

"A Highly Stimulating Work"

A review of: *Jesus Was Not a Trinitarian* by Sir Anthony Buzzard, MA (Oxon.), MA Th., Hon. PhD

Review by Clifford duRousseau



As a member of the Society of Biblical Literature, I can attest to the scholarliness and challenge of this book written from a Socinian viewpoint. It is a sequel to a prior work entitled *The Doctrine of the Trinity: Christianity's Self-Inflicted Wound*. In the author's own words, "*Jesus Was Not A Trinitarian* represents a Socinian view of the Son of God (after Faustus Socinus, 1539-1604)" (page 327). It "represents that 'marginalized' strand of Christianity which struggles to retain the words of Jesus himself" (page 378).

The book is a tour de force. It is a masterpiece. What the author does with two passages from the Bible (Mark 12:29 [the Shema] and Psalm 110:1) is absolutely amazing. He in effect dismantles the Nicene-Constantinopolitan and Chalcedonian edifice of Trinitarianism which has prevailed in all branches of Christianity since the fourth century and he shows persuasively why this is an error of Gentile Christianity unsubstantiated from the Hebrew Bible and the Greek New Testament and why Judaism and Islam are right to reject it.

Equally breathtaking is his laying of the axe to the root of Augustine's theological tree (page 276). 'In one fell swoop', as it were, he shows how Augustine's commentary on John 17:3 in his *Homilies On John* is an unwarranted re-writing,--an *eisegesis*, not an *exegesis*. The implication is that the rest of his magnificent and towering writings (*On The Trinity*, *The City Of God*, *Confessions* and so on) are seriously flawed, being built on this faulty and feeble foundation. "It is at this verse that one of the most startling manipulations of the text of Scripture has occurred. The celebrated Augustine, unable to find his beloved Trinity in Jesus' words, decided to rewrite the utterance of Jesus to accommodate a creed about which Jesus knew nothing. Here is how Augustine deals with John 17:3 in his *Homilies On John*: 'And this,' Jesus adds, 'is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.' Augustine erroneously asserts that the proper order of the words is, 'That they may know you *and Jesus Christ*, whom you have sent, as the only true God.'"

The book is divided into seventeen sections: between the introduction (pages 1-6) and the epilogue (*A Future for Monotheism*, pages 380-384) there are twelve chapters, some of them being work which previously appeared in non-book form (chapters 6, 7 and 12):

1. Foundations for Belief in God and His Son
2. Who Was the God of Jesus and His Followers?
3. Biblical Fact and History Against Dogma
4. The Titanic Struggle of Scholars to Find the Triune God in the Bible
5. The Son of God: Protestant Loss of Jesus' Teaching and His Promotion to Deity
6. Jesus as 'My lord' Messiah: The Golden Key of Psalm 110:1

7. If Only We Had Listened to Gabriel
8. Church Councils, The Da Vinci Code and Modern Scholarship
9. Detective Work and Word Tricks
10. Mathematical Marvels and the Obstruction of Monotheism
11. An Introduction to Dissident Heroes
12. Does Everyone Believe in the Trinity?

Then follow three appendices: *On John 20:28, Where Jewish Opposition Breaks Down*, and *Hebrews 1:10*. -- The strongest chapters are six and 12, in which there is massive documentation of the author's point.

"Defining God and His Son biblically remains part of the unfinished work of the Reformation," says the back cover of the book. It is towards this end that the author writes.

The author dialogues with the finest scholars writing today and deftly employs concessions from them to make his case. If you know of anyone who is struggling with the difficulty posed by the doctrine of the Trinity, I recommend that you buy them a copy of this book. This is definitely one of the most valuable gifts you could ever give to a soul seeking enlightenment.