



Christian-Jewish Dialogue: the Next Steps. London: SCM Press, 2000

| Braybrooke, Marcus

Beginning with the early years of the twentieth century, Braybrooke surveys the changing relationship between Judaism and Christianity reflected by Jewish scholars' interest in Christianity and Christian scholars' appreciation of rabbinic Judaism. For the postWorld War II period, he includes material from various documents, such as Vatican II's "Nostra aetate," that indicate major breakthroughs in Christian attitudes toward Judaism.

In his discussion of the Jewishness of Jesus, Braybrooke explores how ideas related to Christology might be compatible with Judaism. E.g., he asks the following challenging questions: "Is it possible to confess that Jesus was raised from the dead in a way that does not imply that the religious vitality of Judaism was not at an end? Is it also possible for Jews, without themselves making that affirmation, to see the Christian confession as a legitimate response to the one God?" (pp. 57-58). He then presents some responses by various Christian theologians, including his own, that offer new, nonliteralist interpretations of the theology of resurrection in the shadow of the Shoah and other genocidal acts in order to neutralize its use for Christian triumphalism. In response to the question of whether the incarnation can resonate with a Jew, he cites the work of various Jewish scholars on this sensitive question and other core Christian beliefs that open avenues of thought that might narrow the gap between the two faiths.

Braybrooke, furthermore, tackles the thorny issue of Christian missionary activity by citing the new thinking that asserts the validity of God's covenant with Israel, which argues that the attitudes of Jesus and Paul have been misread and misinterpreted and which redefines the meaning of mission. He concludes by calling for an end to religious exclusivism "so that the spiritual resources of the great religions are released to encourage co-operation and the healing of the nations" (p. 107). Therefore, he argues, the next stage of the dialogue must include Islam and other religions, gender and ecological issues, and other global problems.

The final chapter of Braybrooke's work is a response by Rabbi Tony Bayfield, who proposes not only that Christians must take Judaism seriously but also calls Jews to take Christianity seriously and to overcome their resistance to dialogue, which stem from fear, and suspicion. He challenges Jews to reexamine the Hebrew Bible and their doctrines in an effort to bring about greater rapprochement between Judaism and Christianity.

From a review by Lillian Sigal, Cabrini College, Radnor, PA, in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 38:2-3, Spring-Summer 2001.