

gous amount of work and study, but these excerpts will give the reader a chance to see how it is expended.

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**The Interpretation of the English Bible. The Four Gospels.** By B. H. Carroll. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, 1916.

This is volume one, to be followed by volume two, to cover the Four Gospels in the series of Dr. Carroll on the Interpretation of the English Bible. The great bulk of discussions, covering nearly five hundred pages in this volume, is filled with the author's able treatment of the fundamental questions involved in the first chapters of Matthew, Luke and John. In the introductory chapter the author gives a concise but valuable characterization of each gospel and shows what part each plays in drawing the comprehensive picture of Christ.

Dr. Carroll takes no stock in discussions of the authorship of the Four Gospels. He takes for granted that the traditional view is correct; that Matthew the Apostle wrote the first Gospel; Mark, the interpreter of Peter, the second; Luke, the companion of Paul, the third, and John, the beloved Apostle, the fourth. He lays special emphasis in this volume on the "Fifth Gospel, the gospel of Paul." "Of the five gospels, by far the most extensive, the most comprehensive, and most important is the gospel of Paul." He denounces the radical critics' slogan "Back to Christ" and states the gist of the slogan in this concrete phrase, "Back from Paul." Contrary to the modern critical method of studying Jesus, the author says, "We must follow John and Paul back to the real beginning"; that is, into his pre-existent state. He then takes up Matthew 1 and 2 and Luke 1 and 2 and considers the birth of Jesus as a supernatural event—the incarnation of the Deity in human form. The author regards the genealogy in Matthew as that of Joseph and that in Luke as Mary's, in opposition to an increasing number of modern New Testament scholars who regard both genealogies as Joseph's. Some may think that the author puts undue emphasis on this event, but to Dr. Carroll the supernatural birth of Jesus was basal in New Testament theology.

In this volume we find excellent discussions of great fundamental doctrines of the kingdom, repentance, the guilt of sin, regeneration, and the cross (the Lamb of God, as set forth in John's gospel). He sounds no uncertain note as to the guilt of man and the necessity of the new birth.

The author gives excellent reasons for the baptism of Jesus, which was his "inauguration as Messiah"; to "set forth in symbol the great truths of his gospel—death, burial and resurrection"; "as an example for all his followers." The temptation "was not the essential deity of our Lord on trial, but his humanity, and also in an emphatic sense, his representative humanity." As to *why* Jesus was tempted the author gives an elaborate discussion comprising eight reasons. He was "the son of Adam"; "Israel, God's Son"; to "become man's vicarious substitute"; to "destroy the work of the devil and rescue the lawful captives"; to "become a sympathizing and efficient high priest"; to "set humanity on the throne of the universe, etc."; to "become judge of the world"; to "become an example to his people at the hour of trial."

The author regards the miracles as "apparently violating natural laws but really not in violation of natural laws." He defines a good miracle as simply God at work *beyond nature* to "corroborate that which is good."

Dr. Carroll regards the Sermon on the Mount as one discourse delivered by Jesus on one occasion and that it could not have fallen from the lips of a "mere man." Its ethic is superior to that of human teachers.

The author thinks the unpardonable sin has been committed in all centuries of the Christian era and may be committed today. He rightly emphasizes the fact that this sin is essentially a sin of "character," a sin of the "state of the heart," and not of action. He regards the sin as really "utter perversion of the moral vision" which expresses itself in "willful, malicious, presumptuous" action.

Volume one closes in the midst of the Galilean ministry. It strikes the reviewer as the best of Dr. Carroll's books. The interpretations are sane, and every preacher ought to have this volume in his library.

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