
Editorial

In the first article of this issue, Michael Tait considers the various New Testament options for the Church's birthday. Whilst its traditional birthday of Pentecost might well be described appropriately as the Church's 'official birthday' given its public character, the New Testament offers several further possibilities for its 'actual' birth. Tait's conclusion is that any answer to the question depends upon the aspect under which the Church is being viewed. Several 'birthdays' may need to be celebrated in order for all aspects to be appreciated.

In his provocative contribution, Henry Wansbrough explores the Acts narrative of Paul's arrival in Rome, against the backdrop of Luke's literary artistry and in the light of parallels with contemporary novels. He points to significant difficulties with Luke's claim in Acts that Paul was a Roman citizen, a key plank for the Rome episode which is presented as the culmination of Paul's appeal to the emperor. Wansbrough suggests that Paul's actual visit to Rome may have been rather less glorious, the Acts story being an imaginative reflection of Luke's overall concerns, not least to represent in narrative form the triumph of Christianity.

In our third article, the ambiguous figure of the Apocalypse's rider on the white horse (the first of the four horsemen) is examined. Although it has similarities with the later portrayal of Christ riding a white horse, not all may what it appears to be. Is he a Christlike figure, or a figure of the 'dark side'? This contribution proposes that this ambiguity might be a deliberate strategy of the book. It would then reflect what is one of the Apocalypse's greatest contributions to the theology of the New Testament: that recognizing evil, naming it for what it is, is a notoriously difficult task, which calls for 'wisdom' and divine revelation.

Finally, the Executive Committee of the Catholic Biblical Association has received news of the recent death of Fr Reggie Fuller, founder member and one-time Secretary, at the age of 102. Fr Henry Wansbrough pays tribute to Fr Reggie in a reminiscence which can be read on the 'CBA News' section of this website (<http://www.cbagb.org.uk/cba-news>).

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