

Eveson, Philip H. *Baptised with Heavenly Power: The Holy Spirit in the Teaching and Experience of D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones*. Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2025. 393pp. + 26pp. (back matter).

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones was one of the leading evangelical voices of the twentieth century in the United Kingdom particularly but also around the world. The study of his views of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is a fascinating but controversial part of his heritage.¹ Philip Eveson offers a careful and sympathetic overview of Lloyd-Jones's views, a study which one would probably not call "critical" but which is still honest in its approach. The structure of the book shows the author's concerns. The subtitle, *The Holy Spirit in the Teaching and Experience of D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones*, reveals his concern for the role of experience both theologically and personally in understanding Lloyd-Jones's pneumatology. The work divides into four parts—"Theological Background," "Theology of the Holy Spirit," "Revival and the Holy Spirit," "Preaching and the Holy Spirit"—with major analysis coming in the last three sections.

There is much both enriching and informative about the book. The author helpfully explores Lloyd-Jones's Welsh background. Not only does he deal with Lloyd-Jones's personal biography, but he also provides a full discussion of the overall Welsh context going back to the Evangelical Awakening. Eveson demonstrates how this Welsh history is important in understanding the development of Lloyd-Jones's ideas. In addition, he provides two valuable appendices. The first is a previously unpublished address by Lloyd-Jones on Evan Roberts and the Welsh revival; this essay not only reveals aspects of Lloyd-Jones's approach to revival but also stands by itself as a useful introduction to Roberts and that awakening. The other appendix is a selection from a personal journal that Lloyd-Jones kept for a time that shows how his concerns about the Holy Spirit were far from merely academic but were the burden of his heart and soul.

Eveson addresses several concerns in this study. A key part of his argument, as odd as it sounds to those familiar with the Welsh preacher, is that Lloyd-Jones was genuinely Reformed. He answers charges that Lloyd-Jones's pneumatology put him outside the bounds of Reformed orthodoxy. The author shows how Lloyd-Jones's ideas are rooted in the approaches of some Puritans to the doctrines of the Spirit. He may not be typical of Reformed expositors on this point, but neither does he stand as unique. The greater question is whether Lloyd-Jones is biblical in his views, and that issue takes up a much larger portion of the book's discussion.

Eveson also stresses a concern with revival as a major component of Lloyd-Jones's theology. This topic is a natural extension of pneumatology, as the nature of the Holy Spirit's work is a major concern in discussing the nature—even validity—of revival. Lloyd-Jones in fact bemoaned the lack of the discussion of revival among theologians, with the exception of J. C. Ryle, James Buchanan, George

¹ One can start delving into this topic by reading Lloyd-Jones himself in *The Baptism and Gifts of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996). For secondary studies other than Eveson's, see Michael Eaton, *Baptism with the Spirit: The Teaching of Martyn Lloyd-Jones* (Leicester, England: InterVarsity, 1989), or my own briefer study, "Pentecostal Puritan? D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit," *Journal of Biblical Theology & Worldview* 5, no. 2 (2025): 41–60.

Smeaton, and of course Jonathan Edwards, who is likely the most prominent theologian in church history to address the theological nature and meaning of revival.

Of course, it is the details of Lloyd-Jones's view of the work of the Holy Spirit that take the central place in Eveson's discussion. The meaning of "baptism" of the Spirit is central to the analysis (cf. 145–46). Lloyd-Jones, for example, denied that Spirit baptism always referred to conversion, rejecting the idea that Christians already have all of the Holy Spirit they will ever possess and that their need is to surrender fully so that they can enjoy what they already have (193). Instead, he argued vigorously for particular experiences of baptism or fillings (the two terms seem interchangeable in Lloyd-Jones's thought), experiences that were not permanent and could be repeated.

Considering Lloyd-Jones's work as an exegete, it is no surprise that discussions of scriptural evidence take a central place in the discussion. Eveson surveys Lloyd-Jones's examination of relevant passages throughout the Bible, although unfortunately there is no Scripture index. One point of contention is the role of the Book of Acts. Are passages in Acts descriptive or prescriptive? Those opposed to Lloyd-Jones's approach to spiritual gifts tend to see references to Spirit baptism in Acts as simply Scripture's descriptions of events that happened in the first century. Lloyd-Jones argues that they are prescriptive, recording matters that are still normative for the church.

The place of experience in Lloyd-Jones's thought shows his view of assurance. He recognized the importance of views other than his own. Assurance may be a deduction from the promises of God or may be validated by the "tests of life" as in 1 John, the fruit of one's life providing evidence for assurance. But Lloyd-Jones believed the highest form of assurance was the direct testimony of the Spirit to the believer.

Some of Lloyd-Jones's arguments are less than convincing. He said that the reason the NT never urged people to be baptized in the Spirit was that believers were already evidently baptized with the Spirit. As to why John in his epistles used, in the words of Jason Meyer, "lower forms of assurance" based on matters such as the tests of life instead of experiences of the Spirit, John wrote for "a later generation of believers" whose fervor had cooled.

Eveson traces the outworking of these views first in Lloyd-Jones's approach to revival but even more in his preaching. Lloyd-Jones appears to model the classic evangelical understanding of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of the church. One may not presume the Spirit's work in preaching but must seek the blessing of the Holy Spirit every time one enters a pulpit.

Eveson observes, "Lloyd-Jones's calling was not to write systematic or even biblical theology works on the Holy Spirit, preaching, and revival" (325). Eveson's treatment bears out this point. Lloyd-Jones often touched on the subject of the Holy Spirit but not in a progressively structured manner. Rather as the occasion arose, such as when pneumatology related to a passage he was expositing or when he was discussing historical manifestations of revival, he delved into the topic. I wonder whether this tendency could be a source of confusion. To some extent readers must construct a "systematic theology" of Lloyd-Jones's pneumatology on their own.

Of course, every study will leave some matters for further consideration. Does Lloyd-Jones's stress on revival raise questions about the value of the regular means of grace? Eveson's discussion on 217 at least seems to refute or modify that criticism. What about Lloyd-Jones's apparent diminishing of the

importance of objective evidences of assurance? Was he simply correcting those who avoid subjective approaches because they seem too “Pentecostal,” or did he reduce the value of such evidences?

Certainly, on the whole Eveson’s book provokes thought on the subject of Lloyd-Jones’s views on pneumatology and their ramifications. Furthermore, the work’s tone makes it not only historical informative but also edifying.

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