**Recommend a Book Project - Issue 6 April 2021 - Edited Tony + Barbara Holden @** [**thbhholden@gmail.com**](about:blank) **see our website -** [**www.tonyandbarbaraholden.com**](about:blank)

This project ► is all about ‘recommending’ books. We need ‘author, title, publishing date’ and why you want others to read this book! We need between 50 and about 250 words. ‘Discernment is all’ might be our slogan. We hope to ‘publish’ by e-mail and website in April, August, and December.

**Greetings RAB2 issue 6 [April and Easter] –** we send this knowing that we celebrate Easter as a holiday and as a religious festival. We hope you enjoy this issue – there are [26] recommendations. We won’t say there is ‘something for everyone.’ But we do hope there is ‘something for you.’ We suspect we won’t be free from covid and other threats any time soon. And for some, with ageing, illness, disability, hard times is what you have! But we persist and live our lives especially valuing -- people, sharing, connectedness, creativity, art and books. People often speak of art as therapy! Well there is no doubt that books are also therapy for many of us. We look forward to having feedback from you and of course recommendations for the next issue. Love from us Tony and Barbara.

◙ “Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider [Francis Bacon 1561 – 1626].”

**► In A/Z of author first name.**

Ann Cleeves ‘Cold Earth – the Shetland series’ [2016] - I visited Shetland for about 10 years once a year as part of my work for the National Methodist Church. Since those days Jimmy Perez [2013] and Vera Stanhope [2011] have been TV favourites and both are from Ann Cleeves’ novels. This is quite a long-read, just shy of 400 pages. It’s a police procedural; a meditation on Perez’ bereavement, parenting of a child, and a potential new love; and [as you would expect] an evocation of Shetland. My memories include the light, the dramatic changes in the weather, the sea-voes, driving with no other car in sight; travelling by ferry to Yell and Unst; and the people. Oh! and there was the business of getting there. I recall when the plane missed the island because of high winds and the pilot assured us “don’t worry ladies and gentlemen I’ll go round and try again!” And the book, a good read [Tony Holden].

Ann Cleeves ‘The darkest evening’ [2020] - This is the latest book in Ann Cleeves’ series about Vera Stanhope, a detective inspector. Vera is shambolic and ungainly, yet strong, competent, clever and authoritative. A real page turner I read it in two days. In the book Vera is driving home to her isolated Northumberland cottage in a blizzard. She finds an abandoned car on the side of the road with the driver’s door open. In the back of the car is a toddler! She drives on with the child to the next house where a dead woman is found. Is the woman the child’s mother? The house she has reached is the local manor house owned by the Stanhope family, relatives of Vera. Her father, Hector fell out of favour with the family long ago. Everyone in the house comes under suspicion but the eventual culprit comes as a surprise [Janet Dawe].

Arthur Berry ‘The Little Gold Mine’ [1991] – this is a novel set in the Potteries town of Burslem written by the local artist Arthur Berry who has been compared with L. S. Lowry for his depictions of working-class people and life. His art needs to become more widely known outside of the area in which he lived and worked. The little gold mine of the novel is Sissymint’s chip shop and it tells the story of Phoebe Salt and her family in the first sixty years of the twentieth century; it is a tale of humour and tragedy which deserves a wider audience. You might also want to check Berry’s two collections of poetry: ‘Dandelions’ and ‘On the Street’ [Leslie Powner is engaged in producing a new edition of the book with coloured illustrations and additional notes see Newcastle under Lyme’s new museum later this year].

Bernardine Evaristo ‘Girl, woman, other’ [2019] - Once upon a time this novel might have been described as experimental or avant-garde – simply on the basis of the layout of the text. Amongst her many prizes there was “Margaret Atwood and Bernardine Evaristo: Winners of the 2019 Booker Prize.” The flyer describes her as Professor of Creative Writing at Brunel University London.” A Guardian review has: “Her eighth novel follows 12 characters, most of them black British women, moving through the world in different decades and learning how to be [8 May 2019].” It is strong and engaging – though at one level very detailed. I enjoyed it especially on place, identity and gender, generations and [what used to be called] families. It is funny, insightful, and her observations and descriptions often surprise. [Tony Holden].

Brian Hoare ‘Born in Song: Texts and Tunes for Worship’ [2021[ - The long months of lockdown have afforded me time to gather together this collection of sixty-three of my hymns, songs, liturgical settings and anthems now published and available for £7.50 plus postage and packing from [www.moorleys.co.uk](about:blank) or [www.amazon.co.uk](about:blank) . With a Foreword by BBC ‘Songs of Praise’ presenter Pam Rhodes it also includes a brief musical autobiography, the stories of how each item came to be written and an index of other books (thirty-seven of them) in which they have been published. If it provides resources for the ongoing worship of the church (once we can sing again!) I will feel blessed indeed [Brian Hoare].

Christiane Ritter ‘A woman in the polar night – translated by Jane Degras and with a foreword by Sara Wheeler’ [1938, 1954, 2019] – This was a Christmas gift from daughter Siân. My Uncle Elwyn, who twice lived with us [as a young man and later when married], used to describe his visits to Norwegian waters in the Royal Navy during WW2. This adventure began in 1933/4 when a woman Austrian painter joined her ex-navy hunter husband and his fellow-hunter Norwegian Karl Nicholaisen on Spitsbergen. She was to explore and observe living in the Arctic, with all its beauty and dangers. The novel has a lot about ‘ice, soot and holy quiet’ and much about hunting and the landscape. Her description is so sparse and often tense and yet everything is vivid and vital. There is little revelatory about her relationships - with husband Hermann or Karl. She returned to Austria, World War 2 and “my daughter at home” changed by the Arctic experience. She was never to write another book but died aged 103 in 2000 having continued to paint. This is an outstanding novel and a record of an extraordinary woman [Barbara Holden].

Deborah Moggach ‘The Carer’ [2000] – Deborah Moggach explores the topical question of care for the elderly and whose responsibility it is. This is a story of Phoebe and Robert’s complex emotional rollercoaster of offloading their father to Mandy, a professional. / Robert lived in Wimbledon, Phoebe in Wiltshire, and their father James’ village lay between the two. Robert was nearer, but reaching the village meant negotiating London traffic. Robert reminded Phoebe of his alleged commitments when, in fact, he sat in the garden shed trying to write a novel. At the end the two engage Mandy to care for their father. / Within weeks Mandy gains James’ affections and confidence; escorting James on outings he would previously have denigrated. Phoebe and Robert’s ambivalence towards Mandy takes a turn; each find Mandy searching through James’ papers which they assume their father had asked her, but at a family gathering Mandy questions the grandchildren about the family. The more Mandy tries to find about the family the greater the suspicion. It also comes to light that James and Mandy had visited the family solicitor; James had tinkered with his will. / Then, one day Phoebe and Robert arrives to see an ambulance leave; they think it must be their father. It is Mandy; James reveals all. / More in part two where the characters tell their own story, in my opinion, the most arresting being the mother’s letter to James. / Borrow Box, a downloadable software, enables me to borrow from a selection of eBook or audio version without having to visit the library [Hasan Deveci].

Diana Norman ‘The Morning Gift’ [1985] - This novel, published in 1985, is a sort of prequel to ‘FitzEmpress’ Law’ - one of the few books which have tempted me to write congratulating the author (of course, sadly, I didn’t). This book covers the life and hardships of a young noblewoman during the reign of King Stephen, when God and His Saints slept. Mrs Norman has, for me at least, the gift of using characters and settings to bring to life a period which I knew only in monochrome. Here the young FitzEmpress makes a “cameo appearance” setting the scene for later. [Bill Richardson].

Eve Garnett ‘The Family from One End Street’ [1937] - A children’s book first published in 1937 and winner of the Carnegie Medal that year. It is nicely illustrated by the author and tells the story of episodes in the life of the large family of Mr Ruggles, a dustman. The family are satisfied with their lot and their limited aims and successes. Perhaps the lesson for us all comes with the brief reflections of Mr Short, an author, at the end of Chapter 8 [Bill Richardson].

Iris Murdoch ‘Metaphysics as a guide to morals’ [1982 Gifford lectures and 1992] - Iris Murdoch died in 1999 and her life was marked by biographies by husband John Bayley [and others]. I read Iris Murdoch ‘Existentialists and Mystics’ [1997] some years ago and had this 520-page series of essays/ chapters on philosophy and ethics as a Christmas gift from son Adam. Part of the fun of doing A-level history [1958!] was that you got to do library-duty! One day I came across Bertrand Russell ‘A History of Western Philosophy [1945].’ I would have been 17. Goodreads has: “the outstanding one-volume work on the subject.” I was hooked and never ‘recovered.’ I have persisted [in spite of all claims about speech] in privileging writing. And my word can Iris Murdoch write. [1] She gives her own account of western thought especially Plato, Kant, Wittgenstein, and the rest. [2] She understood what happened [pre-1982] to Christian theology and church through ‘demythologizing’ and the loss of a ‘supernatural God.’ [3] She has strong and imaginative things to say about goodness and reality; consciousness and identity; art, literature and culture. Oh yes and meditation and what I’d call human purpose. [4] It is difficult and long but it is a worthwhile and exciting read [Tony Holden].

Jane Harper ‘The Lost Man’ [2019] - This crime novel is unusual, as much about a mystery as a crime, and set in the remoteness of the Australian outback. It superbly evokes the isolated life of a family with vast cattle properties there, with single homesteads long hours apart from each other. / The story centres on the inexplicable disappearance and death of the oldest brother, Cameron, out in the desert. It describes the dynamics of family members, their fortitude and dependence on their own resources, their individual relationships and reactions to their loss, and efforts by them and the Australian authorities to resolve the strange event. / Family secrets are unveiled with compelling skill and pace. The Guardian described ‘The Lost Man’ as a slice of ‘outback noir.’ I recommend it and can lend a copy if wished [Angela Aldred].

Jane Harper ‘The Lost Man’ [2019] - Last year I heard on Radio 4 a couple of excerpts of ‘The Dry’ by Jane Harper. Intrigued I managed to get hold of the book in order to read the whole novel as I hadn’t heard it all. I was gripped. Jane Harper is an Australia writer and these two books, ‘The Dry’ and ‘The Lost Man’ are two in a trilogy with a detective called Aaron Falk at their heart. Set in the immensely hot and arid landscape of the Australian outback many farm families live isolated lives in extreme discomfort and tension, trying to cope with circumstances that offer no hope in the future or sustenance in the present. / In ‘The lost man’ two adult brothers are confused to find the body of their beloved and amiable middle brother dead of heatstroke and dehydration miles from the homestead near the grave of an unknown stockman. What was he doing there? How did he get there? Was the old stockman’s grave a rendezvous that went wrong? These and other questions mark the beginning of a slow and penetrating investigation that gradually brings more than just the perpetrator to light. / Gradually, as the book progresses one finds out that the dead brother was not in fact the wonderful man of his outer personality but a man whose wife and children were afraid of him, a man who secretly bullied and hurt those close to him and a man who deceived his brothers and neighbours into thinking all was well in his life. / It is a standalone novel but the atmosphere of the unrelentingly vast outback, the blistering heat and the sudden unexplained violence are similar to the murder investigation in ‘The Dry.’ I loved it and am now starting on another novel by Jane Harper called ‘Force of Nature’. After that I believe there is another called ‘The Survivors’ Thank goodness the libraries are reopening at last [Andrea Moles].

Jean Rhys ‘Wide Sargasso Sea’ [1966 / 2000] - Over Christmas, I watched a recording of the National Theatre's production of Jane Eyre. It was brilliant and made me want to know more about Mr. Rochester. / Inspired, but independent of Charlotte Bronte's book, the author tells the back-story of Mr. Rochester's first wife - the mad, haunted woman in the attic of Thornfield Hall. / Set in early nineteenth century Jamaica, Antoinette Cosway, a Creole heiress is married off to a young Englishman. She is the product of an inbred, decadent, expatriate society, resented by the recently-freed slaves, whose superstitions she shared. As she languishes in the oppressive beauty of her tropical surroundings, she is unable to understand or love her husband and slowly descends into madness. / The couple return to England and she lives out her life incarcerated in the attic, until that fateful night. / A sad tale, but enlightening, which gave me a deeper understanding of why the main male character in Jane Eyre is so cold and unapproachable. But, as we all know, Jane says at the end of the Bronte book - "reader, I married him" [Suzanne O'Shea].

John Bowker ‘Religion Hurts: Do Religions do more Harm than Good?’ [2018] - This is a short book (177 pages) and a hard but rewarding read. / The author is one of the foremost authorities on religion in the UK, if not the world. The book seeks to answer questions like “What is a religion?” “What part have religions played in evolution and human history?” “Must there be competition and conflict between religions?” / The chapter headings indicate the breadth of the territory that the book covers. For instance, the first three chapters consider (1) Religion and religions (2) Do differences make a difference? From genes to the Golden Rule (3) What does it mean to be human? / Bowker is remarkably well read. Not only in his own field but in the disciplines of genetics, neuroscience, and sociology. The bibliography with which the book ends lists 158 books and articles, a mere 13 being by the author himself! / For me the best section of the book is the second “Additional Text” which is entitled “Christianity and other religions” and is the most theological bit. Perhaps that is why I liked it the most [Michael Fielding].

JoJo Moyes ‘The Girl You Left Behind’ [2012] - I recommend this. I would normally have rejected this book on the grounds that the title and the author’s name sound a bit ‘lightweight’ but it was recommended by a listener on Radio London so I gave it a try. / The story is certainly not lightweight and centres on a painting “The Girl You Left Behind”, hence the title of the book. The painting is of a young French woman and was painted by her husband before their marriage. Their story is set in a hotel they run in northern France which is taken over by the German army stationed nearby in 1916 when France was occupied. The artist husband is taken from the hotel, leaving his young wife, her sister, brother and the painting behind. / We then move to the present, where the painting is owned by a young widow whose husband bought it for her when they were on honeymoon 4 years previously. The artist’s work has apparently now become sought after and a dispute occurs over the ownership of the painting. Should it be returned to the French family along with other stolen Nazi art; to the family who just want to sell it and have no attachment to it now; or should the young, still-grieving widow be allowed to keep it as it means so much more to her and was bought legitimately? / The complicated stories of both young women are told, going back and forth from World War 1 to the present day, so whose side would you be on? [Jean Hobbs].

J. R. R. Tolkien ‘The Silmarillion’ [1977 edited and published posthumously by his son Christopher Tolkien with assistance from writer Guy Gavriel Kay] – I'm currently reading ‘The Silmarillion’ by J. R. R Tolkien. It's very detailed and reads like a history book but fictional and it's fun to see connections to ‘Lord of the Rings’ [1954] and ‘The Hobbit’ [1937] - [Joanna Newton].

Kim Hope ‘The bullet in the pawpaw: theatre and AIDS in South Africa’ [2020] - I’d like to recommend this book. It is by a Quaker friend who attends the same Meeting as us. / It’s the story of her long association with Southern Africa - touring with a theatre company as a young woman, teaching drama at an international school in Swaziland, and then running Themba - a youth theatre project in South Africa together with her friend Theresa. Themba selected and trained young theatre facilitators to educate other young people and children about HIV/AIDS and help them make good health choices. They reached thousands of young people. It’s an inspiring read. Kim also has a light touch in her writing which makes the book both easy and fun [Louise Williamson].

Laura Imai Messina (translated by Lucy Rand) ‘The Phone Box at the Edge of the World’ [2020] – It brings to life a true story of an ancient belief in some cultures that the dead lived beyond the Oceans. / Yui loses her mother and daughter in the tsunami of 2011, in Japan. Like thousands of others living in Tokyo, she is overcome with grief not knowing how she will ever carry on. In the wake of her unthinkable loos, Yui hears of the disused telephone box placed in a garden overlooking the ocean where the grieved could come and talk to their loved ones whom they lost. She makes her pilgrimage to the phone box but she cannot bring herself to speak into the receiver. As news of the phone box spreads more people all around the world make the journey. A few visits later, Yuri meets Takeshi, a bereaved husband whose daughter stopped talking after the loss of her mother. The book tells a story of ‘universal loss and the power of love.’ The reader is taken through a journey of patience, courage and hope; much like Christy Lefteri ‘The Beekeeper of Aleppo’ where the reader starts in Syria through Turkey to Greece then Europe to reach England. The story simultaneously disillusions and reassures. It feels as though all is lost and when you lose everything there is nothing to find, but more grief. Yet, the friendship develops and what follows soothes the soul. / I enjoyed the book because we all have lost someone close or cry for something. I followed Yuri’s every step and found a secret listener who emphasises not merely with words but deeper still with my thoughts and feelings [Hasan Deveci].

Mara Timon ‘The City of Spies’ [2000] - When in 1943 the English agent Elisabeth de Mornay’s cover is blown by a resistance fighter Pierre Alaunt she has to flee Paris. On her escape she meets Alex, a shot down mosquito pilot from the 105 squadron. Elisabeth reaches neutral Lisbon where, with a new identity as a French widow Solange Verin, Elizabeth meets diplomats, rubs shoulders with the Gestapo, follows smugglers and spies on spies. She knows all but, where no one is who they claim to be, Elisabeth can trust no one. / For me, the book captures conflicting loyalties, on this occasion of wartime espionage. In Paris, Pierre Alaunt betrayed her because she rejected his sexual advances. On the journey, Alex is killed defending an innocent woman. Lisbon, Elizabeth as Solange falls in love with Eduard Graf, but he is a Gestapo Officer, who watches her every step but does not report her movements. The closer Elisabeth gets to finding out who is doing what, the risk of being found out grows. Ultimately, Elisabeth infiltrates a German espionage ring targeting Allied ships, before returning to London only to be posted to Germany to find Eduard. / The book ends with an epilogue with a tour of Lisbon, which leaves a longing to visit the city [Hasan Deveci].

Matt Haig 'The Midnight Library' [2020] - If you are feeling regretful about any aspect of your life, this is the book to read. You will see how 'successful' lives (however you want to define 'successful' - riches, fame, sporting prowess) may well have unforeseen downsides. You will see the possibilities and potential in what you may be feeling is your own rather humdrum existence! There is humour and warmth and intelligence and magic here [Rachel Hobson].

Michael Taylor ‘The Interest: How the British Establishment Resisted the Abolition of Slavery’ [2020] - This book has an original take on the Abolition of Slavery. Taylor explores why it took until 1834 to abolish slavery, having ended the slave trade in 1807. The tightly fought battle between the economic self-interest of the slave-holders (the West Indian Interest) and the moral repugnance of the abolitionists is described in some detail but with a verve that is totally engaging. I learnt a lot from this book: the astonishing range of supporters of the anti-abolitionist lobby, from Gladstone to Cardinal Newman, and some of the less famous yet significant abolitionists such as Elizabeth Heyrick and Stephen Lushington. / It is also unusual for its lack of the fashionable missionary sneer. In fact, two Wesleyan Methodists, Henry Bleby and Henry Whiteley are credited in the book for their roles in the struggle. It is also the only book on this subject which I have read which recognises the significance of the arguments over the religious proof texts and how this was shaped by an early nineteenth century understanding of the Bible. The fortuitous coming together of such events as the new Whig government, the Sam Sharpe Rebellion, and the new industrial political muscle, are described with forensic vigour. / His final chapter rightly challenges Boris Johnson’s boast about “countries that haven’t had the benefit of British rule.” The sheer political drudgery yet stoic determination of the abolitionists, their skill in building coalitions, together with their flair and imagination also has a message for our own political times [Gill Webster].

Padraig O Tuama and Glenn Jordan ‘Borders and Belonging: The book of Ruth: A story for our times’ [2021] - During the Brexit debate, Padraig and Glenn held a series of conversations across the UK and Ireland about what Brexit could mean for the future relationship between Ireland and the UK. These conversations took as their basis the Old Testament book of Ruth. / Ruth was a foreigner who returned to Israel with her mother-in-law Naomi when both had been widowed in Moab. The writers uncover the stresses and strains on these two unprotected women in making this journey and the dangers they faced with no male support. They unpack how this unlikely short tale (four chapters) has resonance for our times. / The theological exploration they undertake is well-researched and opens up the possibility that the Canon of Scripture contains within itself the power to reform our understanding of God’s law and our own morality. This is particularly based on the concept of ‘lovingkindness’ – the extraordinary generosity of the migrant Moabitess Ruth to her Jewish mother-in-law which seems to call out generosity in those who meet her. / “Kindness sees beyond divisions of ethnicity, politics or religion and finds the common good through service.” / How we view ourselves and others and our accustomed and unexamined sense of identity are challenged by this story to make possible new beginnings. / As one reviewer says: “Warning: if you prefer to remain unchanged, this might not be for you” [Paul Regan - Ron Smith also wrote recommending this book and shared a paper he had written].

Paul Auster ‘The art of hunger – essays, prefaces, interviews and the Red Notebook’ [1997/8] – Sometimes I have the need to go back to a particular book: this was my fourth reading during some 20 years. I have read some of his novels starting with ‘the New York trilogy’ [1985/1986]. And some of the novels and essays by Siri Hustvedt [his wife since 1982]. Both are outstanding writers. Although American his centre here is European and European history since WW2 and the Holocaust. It includes being Jewish [his parents were Polish Jewish] and translating from the French. So, if you are interested in, [passionate about], reading as part of living - and writing [including writing about books] as part of living – this is an amazing book. He quotes Georges Bataille: “How can we linger over books we feel the author was not compelled to write?” Few will know all [or even many] of his authors. But the narrative, the questioning, is hugely imaginative and stimulating. And as for the quality try - Charles Reznikoff: “Te Deum: Not because of victories / I sing, / having none, / but for the common sunshine, / the breeze, / the largess of the spring. / Not for victory / but for the day's work done / as well as I was able; / not for a seat upon the dais / but at the common table” [Tony Holden].

Pope Francis in conversation with Austen Ivereigh ‘Let us Dream: The Path to a Better Future’ [2020] - This is an amazing insight into the thinking of the present Pope. Austen Ivereigh was for a time a community organiser with London Citizens when I was chair of the charity. Austen has written two biographies of Francis ‘The Great Reformer’ [2014] and ‘Wounded Shepherd’ [2019] and knows the Pope well. This book came out of a conversation between the two men. / He draws on his experience in Argentina of getting alongside those on the margins of society. Francis has a clear understanding that poor people are not heard by systems of government and are unequally treated by the market. The pandemic has exposed these inequalities in a vivid way. / ‘Let us Dream’ is a fascinating look at what the future could be if we can use this crisis to reimagine the economy by putting the poor and the planet at the centre of our action. The recipe which Francis explains is the clearest statement yet of his support for the idea of community organising, of working together fraternally for the common good. / The book is divided into three chapters: Time to See; Time to Choose; Time to Act. / “When I speak of change, I mean that those people who are now on the edges become the means of changing society” [Paul Regan].

Rebecca Wragg Sykes ‘Kindred - Neanderthal Life, Love, Death and Art’ [2020] - This is a detailed, evocative and exciting book. ‘Kindred’ explores how Neanderthals lived, loved, died and created. Wragg Syke’s passion and knowledge for her subject come shining through. There is a strong sense of the scale of time that Neanderthals lived, the changing conditions they survived, and the variety of their skills as cultures evolved across Eurasia. / Of course, when looking back so far, there is so much that is unknown, indeed unknowable. This is as much a story about human curiosity, of science and of the astonishing impact of very recent scientific techniques – that have opened-up analysis of stone, bone and DNA. / As a life-long fan of J M Auel ‘Earth Children Series,’ the landscape and details felt familiar and it was lovely to see such generous acknowledgement of Auel in the book. / ‘Kindred’ challenges us to think about what it means to be human, with Neanderthal DNA still inside of us. / Having already discounted the myth of human innate superiority and touched on potential perils for human survival (with the climate crisis featuring strongly), the epilogue brings us back to the very particular present of Covid and lockdown. / No doubt future historians will ask questions of how we lived, loved, died and created during Covid [Sian Newton].

William R Herzog II ‘Parables as Subversive Speech - Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed’ [1994] - This book reinterprets the [New Testament] parables of Jesus in the light of the social conditions of first century Palestine, particularly from the point of view of the rural poor to whom Jesus was preaching. The approach is inspired by the insights of liberation theology, particularly the work of Paulo Freire as an educator of peasants in Brazil. / The book has turned my thinking about the parables [of Jesus] upside down, and I haven’t even finished it yet. For example, in the parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard (Matthew 20: 1-16) the vineyard owner is interpreted not as a gracious God figure, but as an exploitative landowner whom Jesus was criticising as an example of the social structures and practices of the day. / Herzog agues his case well, with sections on the work of Freire, an analysis of the structures in Palestinian society in the time of Jesus, and a careful analysis of different historical approaches to the parables which are used as examples. He also considers that interpreting the parables and interpreting Jesus’ life and teaching as a whole are strongly interconnected. / The approach sheds new light on why Jesus was hated by the authorities. / It is not a quick read but very worth the effort [Keith Aldred].