by St. Paul, in the need he had to accept in inserting a whole chapter VII on the *KYPIOTHE*, or Lordship, of the glorified Christ, as well as in the all pervading Pauline psychological flashes, he should have sensed both the doctrinal and christological gist of the 'hymn' and the similarity, not to say identity, it has with frequent outbursts of St. Paul's genius and enthusiasm for his Jesus Christ. It would be easy to isolate as 'hymn' used by Paul Acts XIII 32-41, on the promise; XVII 23-31, on God in Man; and XX 28-35 on Pastors for God from his addresses; and from his writings, Rom. I 1-7, as profession of Faith; I 18-32, on paganism; V-XII, which could provide not one 'hymn' but a whole 'hymnal', on christian privileges; I Cor. I 18-II 15, on the wisdom-language of the Cross; XII 31-XIII 13 on christian love; Gal. II 16-21; on the unity Jesus-Christian; Eph. I 3-14. Jesus-Christ key of God's plans; Col. I 24-29, on the glory of suffering; Thes. V 14-24, on the ideal life of a christian; and also in II Tim. II-IV, his tender farewell; or in Hebr. I 1-II 13, on the glory of the Son; IX 1-28, on Jesus, the Priest; XI 1-XII, faith at work in the Fathers and in us. To fly high up into poetry is connatural to the spirit of St. Paul, as, by the way, it was connatural to Jesus whose poetical 'hymn' we have in the gospels, specially in that according to St. John.

The foregoing remarks and exceptions are not meant to blur our recommendation and high esteem for the excellent work we are reviewing. Ordinary readers, even the common seminarians and students of the Holy Scriptures, will not be capable of tackling the constant reference to the original Greek and comments in French, German, Italian and English, overloaded with very diligent technical parlance; but it is a real treasure of information for Professors and Libraries.

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