

BOOK REVIEW

Jung Hoon Kim, *The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus* (JSNTSup, 268; London/New York: T. & T. Clark International, 2005). xvi + 271 pp. Hbk. US\$140.00.

This monograph, the result of the author's doctoral dissertation at the University of Durham under the supervision of Joel Marcus, advances a socio-historical and theological understanding of Paul's use of clothing imagery. Kim divides the material into two sections. The first half of the book interacts with what he terms 'History-of-Religions Background', which is not entirely descriptive of what he does in this section. The second half explores Paul's use of clothing imagery in terms of three broad categories: (1) clothing with a person (I): 'Christ', (2) clothing with a person (II): 'The new man' and (3) clothing with the resurrection body.

Seven relatively short chapters make up the 'History-of-Religions Background' section and these cover a wide and diverse range of ancient literature and customs that placed significant emphasis upon clothing imagery. Kim begins with the Hebrew Bible, moving from Adam and Eve to the priestly garments to various cosmological references to clothing (e.g. Ps. 102.26). Other Jewish literature is also consulted including *1* and *2 Enoch*, *Apocalypse of Moses*, *Vita Adae et Evae*, Philo, an assortment of rabbinic literature, and some references to various Dead Sea texts and pseudepigraphical works. He also consults *Joseph and Aseneth* and *The Hymn of the Pearl* (from the apocryphal work *Acts of Thomas*). Kim investigates the use of clothing imagery in an assortment of ancient traditions as well. These include clothing imagery in the mystery religions, the social significance of the Roman *toga virilis* and the baptismal practices of the early Church.

The function of clothing in the story of Adam and Eve and the symbolism of baptism in the early Church weigh in most heavily and consistently in his analysis of Paul's use of the motif. However, Kim does attempt to incorporate nuances from other literature and traditions

at several places; at these points in his analysis, he often tends to overextend the semantic domain of the motif. For example, he suggests that in Rom. 13.11-14, Paul had in mind traditions echoed in the Hebrew Bible, *Apocalypse of Moses*, *Gen. Rab.* and *The Hymn of Pearl* (p. 145). The extraction of the symbolic meaning for clothing imagery in these texts often involves a more allegorical reading and it is not always clear that Kim grasps precisely what is signified (if anything) by the use of clothing in these texts, which has an impact on the way he perceives Paul to be incorporating their ideas. Apart from these minor shortcomings, however, Kim deals with these materials in a concise manner and establishes their relation to clothing imagery in Paul.

Kim provides a comprehensive treatment of clothing imagery in both the (so-called) ‘disputed’ and ‘undisputed’ letters attributed to Paul. Galatians 3.27 and Rom. 13.14 form the exegetical basis for the chapter on being clothed with Christ. Kim begins his treatment of each passage with introductory remarks concerning the date and social setting of the letter. He seeks to draw a systematic connection between Pauline clothing imagery and baptism, stated on the background of the Adam–Christ typology, in both Galatians and Romans. ‘Therefore, to be united with Christ in baptism (in other words, to put on Christ) does not simply point to ritual initiation into Christ, but also to incorporation into Christ as the new Adam’ (p. 128). The ethical emphasis of the imagery is underlined more thoroughly in the Romans passage: ‘Paul wishes that “putting on the Lord Jesus Christ” should function as the main-spring of good works’ (p. 147). Whereas the passage in Galatians, which emphasizes a believer’s change of status, can be cast on the background of putting on the *toga virilis*, which signified that a Roman boy had become a man, Rom. 13.11-14 can be compared with Adam’s pre-fall garment of light, as recorded in ancient Jewish traditions (p. 150).

The clothing imagery involving putting on ‘the new man’ comes from Colossians (3.9-10) and Ephesians (4.22-24). Since the authorship of both of these books is disputed, Kim digresses to defend their Pauline authorship. Although he claims that ‘most modern scholars look on [Ephesians] as “deutro-Pauline”’ (p. 175) (a common misconception in New Testament scholarship), Harold Hoehner has recently shown that the divide in Pauline scholarship from 1991 to 2001 on this issue is actually about fifty-fifty (*Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002], pp. 19-

20) and throughout the history of New Testament studies there has typically been much less than 50% against Pauline authorship.

Clothing with the new man in Colossians and Ephesians is very similar conceptually, according to Kim, to clothing with Christ in Galatians and Romans. Concerning Col. 3.9-10 he concludes, ‘The eschatological outlook in Col. 3.1-4, which is maintained also in the imagery of putting-on-the-new-man in 3.9-10, implies that this metaphor refers to the believer’s identification with his or her inner self, which is undergoing eschatological change after the model of Christ, the new Adam’ (p. 174). The Christ–Adam typology, therefore, is still prominent, although baptism is not as heavily emphasized. This theme comes out more fully in the passage from Ephesians which ‘suggests that Christians’ baptismal union with Christ should be constantly realized in their practical lives. A constant change toward moral perfection should persistently take place in the believer’s inner self’ (p. 191).

The final chapter in Kim’s work treats being clothed with the resurrection body, mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15 and 2 Corinthians 5. In 1 Corinthians 15, clothing imagery signifies four things, according to Kim: (1) the fallen body inherited by the first Adam will be replaced by a body pervaded by the spirituality of the second Adam, (2) the present body will be exchanged for a body suitable for the inheritance of the kingdom, (3) the present body is corruptible while the future body is incorruptible and (4) the present body is subject to death whereas the future body will be subject to life (pp. 208-209). The clothing imagery in 2 Corinthians 5 describes the transformation that will take place at the parousia and is very much in line with the description in 1 Corinthians 15.

*The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus* provides the first monograph-length treatment of the clothing motif in Paul’s letters. While many of Kim’s conclusions are not novel, they are detailed, well argued and situated into a comprehensive framework for understanding clothing imagery in Paul. His use of extra-biblical literature seems at times to overextend the metaphor, but his central thesis revolving around the importance of the Christ–Adam typology, baptism, Paul’s ethical agenda and the inner self is hard to dispute.

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