

ANA RODRÍGUEZ LÁIZ, *El Mesías hijo de David: El mesianismo dinástico en los comienzos del cristianismo* (Asociación Bíblica Española 65; Estella: Verbo Divino, 2016). Pp. 333. Paper €26.

The work is the author's doctoral thesis (Pontifical University of Salamanca, 2014), which has been edited to reach a wider audience. The monograph, which is well written, offers a theological and contextual interpretation of the title "Son of David" in both the Gospel of Mark and the context of the primitive church. The volume consists of six chapters plus an introduction and a conclusion. In the introduction, Rodríguez Láiz lays out the scope and triple methodology of the volume: narrative, historical, and theological. She presents a

summary of previous research on the biblical concept of a Davidic messiah in the Gospel of Mark from the historical-critical method and narrative analysis.

In chap. 1, R.L. studies the Davidic and messianic connection in selected passages in the Gospel of Mark using narrative analysis. The titles “Messiah,” “Son of God,” and “Beloved Son of God” show that Mark departs from the traditional understanding of a Davidic Messiah—a warrior and righteous king who rules over Israel—to provide a christological identity for Jesus. The title “Son of David” (Mark 10:46-52; 11:9b-10a; 12:35-37) is treated with ambiguity in some early works. Bartimaeus, for example, calls Jesus “Son of David” but in a context of healing. The multitude who identifies Jesus as “Son of David” in his entrance to Jerusalem will not see him act as a warrior king. Instead, the event is interpreted prophetically. R.L. notes that Jesus’s Davidic lineage is absent and that Mark distances Jesus from his relatives, who do not understand his mission, actions, and words (3:20-21, 31-35; 6:1-6a). In the passion narratives, Jesus’s enemies are the only ones who consider the possibility that he may be the king of the Jews. In this way, Mark avoids any political association with the title.

In chap. 2, R.L. explores the biblical texts linked to the Davidic covenant, such as the oracle of Nathan (including other Deuteronomistic texts), some Davidic psalms, passages from the prophetic tradition, and extrabiblical sources from the Judaic literature of the first century B.C.E., especially texts written after the Roman occupation, to trace the influence they had on the understanding of Jesus’s identity as “Son of David” during the Second Temple period.

In chap. 3, R.L. turns her attention to the meaning of the title “Jesus, Son of David” within the Christian community prior to the Gospel of Mark. The identification of Jesus as “Son of David” is found in ancient professions of faith in Rom 1:3-4; Acts 2:22-36; 13:32-33, and other texts (Rev 5:5 and *Let. Barn.* 12.10-11). R.L. shows that the early church professes Jesus as the Son of David, the awaited Messiah, in view of the resurrection.

In chap. 4, R.L. explores the meaning of the title “Son of David” in the Synoptic tradition after Mark, the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. R.L. concludes that these authors depart from Mark’s christological agenda. Instead, they incorporate a record of the genealogy of Jesus as a descendant of David to emphasize the fulfillment of prophecy. Jesus was literally a descendant from David’s family line, but he was also the awaited Davidic Messiah who would reign forever. This belief was espoused by the primitive church and continued to be taught by the early church, as is brought out in the excursus on the writings of Ignatius of Antioch.

In chap. 5, R.L. considers the title “Son of David” and the Gospel of John. John differs significantly from the Synoptics in that he does not mention Jesus’s filial relationship to David. For the fourth evangelist, Jesus’s true origin, identity, and mission are disclosed through divine revelation and comprehended by faith, in line with Mark’s theological perspective.

In chap. 6, R.L. discusses Jesus’s messianic ancestry within the framework of the christology of the primitive church. The main idea here is that the different messianic conceptions of Jesus as “Son of David” in the primitive church were influenced by historical, theological, and social factors. In an excursus on social factors, R.L. argues that the Jewish Revolt prevented Mark from openly identifying Jesus as “Son of David.”

The final chapter is a summary of the previous chapters in the book with the author raising her own question for further research: To what extent has Jesus, Messiah in the Christian tradition, fulfilled the Jewish expectations of the Davidic promise?

There are many positives to this volume. It is an extensive and complex study of the traditions of the title “Son of David” from theological, historical, and social perspectives. Whoever wants to study the different aspects of christological titles and their relationship to Jewish messianic expectations will have a valuable source in this work. The volume, however, has some weaknesses. The author does not always explain why some texts were selected and other excluded; some points are repeated; and in a few instances the Greek text is cited with no accompanying translation.

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