

SUMMARIES

Buber's last corrections

K.A. Deurloo

The significant feature of the ninth edition of the *Verdeutschung der Schrift, Bücher der Weisung* (Verlag Lambert Schneider, Heidelberg 1976) is that Buber's last corrections are here incorporated into print. Besides the more obvious alterations, these corrections are evidence of Buber's attention to and desire for more consistency and precision. The changes in translation apparent in the various editions are of great interest for Biblical translation and exegesis.

The sons of Noah

W. van der Spek

The writer of this article takes the position that the passage under study Genesis 9:18-28 can be read and understood only within the context of the whole book of Genesis and particularly as a part of the block of stories beginning with Genesis 6:9. Lifting it out of its setting and reading into the story other meanings does violence to the message of the book of Genesis.

The predominant literary device used throughout this series of stories is contrast and this device serves as a key or clue to the meaning.

Five propositions are set forth in explanation:

1. The life of Noah in contrast to all the other firstborn sons in Genesis 5 spans the flood. He lives before and after the flood. He lives before and after the flood, they before and after their firstborn son. The same contrast exists within his life for although the flood is the dominating event he also became the father (Gen. 6:10) of sons (9:18-28).
2. Genesis 9:18-28 is also to be understood with the help of the contrast clue. The central part of the pericope (vss 22 and 23) shows the brother's overt rejection of the act of Ham and the idea it represented.
3. The act of Ham is the expression of his acceptance of the prevailing heathen deification of fertility and the practices it includes, neither more nor less.
4. This story with its setting in a heathen society shows the rejection of the primacy of natural fertility and deification of potency in that society by the act of the firstborn (Shem) and anyone who believes and acts with him (Japheth) and epitomizes deliverance.
5. Morality is not an issue here. The passage takes meaning when it is seen as a part of the history of YHWH and his dealings with his people, according to Tenach that history is continually in motion and man is always acting in it. For "of them was the whole earth overspread" (9:18).

Name and names in Gen. 32:23-33

K.A. Deurloo

The name of *Israel* occurs in the O.T. for the first time in Gen. 32:23-33 together with the *Sons of Israel*.

This pericope turns out to be a point of junction of many lines and motives in the Jacob-cycle.

Play upon names which is also found in the context (Mizpah, Gilead, Succoth) is characteristic for this little literary unity linked as it is with the whole of Gen. 32,33.

Especially the chosen location of the story gives rise to thematic elaboration:

Mahanaim: camp, company, favour (*hn*), present (*mnhh*);

Jabbok: (Jacob), wrestling-striving: Israel;

Pniel: face of God and brother.

The alteration of the name “Jacob” into “Israel” stands in the exact middle of this unity and corresponds with the manifold “passage” (as that from one side of the river to the other or from night unto sunshine).

Small wonder, that besides the important words which occur twice, the thematic words *to pass* and *name* occur five times, along with *hip* (referring to progeny; the natural place of blessing). The unique taboo-precept with respect to the hip-nerve, gives the opportunity to mention the “Sons of Israel ... unto the present day” directly with the first occurrence of the name of Israel.

Nevertheless the last secret of this story is not the name of Israel, but the name which is hidden and disclosed in the blessing.

‘Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done’ (The composition of the stories about Elisha and the Shunammite woman and their interrelation). II. The construction of the passages II Kings 4:12-17 and 25-28 and their interrelation

Aleida G. van Daalen

One way of arranging the two pericopes (A and B) for study is to group the texts according to the actions taking place, resp.: vss 12-14, 15-16, 17 and vss 25-26, 27-28.

Even though persons taking part in the events of the various scenes of A and B are not in the same location, there is a suggestion of ‘unity of place’.

The interrelation of the reactions of the woman in A and B and also the connections between the dialogues of A and B are examined carefully. The many parallels in the text form concentric circles around the words which are central in the story, and not only in a literal sense!

Questions and discussion concerning the possible course of events may distract from the centrality of the words – not that which is not said, not those events which possibly lie behind the text, but what actually is said, and what those words say, deserve our attention.

‘Speak ye now to Hezekiah’

K.A.D. Smelik

Old Testament scholars hold varying opinions about the historicity of II Kings 18:17 – 19:37 and Isaiah 36-37. This article is an effort, on the one hand, to show that there is little reason to see this passage as a recalling of an historical event, and on the other hand, to discover what is the purpose of the writer, if he is not recording history. In the first part of the article an attempt is made to reconstruct the method used by the Biblical author in collecting his material.

In the second part the speeches of the Rabshakeh, are subjected to close analysis, from which it becomes clear that the author, by the use of artifice, let the Assyrian official make pseudo-prophecies. In this way we find already in the Old Testament a warning about the possibilities the Bible affords for malicious exegetes to pervert the message. This warning is certainly not given without reason.

The good wine...

Ben Hemelsoet

The story of the wedding at Cana in Galilee is far more than the account of the first miracle of Jesus. It is set between “the greater things to be seen” (John 1:50) and the Passover feast at Jerusalem (2:13). The story ends with the revelation of his glory and his descent to Capernaum.

In this account Mary is set in opposition to Jesus. We cannot deny this opposition by saying that Jesus nevertheless must have loved his mother. In this pericope the love of Jesus for his mother is not the point of discussion.

The point is that they do not have wine; not as is written “they have no more wine” or “no wine is left”. There is no wine at all. Wine is missing at a wedding feast. There is not even a bride, and only at the end of the story in the glow of good wine is mention made of the bridegroom.

In the story, only Mary is THERE on that notable third day. Jesus, with his disciples is CALLED, not simply invited. The word THERE carries special weight, because there are set the jars for the purification of the Jews. From THERE the story takes significance and the opposition between Jesus and his mother can be resolved. From THERE Jesus can be discovered, when his hour has come, as the true bridegroom with all the associations given within the text of the gospel of John.

No place in the inn

Rochus Zuurmond

Starting from the Greek textual variants and the ancient versions this article discusses the history of the exegesis of Luke 2, in particular verse 7b: ουκ ην αυτοις τοπος εν τω καταλυματι.

Ancient commentaries and homilies have concentrated largely upon such topics as the activity of Mary, the virgin birth, the stall, the poverty of Joseph and Mary, the scene of the child in the manger and their theological and philosophical implications. These features are analysed not only as elements in a history of ideas, but also as belonging to a certain socio-political context. The bias of several exegetes of the past (Hieronymus, Bonaventura, Luther et al.) is then again confronted with the text and critically examined.

Arguing mainly from the φατη, the author accepts the emphasis on the poverty of Mary and Joseph, in as far as it expresses Luke’s wilfully chosen context of “the word that has happened” (Luke 2:15). The Davidic king is born incognito. The colourful history of the inn(s) in Bethlehem crowded on account of the census, is rejected as a late Midrash. Greek ουκ ην αυτοις τοπος is taken as a dative possessive stating the fact that they did not stay in the καταλυμα. Verse 7b is a Lukan footnote, explaining why the child was laid in a poor man’s place like a manger. In contrast to the manger the καταλυμα represents a certain social status.

The permanent tendency to interpret Luke 2:7b in the sense that there was on this our earth no place for Jesus (often with anti-semitic overtones) should be explained as a religious answer to the actual position of oppressed and despised people, in Roman Antiquity as well as in feudal Middle Ages and in modern capitalist society. It is contradictory to the impetus of liberation which dominates the Lukan text.