

**THE PRAYERS OF JESUS**, by Joachim Jeremias. *Studies in Biblical Theology: Second Series*, 6. S.C.M. Press. 18s.

These four studies of Professor Jeremias are now happily available to a wider circle of readers in an admirable translation revised and checked by the author himself.

The four essays overlap in content, yet each is a complete little work with copious and very useful notes and references. Underlying all four is a preoccupation with what Professor Jeremias has termed *ipsissima vox Jesu*, or the very words uttered by Our Lord while on earth. Many scholars hitherto have been sceptical about the recovery of such words. Professor Jeremias, with consummate skill and scholarship, shows e.g. that Jesus constantly addressed God as 'my Father' (exceptions being Mk. 15:34, cf. Matt. 27:46), and that in doing so he used the Aramaic form *Abba*; and then 'with the simple *Abba*, "dear Father", the primitive Church took over the central elements of Jesus' faith in God'; hence St Paul's words 'God has sent the spirit of his Son into our hearts crying *Abba, Father*' (Gal. 4:6, cf. Romans 8:15b-16).

The second study starts from the basic statement that *Jesus came from a people who knew how to pray* (author's italics), and so very different from a world which was ignorant of prayer or simply made parody of it. This is not simply a situation of those days, but also one we can know only too well today. However much the Church goes out in compassion and love to the world, that same Church remains at heart a praying reality, and indeed distinct by this capacity for prayer which wells forth from

faith, and which somehow the world must be brought to share.

The situation in the Church, in this respect, was then as now. In another respect it was quite different. Arguing from the 24th Catechesis of St Cyril of Jerusalem, and then back to an earlier period, Professor Joachim shows how knowledge of and the privilege of using the Our Father was something reserved for full members of the Church, for those who attended the *missa fidelium*. Using the Lord's Prayer was a *privilege*. Hence the wording which has survived to this day: *audemus dicere*, which we should render 'we dare to say'. 'That should disquiet us' comments the Professor. Perhaps it should: because we have grown used to something very different, to hearing the Our Father on the lips of each and all from earliest days, because Our Lord taught them, and perhaps with the implied hope that we should have a lifetime in which to enter into the meaning of these Christ-given words.

Professor Jeremias goes on to analyse the earliest text of the Our Father (St Luke's), the earliest form of words (better surviving in St Matthew), and finally the absolutely new cry of *Abba, Father*. Most wonderful of all, Jesus authorizes his disciples to repeat *Abba* after him. 'Jesus gives them a share in his sonship, and empowers them, as his disciples, to speak with their heavenly Father in just such a familiar trusting way as a child would with his father' (p. 97).

ROLAND POTTER, O.P.

**THE CHRISTIAN IN THE THEOLOGY OF ST PAUL**, by L. Cerfaux. *Geoffrey Chapman*, 1967. 50s.

There is a good measure of originality in Mgr Cerfaux's presentation of the theology of St Paul. Instead of a stuffy and conventional treatise of a more usual type, he has chosen to write a trilogy on Christ, then on the Church, and finally on The Christian in the theology of St Paul—the volume before us. Three such approaches, three such ways of delving into the quarry, are surely a guarantee of omitting

nothing essential in the thought of St Paul and help considerably in bringing out the rich doctrinal content of the epistles.

The method used is wholly literary, historical and truly exegetical, and so free from existential or other philosophical bias. The author himself believes in an historical exegesis, 'which is the chief "handmaiden" of theology, and cannot correctly be made to serve any