

reception history and reader-response theory. He suggests that the work of Lucas, as biblical scholar, scientist and practising Christian, resonates with an emerging methodology that allows the text's original context to impact interpretation even as the reader engages with it from a contemporary context. This essay sets up the third part of the book well in its focus on the integration of perspectives and contexts from which readers do interpretation.

Mike Pears' essay "Moving Towards a Theological Perspective on 'Place' by Using Cresswell's Notion of Doxa and Deviance as a Hermeneutical Tool for Place-based Readings of Mark's Gospel" follows next. He argues that place is not simply a backdrop to Mark (and the other gospels) but reflect ideological, hierarchical powers embedded in topography and suggests that Jesus begins the transformation of place by creating new space defined by his presence, which, however, will only be fully established in the eschaton. This essay would greatly benefit from some concrete examples from Mark to anchor the discussion for the non-specialist.

Stephen Finamore's "'Not Made with Hands': the Heavenly Temple in Hebrews and Revelation" explores the meaning of the heavenly/eschatological temple in these books. In the latter the temple represents all of creation and is the goal of creation, while in the former, body typology has a stronger emphasis. In particular, Hebrews seems to draw on Second Temple Jewish ideas echoed also elsewhere in the NT that the temple is symbolic of the human body and both are purified by sacrifice of some sort.

Finally, Robert Ellis' essay "'Play Up! Play Up! And Play the Game!' Cricket and Our Place in the World" concludes the volume with a theological reflection on cricket highlighting principles that can also be applied more broadly to sport in general.

This collection of essays is laudable in its aim of integrating different aspects of Lucas' interests and so in some sense, crossing disciplines to engage with the world and with Scripture. The first two parts cohere particularly well with part three linking with them perhaps more loosely. The volume's strength is this broad spectrum although few will share an interest in or be knowledgeable about all aspects of the book. The depth and expertise required varies among the essays. Some make for easier reading and are accessible to a wider, lay readership while others engage with Hebrew and Greek and/or are more technical and so will primarily be useful for Bible college/seminary students. Overall, this is a rich and interesting volume engaging with a broad range of issues and a worthy tribute to the work of Ernest Lucas.

EDWARD ADAMS, *THE EARLIEST CHRISTIAN MEETING PLACES: ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY HOUSES?* LIBRARY OF NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES 450. LONDON: T & T CLARK, 2013. 263 PP + XIV. [ISBN 978-0-56728-257-6 (HB). 978-0-56715-732-4 (ePDF)].

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In this monograph Edward Adams challenges the long-held idea that in the pre-Constantine period, Christians met almost exclusively in house churches. While others have previously noted various locations for church gatherings in the biblical text, this is the first comprehensive survey of the primary and secondary data available, making the material invaluable to the current conversations about the life of earliest Christians. Of particular note is the attention to archaeological data and primary source material, which not only secures the book's academic usefulness, but also brings this conversation to life for any informed reader.

Adams clearly shows how scholars have fallen into the trap of taking a few very clear passages about Christians gathering in houses (such as the Pauline formula ἡ κατ' οἶκόν ἐκκλησία in 1 Cor 16:19; Rom 16:3-5; Col 4:15; Philem 2) and then reading any reference to a "house" or "gathering" and assuming the physical location of a home. As with any biblical conversation where evidence is reasonably laconic, it becomes a matter of which information you privilege and therefore what you then assume *must* have happened. Adams' book is likely to stem the tide in this debate and so help sharpen our thinking about early church practices. It will almost certainly be the death-knell to the common term: "house churches."

The book is divided into two sections; chapters one to five outline the biblical and archaeological evidence; and chapters six to eight provide evidence and new possibilities for non-house settings for church gatherings. The book ends with two short but useful appendices addressing the setting of the Corinthian communal meal and figures and photos of a range of dwellings.

Adams turns first to the Epistles (Pauline, Deutero-Pauline, General) to establish what the text actually says and open up the field for other possible locations for church gatherings. He is quick to confirm that houses were used for meeting places, but makes clear that other references may not, in fact, allude to homes. Rome is one city where it is well known that there were multiple groups of Christians that gathered together; often we hear that there were four or five "house churches." However, while Priscilla and Aquila may have met in their house (or more likely at their tent-making workshop where they may also have lived), the other groups listed do not imply a domestic location; "those who belong to Aristobulus" (16:10) and "those who belong to Narcissus" (16:11) are defined by a person (perhaps an employer or master as Paul does not personally greet them); and the two other lists of low socio-economic names (16:14, 15) have no implied location. Therefore, while Roman "house churches" is a term referred to in today's textbooks, it is likely that this term is quite inaccurate and misleading.

The Gospels and Acts are addressed in chapter two where Adams considers Jesus and the early church who are frequently in meeting in homes. However, as the Greek terminology of οἶκος and οἰκία can mean any kind of dwelling and not simply a house, and as archaeology has shown a number of dwelling-types in Palestine in the Roman period, not all uses of these words may be domestic structures. There are times the house *was* a place of gathering and mission; one particularly interesting text is Luke 10 as scholars are confident this tradition does go back to the historical Jesus and furthermore, Luke foregrounds this in his travel narrative. I appreciate that Adams' task is an historical one, and this is the first task which needs to be undertaken, yet his work now "begs" some synthesis with a narrative reading

which is especially appropriate when reading Luke (1:1). How does Luke view the "house"? What literary role does it play? Notably the house is a liminal space where women have considerably more freedom to exercise leadership, something we see in Lydia for example (Acts 16:11–40); it is also a place that children inhabit and are visible. While Adams gives considerable attention to Acts with its many references to gatherings in houses, there is less attention to the companion Gospel; what about the women who accompanied Jesus on the road (Luke 8:1–3), how can they be viewed with respect to the household mission? And what of the women who sweeps her house to find the lost coin (15:8–10)? As she is a female picture for God who is engaged in domestic duties, what might this mean for a Lukan understanding of "church?" I admit these are outside Adams' parameters for an historical engagement, but they are questions that must now be asked. The household mission for Luke must be seen as (1) a movement away from the formal structures of Jerusalem and the temple which are hierarchical and restrict access to God, and (2) a place where the new (non–nuclear) family of God is evident. This reader would have welcomed some acknowledgement and attention to Lukan *narrative* readings and some attention to the theological questions this data raises; at least Adams could have tipped his hat in this direction.

Chapters three and four attend to further literary and archaeological evidence. Adams shows that there is only explicit literary evidence for the use of unaltered houses as gathering places in the Apocryphal Acts while other places are also specified. The thinking that houses were altered for church use is very thin both in literary and archaeological evidence; the house did not ultimately become the church building. Comparative literature, which is surveyed in chapter five, does however, show the domestic cult used the home (which makes sense!) while this cannot be said necessarily of synagogues; Jews and God–fearers favoured the use of an open air space (such as we see in Acts 16:13).

The final three chapters deal with other possible spaces which literature and archaeology point to: retail, industrial and storage spaces; commercial hospitality and leisure spaces; outdoor spaces and burial places respectively. This data will prove to be a fruitful smorgasbord of alternatives for the exegete other than simply assuming Christian gatherings were mainly in houses. As a result, this book should become a necessary addition to any theological library and for any serious scholar of biblical studies and ecclesiology; the implications of this study could stand to be quite significant. Further, the discussion arising from this book will also be important for ecclesiology as there has been an over emphasis and linking of metaphors such as the household of God, terms such as master, and father, and the various *Haustafeln* to the church gathering; some see houses and the *paterfamilias* model as normative (and so ordained by God). Adams' book will help inform this important conversation.

TONY CUPIT, ROS GOODEN & KEN MANELY (EDS). *FROM FIVE BARLEY LOAVES: AUSTRALIAN BAPTISTS IN GLOBAL MISSION 1864–2010*. PRESTON: MOSAIC PRESS, 2013. 600 PP. [ISBN 9781743241004].