Scott's insights range from indispensable to indispensable. For almost every parallel, Scott manages to consider the text from a fresh and provocative angle. In many instances, his interpretations prove riveting: the rich book (Lk 13:21-33) illustrates how "to mismanage a miracle" (p. 127), the Pharisees and the tax collector (Lk 18:11-14) shows what had been considered holy is now outside the kingdom while the unloved may now be inside, the talens (Mt 25:13-14) paradox legal form for the same reason (Jesus) parades the rabbinic teaching in the eye of the law - for freedom" (p. 225), and the unjust steward (Lk 16:1-14) breaks the bond between power and justice", showing "the kingdom of God is being undermined, for masters and stewards who do not get even" (p. 266).

In other cases, however, Scott's readings seem less than fully persuasive. Scott insists on seeing the leaven (Lk 13:21-23) as a metaphor for evil and concludes that the parable teaches about the kingdom's freedom to penetrate into the guise of corruption. He plays down the abundant harvest in the sower (Mk 4:1-9) and so rejects any apocalyptic interpretation of the narrative. He speculates too much about the minor details of the wicked tenants (Mk 12:1-12) and so decides that in the plot the kingdom fails and the inheritance is in doubt (p. 231). And he finds in the potentially unethical behaviour of the man who buys the field with hidden treasure (Mt 13:44) a loss which the kingdom creates because it is based on grace alone.

More desconcertingly disquieting are several of Scott's overarching presuppositions and methodological principles. (1) One can learn nothing about Jesus from rabbinic parallels, not least that approxi mately three-quarters of the rabbinical parallels are not allegorical. But Scott refuses to consider this information relevant for interpreting Jesus' parables because of the time gap between first-century and the earliest attested forms of the rabbinic material. Yet certainly not the least possible is that one might use these later parallels to shed light on first-century Jewish teaching. (2) His dissection between parables and parables is a valuable one for viewing most of these parallels as later than and dependent on the Synoptics. (3) He recognizes that the possibilities of an imputation structure means that Jesus must have told similar stories in several different settings and never once applies this to the parable of the prodigal son. (4) He dismisses without refutation a strong case made for viewing most of these parallels as later than and dependent on the Synoptics. (4) He recognizes that the possibilities of an imputation structure means that Jesus must have told similar stories in several different settings and never once applies this to the parable of the prodigal son. (5) He dismisses without refutation a strong case made for viewing most of these parallels as later than and dependent on the Synoptics. (4) He recognizes that the possibilities of an imputation structure means that Jesus must have told similar stories in several different settings and never once applies this to the parable of the prodigal son. (5) He dismisses without refutation a strong case made for viewing most of these parallels as later than and dependent on the Synoptics.

The departing Dean Ireland's Professor at Oxford and his wife have jointly produced this volume which is in effect an introduction to the synthesis. Elder Sanders is responsible (apologetically) for all but Part Four of the book, and its contents will be fairly predictable for the reader familiar with his earlier works. The great merit of the work is its fairly detailed discussion of the problems and the texts with copious examples that the reader can follow through. The book is thoroughly up-to-date and incorporates discussion of recent developments in synoptic study. It has five parts.

Part One: One Sanders discusses authorship and genre in broad terms. He thinks that the gospel was written anonymously c. 85-100. This conclusion is reached by doubting the reliability of Papias and the traditions which he contains. In Part Two there is an extensive discussion of the synoptic problem which reduces the complexity of the issues and the uncertainty of the commonly used criteria. Sanders is persuaded by M. Goulder that Luke knew Matthew but not necessarily that Matthew had no source other than Mark. He is particularly critical of the hypothesis of Mark as a whole and for the complex relationship which in the nature of things is hard to prove. It is possible that Jesus was teaching in this way, therefore, that the book is dubious about the methods of a reduction critic who assumes any particular hypothesis of synoptic origin. Part Three discusses form criticism in the light of recent studies by A. Di Fabio. Sanders and others who hold to some modifications of more traditional positions. Thus, for example, Sanders speaks in terms of 'paradigm' rather than 'synthesis' or 'original' stories, and he is sceptical of 'Lerners' attempt to locate the parables in historical contexts in the ministry of Jesus. On the whole, he keeps fairly close to Roberts, but he argues that his critical reservations about Brown and others lead to 'more uncertainty than he had not, less'.

In Part Four Margaret Davies makes her examination of 'Holistic Reading' of the gospels. She draws heavily on the insights of J. D. Engberg and the idea that the cross is crucial in any discussion of the gospels, and to the extent that this is the case, she argues that the Redaction criticism is the most appropriate. However, it is no more than a caricature to say that the intention of the 'fallacy' in the parables, F. C. M. Turner has shown in The Linguistic and Biblical Interrelation, chapter 2. She picks up the typology, or structural and deconstructions, of which is often sceptical and, then to rhetorical criticism, which is important for its analysis of the literary devices used by all writers, biblical ones included. Finally, she looks in turn, at the genre of the third gospel, Matthew – "theothers about creation and re- creation" - which is central in the life of the death and resurrection of Jesus". So far it is Mark. But Luke is closer to the genre of the Hellenistic history writing.

Finally, in Part Five the question of the Johannine Gospel is considered. Sanders strongly defends the legitimacy of the question. He insists that it 'is not a matter of incorrectness but proved guilty' with the sources or new test of weighing the evidence and assigning degrees of probability. He finds support for authorship where the material shows characteristics which are against the interests of the Evangelists, where there is uniqueness (i.e. the hypothetical 'principal'), where there is multiple attribution in independent sources, and where there is agreement between friends and foes of Jesus. The first three of these are familiar; while the last is perhaps more novel. On this basis seven general statements about Jesus' mission and his view of the kingdom of God can be listed as virtually certain - and a good deal more which is not listed.

Readers of all schools of thought will be grateful for this clearly presented account of gospel study and its methods. The authors are sufficiently sceptical of some of the assumed results of earlier criticism to make their work provocative for all readers. Conservative students will be no doubt by the rather sceptical conclusions to which they come regarding the historical reliability of the gospels: a very great deal of material is regarded as unauthentic (with virtual certainty) or as bring of doubtful historicity. Has any thing gone wrong?

It is customary to distinguish between presuppositions, methods and conclusions, some conservatives argue that methods which allow that the gospels may contain historically unrepeatable statements start from unproved presuppositions. But, on the other hand, it is difficult to see why methods which investigate the historicity of the gospels should fail to work because the critic approaches the evidence with an open mind as to historicity. Surely if the gospels are historical it is open to the historian to make reliable statements, then the only pass tests for historicity, or absent cannot be improved by historical study. And, on the other hand, it is necessary to investigate in what sense the statements in the gospels are historical, as for example, when may have been presented in abbreviated form or difficult saying of Jesus has been clarified by Evangelists. (I am aware that James Barr says that conservatives practice biblical criticism only because they are sure that it will come up with the right answers from their point of view). The fact that a critic is thinking in this way and that he is so inclined to destroy my point. It would be more effective if they were to say that conservatives are right, should be open to the truth, whatever it is. They believe that criticism cannot destroy the truth of the gospel even if it may correct their own false ideas of the gospel (it is true, of course, that anti- systematic presuppositions with false conclusions, and it is necessary to watch out for these, even when authors present them, they have not been influenced by them. But in the present case faulty presuppositions of a different sort may be the real culprits. They emerge perhaps in the discussion of the synoptic problem where the possibility of combining sources of reliable information about Jesus right up to the time of composition of the gospels is simply not taken sufficiently seriously. Or again, assumptions about primitive narratives being 'simple' and later ones 'more developed' are not questioned sufficiently.
Indeed, I have gradually come to the conclusion the Fourth Gospel was not written primarily for church consumption anyway, but as an evangelistic booklet. I realize this point is debatable; but the very fact that it is debatable but is not, and by large, been debated, is profoundly troubling and indicative of what is going wrong in Johannine scholarship. The historians and exegetes of earlier scholars have now become the "givers of this generation" of scholars, who feel free to build fresh, hesitant suggestions on top of them. I am tempted to think that the emperor has no clothes — or, more accurately, no clothes to don any more.

D.A. Carson, Deerfield, Illinois

Perhaps the most disappointing thing about this book is its almost unrestrained pessimism about demonstrating that Paul knew traditions about Jesus. For Paul to have knowledge of such a development, of Jesus the Messiah, its remarkable ability to bring witness, its claims to bring witness, its political independence is not, or who is told that the emperor has no clothes — or, more accurately, no clothes to don any more.

D.A. Carson, Deerfield, Illinois

### Abraham in Galatians: Epistolary and Rhetorical contexts

#### G.W. Hanson

#### University of Sheffield


Paul's use of the Abraham narratives of Genesis is a significant problem for readers of Galatians. Hanson's thesis is to draw out the logic of this use within the letter and to interpret the book, presents us with far more than just a discussion of the relevance and the precise application of the narratives. Thus he is, for example, we are left with the contours of the social forces that shaped it — and derives political conclusions from by drawing on several social forces. Situated within the context of the Johannine corpus, he argues that that the emperor has no clothes — or, more accurately, no clothes to don any more.

D.A. Carson, Deerfield, Illinois

### Paul and the Popular

#### Abraham J. Malherbe


This book contains a collection of technical essays by Abraham Malherbe, most of which appeared in journals or books. The publication of his essays is timely since they furnish a unique and general work titled Paul and the Thessalonians: The Fourth Gospel and Paul's Jewish Group. The Jesus Debate: from Baur to Bultmann', and has surveyed articles by Victor Furnish, The Jesus Debate: from Baur to Bultmann', and has surveyed articles by Victor Furnish, The Jesus Debate: from Baur to Bultmann'. The editor, who is now at the University of Durham, has brought together six seminar papers given at the Society for New Testament Studies, all of which have been published in print, J. W. Fraser's...