

Roger Stronstad, *The Prophethood of All Believers: A Study in Luke's Charismatic Theology* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2010), paperback, xii + 136 pp., ISBN: 978-0981965130, US\$ 12.95.

Roger Stronstad inaugurated what is currently known as the William W. Menzies Lectureship at Asia Pacific Theological Seminary, Baguio City, Philippines, in February, 1993. This volume includes the four major lectures that he gave, revised and updated for publication. It was originally produced by Sheffield Academic Press in the Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series in 1999. It was also reprinted by T & T Clark in 2003. Now it is a delight to see the new edition of Stronstad's *The Prophethood of All Believers: A Study in Luke's Charismatic Theology* in print once again, courtesy of the CPT Press. It brings out the best of Pentecostal scholarship. This volume is a follow-up work of the author for one of the crucial Pentecostal publications on Luke-Acts, namely, *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Hendrickson Publishers, 1984) where he argues that Luke should be treated as a theologian in his own right apart from Paul and so should his pneumatology be seen as vocational. Accordingly, the charismatic theology of Luke-Acts is prophetic in nature. His conclusion is based on an inductive study of the Spirit. In *The Prophethood of All Believers*, once again the author focuses on the narrative hermeneutics in interpreting Luke-Acts. The result of his study is a strong argument for viewing the pneumatology of Luke as describing the prophethood of all Christian disciples. It has been highlighted again in this title that Luke is using his narrative to communicate theology. Stronstad's exegesis of Luke-Acts is a perceptive one and it is contributing something to the articulation of Pentecostal hermeneutics and theology. Hence, this work of Stronstad is appropriately reissued in a new edition by the Centre for Pentecostal Theology— CPT Press in the Pentecostal Theological Seminary, Cleveland, Tennessee. Reading *The Prophethood of All Believers* is a must for this current generation of Pentecostal students and ministers.

After an introduction, the book presents seven chapters. The chapters are all dealing with the prophetic Lukan pneumatology. Chapter one talks about the hermeneutical issue of Luke-Acts. Stronstad argues for “the narrative strategies” of Luke that includes “programmatic episodes” to give “successive reports” about the experience of the Spirit in Luke-Acts. The Lukan two-volume work is “selective history” and the paradigm that Luke presents should be applied. Neither the “historical particularity for the early Christian

community” nor the temporal “early Church practices” but rather “the principle inherent in a particular practice” must be applied. The groundwork that the author places in this initial chapter is very vital for the arguments that he makes in the subsequent chapters. In chapters two to six, Stronstad demonstrates his central thesis of “the prophethood of all believers” in Luke-Acts. He argues in chapter two that Jesus was an “anointed” and an “eschatological” prophet who was “mighty in word and deed.” Then, in chapter three, he contends that the early disciples of Jesus experienced Spirit-baptism that brought about the “prophethood of all believers.” The author explains in the following chapter how Moses’ desire for all people to be prophets and Joel’s prophecy of the outpouring of the Spirit nationwide are fulfilled when “the community of prophets becomes a nation.” The next chapter presents the deeds of the charismatic prophets namely, Stephen, Philip, Barnabas, Agabus and Peter. In chapter six, Stronstad depicts Paul as a charismatic apostle-prophet who pioneers prophetic communities in the local churches he plants among the Gentiles. The final chapter is a synthesis of his inductive study of Luke-Acts maintaining the validity of his central thesis that all Christian believers are prophets indeed.

Stronstad prefaces this new edition with confidence that the book has “not eroded its value, nor found its basic premise, namely, that the Lukan portrayal of God’s people as a community of charismatic prophets, untenable.” True to his preface, the author did not revise his book, except that the bibliography is updated. The author has not changed his views. He thinks that his study of Luke-Acts is sound. He only believes that he can still sharpen his arguments. Sound exegesis is important, and exegetical fallacy should be avoided. Exegesis can be abused. Each biblical scholar, like Stronstad, must focus on the hermeneutical methodology that has been adopted in the process of inquiry. This focus, in Stronstad's case, is the inductive analysis of the expressed pneumatology through the Lukan story of Jesus and his followers. That focus is important. It will be the fence that will guard him against any sidetrack, which is not vital to support the perspective of his hermeneutical aim. Concerning the method of interpretation that he employs, that is, a narrative paradigm analysis, is in turn anticipated to produce a system of theology that is discernible in Luke’s narrative. This system of theology brings to a near impossibility the viewing of anything that contends with or exists outside the system which Stronstad carefully develops. In other words, he is not going to give any attention to issues that may confuse or destruct the arguments that he generates from the system he develops in the process of his

study. If consistency in his approach places Stronstad in a difficult position, he may bypass the questions or consider some manner of reasoning to bypass the situation and suit it to the system that he is using. This avoidance of confronting subsequent questions upon a theological result is more or less based on the perspective and the agenda of the author in his inquiry. In any case, the integrity of Stronstad may not be questioned for it is his prerogative to do that. His adoption of a narrative paradigm analysis is legitimate.

Looking at the patterns in the narrative of Luke-Acts to come up with a theology of “the prophethood of all believers” is a significant principle that should be adopted in interpreting the narrative genre. In the narrative, the theology is disclosed in the story. It is the story in the narrative that articulates the intended meaning of the author. The establishment of the authorial intent through the examination of the paradigm in the narrative is the strength of Stronstad's hermeneutics. The author's approach is Evangelical. He follows the argument of Luke in the narrative presentation and comes up with a significant narrative paradigm, which is rooted in the Old Testament presentation of narrative paradigm. Furthermore, by using the Old Testament narrative paradigm approach, he is able to establish that the interpretive methodology he adopts is not strange to the original readers of the New Testament, especially to that of Luke-Acts. Since the scripture of apostolic Christianity is actually the Old Testament, Stronstad's presentation of his system of interpretation appears to be in line with that of the original readers of the Luke-Acts narrative. If that is the case, Stronstad's study brings to Pentecostal theology a valid and adoptable established system of biblical interpretation. Recognizing that the Pentecostal theology is based entirely on Luke-Acts, therefore the Pentecostal theological system is built on how the paradigm in Luke-Acts narrative is understood. If Stronstad is right, Pentecostal theology is legitimate and has a place in the theology of the New Testament. Based on the system of theology that he uses, he comes up with a theology of the prophethood of all believers that was taught by Luke.

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