



D. BROUGHTON

KNOX

SELECTED WORKS



VOLUME II

CHURCH AND MINISTRY

EDITED BY KIRSTEN BIRKETT



D. BROUGHTON
KNOX

SELECTED WORKS



VOLUME II
CHURCH AND MINISTRY

EDITED BY
KIRSTEN BIRKETT

 MATTHIAS MEDIA

D. Broughton Knox, Selected Works, *Volume II: Church and Ministry*
© Matthias Media, 2003

All rights reserved. Except as may be permitted by the Copyright Act, no part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means without prior permission from the publisher. Please direct all copyright enquiries and permission requests to the publisher.

As a purchaser of the file you may store and display this ebook on as many electronic devices as you wish (computer, tablet computer, phone, book reader, etc.) as long as each device is owned by you for personal use. For more detailed licence information on purchased Matthias Media ebooks, please see www.matthiasmedia.com.au/ebooks.

Matthias Media

(St Matthias Press Ltd ACN 067 558 365)

email: info@matthiasmedia.com.au

Internet: www.matthiasmedia.com.au

Please visit our website for current postal and telephone contact information.

Matthias Media (USA)

Email: sales@matthiasmedia.com

Internet: www.matthiasmedia.com

Please visit our website for current postal and telephone contact information.

A NOTE ON BIBLE VERSIONS.

In the course of his lectures and writings, Dr Knox characteristically quoted from either the King James Version or the Revised Version, and sometimes in a combination of both. We have retained this feature.

Cover design by Lankshear Design Pty Ltd. Typesetting by Graham Wye.



•CONTENTS•



PREFACE

PART 1: THE CHURCH 7

1. The church and the people of God in the Old Testament 9
2. The church 19
3. De-mythologizing the church 23
4. The Spirit, the church, and the denomination 33
5. Christian unity 35
6. The body of Christ 37
7. What is Christianity? 43
8. Acts 2:42 49
9. The biblical concept of fellowship 57
10. The church, the churches and the denominations of the churches 85
11. Sermon notes 99
12. Notes on authority in the church 101
13. The office and work of a Bishop in the church of God 105

PART 2: THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES 107

PART 3: MINISTRY 199

1. Women's ministry 201
2. The ordination of women 205
3. What must not change in a changing ministry 211
4. Worship I 221
5. World evangelism 225
6. Let the word do it 233
7. Repentance 235
8. The priority of preaching 239

-
9. Ministry of women 243
 10. Heaven is People 247
 11. Chapel sermon 253

PART 4: BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER 261

1. New Testament baptism 263
2. Addition to manuscript on baptism 311
3. A short statement on the Lord's Supper 317
4. Note on the Lord's Supper 319

PART 5: THE LORD'S SUPPER FROM WYCLIFFE
TO CRANMER 321

PART 6: ROMAN CATHOLICISM 393

1. Purgatory 395
2. The anniversary of the Reformation 399
3. The role of the Pope 403
4. Transubstantiation 407
5. Holy year 411
6. Trust God not relics 413
7. Bible forgiveness and Roman Catholic confession 415
8. Authority in life 421
9. Worship II 423

GENERAL INDEX 427

BIBLE PASSAGES INDEX 435



PREFACE

*I*N THIS VOLUME WE CONTINUE THE work of collecting the writings of David Broughton Knox for publication¹, in some cases for the first time. The works presented here have been gathered under the heading ‘Church and ministry’, although of course to suggest that these are two separate topics does not at all reflect Dr Knox’s views on the matter. Here you will find various presentations of the ‘Knox-Robinson’ doctrine of church, with its strong emphasis on fellowship and relationship over structure, as well as various other reflections on our corporate Christian life.

Since structures still have their place, even if not a central one, the writings here include thoughts on denomination and, in particular, the Anglican denomination, based doctrinally on the Thirty-Nine Articles. We are pleased also to be able to publish a previously unpublished book on New Testament baptism, alongside writings on the Lord’s Supper, both historically and in its role in church life today.

Although many may not realise it, Dr Knox included amongst his writings numerous works opposing the Roman Catholic church. These polemic writings, which patiently, carefully but uncompromisingly dissect Roman Catholic doctrine and expose its weakness, constituted part of Dr Knox’s valuable ministry to the people of Sydney. We have included a range of these pieces as examples of what Dr Knox thought church should not be.

We are grateful for the opportunity to make available the writings of this significant theological thinker. May they be as inspiring and provoking to the readers as they have been to the editors.

Kirsten Birkett

SYDNEY, 2003.

1 For biographical information about D. Broughton Knox, an assessment of his significance as a theologian, and a broader introduction to his thought, see T. Payne (ed), *D. Broughton Knox: Selected Works, Vol.1*, Sydney: Mathias Media, 2000.

· PART 1 ·

THE
CHURCH



The articles in this section
are arranged according to date.

Chapter 1

THE CHURCH AND THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT¹

THE EMERGENCE AND CONTINUANCE OF

the church is easily the most interesting phenomenon since the beginning of the Christian era. It is important to enquire whether the church was a novel institution or whether it had its roots in an earlier prototype. It arose in Palestine, but it soon became world wide. How much did it owe to Old Testament religion?

Some of the early heretics would not allow that the Christian church owed anything to the Hebrew nation. Marcion, for example, was so impressed with the newness of Christianity that he taught that Christ had descended direct from heaven with a sidereal body and had begun to teach in the synagogue of Capernaum in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar. Marcion wrote his famous book, the *Antithises*, to show that the God of the Old Testament was entirely different from the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, revealed in the New.

But if we go to the New Testament itself, we will find a very different viewpoint. From the Acts we learn that the Palestinian Christians still remained loyal Jews. St James reports that "they are all zealous of the law". Of St Paul himself, it was said, that he "walked orderly and kept the law" (Acts 22). On the other hand the early Christians were certain that the Jewish nation by rejecting and crucifying its Messiah, had ceased to be God's instrument. St Peter's hearers were urged to "save themselves from this crooked generation" (Acts 2:40). Yet the New Testament writers were conscious that the church was integral with the Old Testament people of God. The Christian church was the Israel of God (Gal 6:16). Just as in the days of Elijah and in the days of Isaiah, God's people were represented, not

1. Paper read at the Goulburn Diocese Clergy Conference, Canberra, August, 1950; printed in *Reformed Theological Review*, 1950, X, pp. 12-20. Reprinted by kind permission.

by the nation at large, but by the faithful remnant within, so the Christian church was “the remnant according to the election of grace” (Rom 11:5). In one sense, the whole Jewish nation could rightly be called “God’s own” even by so anti-Jewish a writer as the fourth evangelist. “He came unto his own.” But in a truer sense the people of God, once identified with the Hebrews, was now no longer confined by this natural restriction. The wild olive branch had been grafted onto the old root.

Since there is thus this real connection between the old and the new, let us examine the features which characterize the Old Testament church. But first, consider how it is that we are justified in speaking of an Old Testament church. What characterizes the word ‘church’ so that we are justified in using it of the people of God in the Old Testament?

The root meaning of the Greek word ‘church’ is ‘called out’—ἐκκλησια, *ekklesia*. The emphasis falls on God’s activity. The church is not an agglomeration of men and women who have chosen to associate themselves together for religious purposes, but it is an assembly of sinners, called out and redeemed by God, and constituted into his church, the body of Christ, by the sovereign power of regeneration through the Holy Spirit. The word focuses the attention on God who calls, and thus it is eminently applicable to the people of God in the Old Testament. The initiative of God in redeeming his people is the keynote of the Old Testament. At the very beginning, in the narrative of the fall, God intervenes with the gracious promise of redemption. At the time of the flood, Noah is chosen; but it is in Abraham that the gracious choosing of God is most clearly emphasized. He was called by God.

Now the LORD said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father’s house unto the land that I will show thee and I will make of thee a great nation and I will bless thee and make thy name great and be thou a blessing ...

This passage might be taken as the text for this paper, for it contains within it some important ideas.

The first is that which we have already mentioned, the calling of God. This is fundamental and is true of all Israel’s history. It is rightly to be found at the head of the Decalogue. “I am the LORD thy God that brought thee out of the land of Egypt.” The call is grounded solely in God’s loving kindness. The scriptures are careful to exclude any suggestion

that foreseen merit or foreseen response might be a contributing factor for God's selection in those whom he calls. In Deuteronomy 4:37 Moses states "because he loved thy fathers therefore he chose their seed after them". In 7:7 he repeats the idea: "The LORD did not set his love upon you nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people; but because the LORD loved you". In 9:4 Moses is explicit: "Speak not in thine heart, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land ... Know therefore that the LORD thy God give thee not his good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiff necked people". In his sixteenth chapter, Ezekiel, with rather realistic imagery, works out the same thought. The meaning is quite unmistakable, God's choice of his people did not take its rise from anything in the one chosen. The very acme of sovereignty is exhibited, as St Paul points out, in the choice of Jacob and the exclusion of Esau.

For the children being not yet born, neither having done any thing good or bad, that the promise of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth, it was said unto Rebecca, the elder shall serve the younger, even as it is written, Jacob have I loved but Esau I hated (Romans 9:11-13).

We conclude then that Israel was the people of God because God called them and that the ground of this call is to be found solely in God's character of love, justice and mercy.

Examining the next question, what was the purpose of God's care, we read in Genesis 18:19 that God called Abraham to the end that he and his children might keep God's commandments and that they might be blessed in consequence. We are reminded of the answer of the Shorter Catechism; "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him for ever". This was the purpose in God's call of Abraham. Indeed, the Old Testament uniformly attributes this purpose to all God's actions in the world—that God might be glorified and mankind blessed. For example, God says to Pharaoh, "In very deed for this cause have I made thee to stand that I might show in thee my power and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth". Similarly Isaiah attributes the call of Cyrus to the purpose that all the world might know that the Lord is God. The thirtieth chapter of Ezekiel contains the beautiful prophecy for the redemption of the people from captivity. God promises to sprinkle clean water on them and cleanse them from

all their iniquity.

A new heart also will I give you and a new Spirit will I put within you; and I will take the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh and I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgements and do them and ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers and ye shall be my people and I shall be your God...

This moving passage opens and closes with the reiterated statement that this redemption of his people by God is designed primarily for the purpose of glorifying God's name. Ezekiel writes:

Not for your sake, do I do this, saith the Lord God be it known unto you.

I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name which ye have profaned among the nations whither ye went; and I will sanctify my holy name...and the nations shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.

The glory of God was the purpose of the calling of the Old Testament church. It is the purpose of the church's existence to-day. A church whose life has ceased to glorify God has ceased to have a *raison d'être*. This is the yardstick by which to judge all your activity. Is our life and is our church's life conducive to God's glory? If it is, we are fulfilling our purpose; if it is not, then it is a failure, and no longer justifies its continued existence, although from other points of view, it may be regarded as successful. "Let your light so shine, that men may glorify your heavenly Father."

Returning to our text, God in his call of Abraham adds the promise "I will bless thee". Abraham was called in order that he might be blessed. God is love and his purposes are gracious. The church in the Old Testament, as in the New, is the sphere of God's blessing. This blessing is both material and spiritual. God promised that he would make of Abraham a great nation. And he blessed him with flocks and herds and menservants and maidservants.

One of the most vividly held concepts in the mind of ancient Israel was the blessing God gave them in giving them Palestine, a land flowing with milk and honey, a land that was the delight of God. As Moses said, it was not a land like Egypt which was watered with the

foot, but:

it is a land of hills and valley that drinketh water of the rain of heaven, a land which the LORD thy God careth for; the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year (Deut 11:10-12).

This blessing was constantly before the mind of Israel. Every year, at the feast of the first fruits, it was recalled to mind by every Israelite as he recited the formula which begins: "A Syrian ready to perish was my father..." (Deut 26).

Another very conspicuous blessing that resulted from God's choice of Israel was his protection. The Lord fought for Israel. National victories are described in the early literature as the righteous acts of Jehovah. God was the captain of their host. The word 'salvation', which has come to mean so much in Christian experience, in the Old Testament is confined almost, but not altogether, to salvation from material disaster. God saved the people from the tyranny of Egypt, or from the plague or pestilence.

The material blessings, which God's providence provides for his children, are real, and are not glossed over in the Old Testament, but it would be a mistake to think that they are the most prominent. The greatest blessing Abraham received was that he should be the friend of God. The greatest blessings which his descendants received was that they should be God's people and that God should be their God. We must always remember that the sacrificial system was given by a gracious God. It was to be a way of blessing, a way by which sinners might be reconciled to him. It is a very grave mistake to imagine that the Old Testament sacrifices were intended to make God propitious. The heathen sacrifice in order to placate God, to avert his wrath or win his favour. But this is not the teaching of the Old Testament. It is because God is already propitious that he has provided a way by which his children, though stained by sin, might come to him and be forgiven. The Old Testament does not speak of sacrifice propitiating God, but as propitiating, or expiating sin. It covers sin; it is the God-given way of reconciliation, for it points forward to that perfect atonement of Calvary when God gave his only begotten Son.

The Old Testament is sometimes spoken of to-day as though in it salvation is by law; while in the New salvation is by grace. This is a

grave error. The Old Testament itself teaches (Psalm 143:2) that by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. Salvation is all of grace, in the Old Testament as in the New. Jehovah is depicted as taking the part of the near kinsman, the goel. He redeemed Israel, not only from temporal trouble but from sin.

I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins. Return unto me for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens, for the LORD hath done it...the LORD hath redeemed Jacob (Isaiah 44:22-23).

The word 'redeem' here is literally 'acted as a near kinsman'. Note that the blessing was spiritual.

Abraham was called by God not only to be blessed but to be a blessing. "I will bless thee and be thou a blessing." The church is not only to receive blessing but it is also to bless others. It has been rightly said that the church is not only a saved community, as indeed the true church is, but also a saving community. So Israel was not only a saved nation but also to be a saving nation. The truth is clearest in the servant songs of Isaiah. The servant is to bring forth judgement to the gentiles. In chapter 42 we read:

I the Lord hath called thee in righteousness and will hold thine hand and will keep thee and will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring the prisoners from the dungeon and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am the Lord (Isaiah 42: 6-8).

This truth is reiterated in the 49th chapter, verse 6. "I will give thee for a light to the gentiles that thou mayest be my salvation to the end of the earth." In this chapter, as well as in the 44th, the servant is expressly identified with the nation of Israel. And although these passages are only fully fulfilled in Jesus Christ, God's perfect servant, they have a primary reference to the nation of Israel, for it was for the purpose of being a blessing that Israel was chosen. Election involves service. That is a note of Amos' prophecy. Yet of this truth the nation was oblivious. The people looked for the day of the Lord in order that they might be top nation, but for these moral slackers, Amos warns, the day of the Lord would be darkness and not light, even very dark and no brightness in it. Amos reminded them that God had chosen

them, but chosen them for service; since that was lacking, they must expect judgement. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth. Therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities" (Amos 3:2).

The relationship between God and his people is described in the Old Testament as a covenant. God gives the covenant and his people accept it. The most famous Old Testament covenant is described in the first eleven verses of Exodus 24. The essentials of the covenant are, the reading of God's law to the people and their acceptance of it. The covenant is sealed by the blood of the sacrifice sprinkled partly on the altar, partly on the people. This is not the first covenant which God entered into with men; and since Moses' time he has given us the new covenant, the blessings of which we are enjoying at present. All these covenants are the result of God's initiative; they spring from his graciousness. He enters into covenant to bless mankind. Man does not initiate the covenant nor draw up the terms. He accepts them. The terms always involve the obligation to do God's will and that means to be a blessing to our fellow-men. The breaking of the covenant brings with it judgement, partial or complete, according to the nature of the transgression. This is the most solemn lesson to be learned from the history of the Old Testament church.

There is no doubt that Israel was God's chosen instrument. But for two thousand years they have been laid aside, rejected. They were his people, his church. This is no longer true. St Paul leads us to hope that this casting off is not final, but at present it is complete.

Is it possible that the Christian church should suffer the same fate, if it goes the same way of self-obsession in its own advantages? True, the Christian church is the salt of the earth, but if the salt has lost its savour...? What have we been taught to expect in these circumstances? Flourishing churches have perished, almost without a trace, in the course of the two thousand years of the Christian era. I sometimes think that communism is the instrument of God's judgement on a decadent Christianity. Of course, this consideration does not make the communists any less reprehensible than it did the cruel Chaldeans in Isaiah's time. But it should warn us to repent lest we likewise perish.

Closely associated with the idea of judgement and rejection is that of the remnant. Not all the sons of Abraham were chosen, but Jacob alone, and not all the sons of Jacob, for Isaiah wrote concerning Israel, "If the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is

the remnant that shall be saved". It was in Elijah's time that the remnant principle was first made manifest; the seven thousand who had not bowed to Baal. Isaiah, as we have said, is the great prophet of the remnant. The thought is integral to the vision which was his call. He acted on it in his ministry again. In the servant songs the idea is clear. The servant is to be a blessing to Israel as well as to the gentiles. In Isaiah 53, the bystanders see the servant suffering for them. I do not think those commentators wrong who see in this passage a partial reference to the inner core of spiritually minded Israelites, suffering for the nation, though, as I have already said, the prophecy receives its perfect fulfilment only in Jesus Christ.

T. W. Manson, in discussing the term 'son of man', in his book, *The Teaching of Jesus*, is of the opinion that the remnant principle in God's dealing with man, is fundamental in scripture. The question is, is this the principle by which God works to-day? Admittedly not all the baptized members of the church enter heaven. Such a suggestion has never been entertained by any Christian theologian. Not all the members of the Israelite nation were members of the remnant. Nor are all the members of the church, living members of Christ, regenerated by his Spirit. This fact is true, must always be borne in mind and indeed taught. But I think that the word 'remnant', though a true description of the church's state at some periods, is less apt at others. If we apply the thought mechanically, we reach the conclusion that there is only a remnant of the clergy being saved, only a remnant of the bishops? God forbid! Yet the truth of the doctrine is contained in St Paul's words that "they are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither because they are Abraham's seed are they children" (Rom 9:7). It is possible to be a member of the church and not a member of Christ, and if we may argue from Old Testament analogy, we conclude that sometimes this unfortunate condition can be so usual that the faithful are the exception and deserve the title 'remnant'.

A final point needs to be observed. Salvation was not confined to those within the visible membership of the Old Testament church; it was not confined to Israelite nationals. The most conspicuous example of this teaching in the Old Testament is the book of Jonah. In this book the Old Testament prophet, a man whose character, so we gather from the book of Kings, was passionately patriotic, is depicted as sent by God to be the means of bringing repentance and blessing to a heathen

nation. The moral is unmistakable. God's grace extends beyond the borders of Israel. In a similar way, though on a lower plain, Amos speaks of God punishing the inhumanities that one heathen nation inflicts on another. So, too, he says, the migrations of the nomads were under God's direction. God brought the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kin (Amos 9). The story of Job is an example of God dealing in mercy with those who were not members of the Hebrew race. In this book there is no suggestion that Job knew or observed the Mosaic law or performed any of its sacrifices. Yet he has a strong faith and deep knowledge of God. His prayers were heard. He was blessed with as full a blessing as any member of the covenant race received.

God is not tied to his ordinances. That is the truth which these stories inculcate. It was the error of the Pharisees that they would not learn this truth. For example, their views forced them to hold that even the patriarchs observed the Mosaic law and so were saved. The truth contained in the Old Testament is the opposite. No one is saved by the observance of ordinances. The Mosaic law does not save. Men have always been saved through their relationship with God. This relationship is of grace, initiated and maintained by God himself. God normally confines this work of grace to those whom he has chosen to bring into covenant relation with himself. So much is clear from the scripture. But it is equally clear that God does not restrict himself exclusively to working in this way. God is not bound by his sacraments. This is an essential truth.

We are not under the old covenant but under the new. It may well be added whether the lessons drawn from the Old Testament are applicable to our conditions. The answer in my view is to be found in the fact that God is consistent. With him there is no shadow of turning. His actions spring from his character. By studying his actions in the past we may learn his character and so understand his actions in the present. We should study the Old Testament not in order to copy the details but to discern the principles of God's dealing with men and their relationship with him. For those principles do not change, just as God does not change. As the Article puts it, the Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only mediator between God and man being both God and man.

By examining God's dealings with the people of God and the church of the Old Testament we may learn what those principles are, which govern God's dealings with the church to-day.