

BOOK REVIEWS

Bible Windows 5.1. Cedar Hill, TX: Silver Mountain Software, 1997. \$195.

Software for Bible study abounds (see reviews by Dr. David Baker in *ATJ* 29 [1997] 99-103; 28 [1996] 112-125), but this reviewer has found none to surpass the updated release of *Bible Windows* for relevance of contents and overall value. The program is available only on CD-ROM, and requires an operating environment of Microsoft Windows 3.1, Microsoft Windows 95, or higher to run, and a system with at least 4 MB RAM.

The designers of the program have assembled an impressive collection of texts. There are eight English translations of the Bible—the KJV, ASV (1901), RSV, NRSV, God's Word translation, Darby, Webster, and the Bible in Basic English. The RSV includes the Old Testament Apocrypha. Luther's German translation is also included. The bundle of original language texts is complete: Greek New Testament (United Bible Societies text, 4th edition), Hebrew Bible (*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*), and Septuagint. These texts are grammatically tagged for full parsing, and equipped for full interlinear display. Also included is the Vulgate and three additional Greek New Testament texts (Textus Receptus, Westcott-Hort, and Tischendorf). As many of the above texts as the user desires can be installed directly onto the hard drive for faster searches and the like; the rest will still be available through the CD. The program comes with three Greek-English lexica: a concise dictionary (Barclay Newman), the Intermediate Liddell-Scott Lexicon (an excellent resource for both biblical and classical Greek), and the Louw-Nida Lexicon (which groups words by semantic domain, the premier United Bible Societies lexicon). The Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon and a more concise Hebrew glossary provide support for Hebrew Bible study.

In addition to strictly Biblical texts, the CD-ROM contains an extensive library of Greco-Roman and early Christian literature. The thirty-eight volume collection of the Ante-Nicene, Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers (Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp, Justin, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian, Eusebius, Jerome, Augustine, John Chrysostom, and many others) is included, as well as the complete works of Josephus. A truly impressive addition is the Silver Classical Library -- the texts which provide the reader with a comprehensive introduction to the Greco-Roman environment of the New Testament, but which are all too frequently overlooked. Here one will find, in English translation, the major plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes, the works of Aristotle, Homer, Marcus Aurelius, Plato, Plotinus, and Virgil, the histories of Herodotus, Tacitus, and Thucydides, and the Lives of Plutarch. As an added bonus, the designers of *Bible Windows 5.1* have included a collection of liturgical texts taken from the internet. The format of these is rather rough, but the texts of the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*, the Greek Orthodox Divine Liturgy, the Catholic Mass, and many other liturgical resources are available.

The program is well designed for working with the original language texts (as well as the English, of course). A scroll lock function enables the user to open the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, and an English version and read through a Bible passage

Book Reviews

simultaneously. The main biblical texts (Greek NT, BHS, and LXX) are grammatically tagged so that parsing help is instantly available; links to the lexica make word study easy (and rather reliable, given the choice of lexica); an interlinear display of a text is always just a click away. There are even links for investigating OT allusions and quotations in the NT (although here the program lacks an important feature — it takes the user automatically to the Hebrew OT and not also the Septuagint). At any point in the Greek New Testament, one can open all nine translations for the purposes of comparison. The program has complete concordancing and search capabilities. The user can search for single words (whichever language), phrases, combinations of words, or run grammatical searches (e.g., every masculine singular present participle of εἰρομαι). One can very easily copy verses, whole passages, or search results from *Bible Windows* into a major word processor (I used *WordPerfect for Windows 7*, but also tested it a bit on *WordPerfect 5.1 for DOS*), as well as block and paste selections from the early church fathers, the Greco-Roman texts, or collection of liturgical resources. “Power mousing” enables the user to employ the right-hand mouse button for common search, copy, and reference functions, making the use of the program even quicker and easier.

The program is also structured to connect with Internet resources, most notably the Perseus Project (www.perseus.tufts.edu — well worth the visit from an internet browser whether or not you acquire *Bible Windows 5.1*). This function, which requires Netscape, allows the user to access Perseus’ advanced lexical resources, and, while visiting Perseus, explore their vast classical library (in Greek and Latin, as well as English). If you have already bought into Logos Bible Resource Systems, *Bible Windows 5.1* can also link up to the lexica and commentaries used by Logos (boasting of faster and easier access to the variety of lexica than Logos itself).

In sum, *Bible Windows 5.1* offers an astounding range of primary texts, tools, and resources for Bible study (including study of the Jewish and Greco-Roman backgrounds of the NT, as well as the history, theology, and practice of the early church) for a surprisingly low price (group discounts are available for purchases of 6 or more units). The program certainly merits serious investigation and consideration by those looking for Bible software.

David A. deSilva

John J. Bimson, ed., *Baker Encyclopedia of Bible Places*, Leicester/Grand Rapids: InterVarsity Press/Baker, 1996, 319 pp., \$29.99.

The subtitle of this volume (“Towns & Cities - Countries & States - Archaeology & Topography”) well explains its interest. While not exhaustive of places mentioned in the Bible, it serves well for the major, and many minor ones.

A history of the development of the book is not included, but will prove useful for its users. In 1962, InterVarsity Press in England published *The New Bible Dictionary*, considered by some to be the finest one volume dictionary in English. It was issued in a new edition in 1980. Initially this was in 3 volumes called *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (IVP/Tyndale House), including lavish illustrations, drawings, maps, etc. The text portion of this was released as *The New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd edition.

Textually, this volume under review is almost exactly the relevant *NBD* articles which have only minimally been updated, if at all with many of the *IBD* illustrations. A third edition of *NBD* was released this year, with only some bibliographic changes. Some of these bibliographic updates appear in this volume as well.

Who will find this volume useful? It is attractively laid out and beautifully printed so would interest lay-people and so would find a good place in church libraries. The *IBD* would appear to be a better log, however, since it is much more comprehensive (though also more expensive). Those who own the *NBD* will be frustrated to find upon buying this, that they already have it in textual form. Serious students will also be frustrated since the material substance of the book is already over fifteen years old.

David W. Baker

George Carey, ed., *The Bible for Everyday Life*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996, 392 pp. + index, \$20.00.

This volume is the U. S. edition of a book previously published in 1988 in the U.K. under the title *The Message of the Bible*. Twenty-nine biblical scholars, mostly from Great Britain, but including contributors from Brazil, Australia, the Philippines, and the U.S., provide concise summaries of each book of the Bible. Some names will no doubt be more familiar to American readers than others, such as David Clines (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes), Hugh Williamson (1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah), and John Goldingay (Psalms).

The format for each biblical book consists of an overview of its message, an outline of the book, and a selection of a few key verses with commentary. The shorter books, for instance Song of Songs, most Minor Prophets, Philemon, and 2 and 3 John, are presented without key verse commentary. In all, about 200 Bible passages are treated, with special emphasis on the relevance of the Bible for today. The international viewpoint of some of the contributors offers a global perspective in the commentary to the relevance of the passage. For instance, the commentary on 1 Peter 2:21-25 reminds us that,

Traditional Western Christianity has, because of its history, seen Jesus mainly as heavenly Ruler and exalted Lord. So Christianity has sometimes become an instrument of domination, or has acquiesced in the West's colonial or economic dominance over other nations...

We are called in this picture of Christ to be not rulers but servants, on the side not of the oppressors but of the oppressed. And having before our eyes the servant Jesus, we must be a servant church, becoming in the world a ferment of love, peace and justice (p. 279).

Because of the concise nature of each summary, understandably not all theological views of a given passage find representation. For instance, in the commentary on Rev

Book Reviews

20:1-10 the amillennial perspective is presumed, with only a brief acknowledgment of other interpretations.

In addition to the summaries of each biblical book, the volume contains introductory articles on "How to Understand the Bible" (dealing with rudimentary elements of hermeneutics), "The Book of Books" (addressing the issues of the authority and inspiration of the Bible), and "Tracing Bible Origins" (explaining textual criticism, biblical languages, source, and form criticism, although these critical issues are not taken up within the discussions of the books). Eleven attractively drawn maps are interspersed throughout.

The book concludes with forty-eight unsigned articles entitled "Key Beliefs" with topics ranging from theological to practical, such as the "Incarnation," "Jesus the Messiah," "Marriage and the Family," "The New Creation," and "War and Peace." These articles strive to be ecumenical on those issues where Christians have deeply-seated disagreement. For instance, the article on Baptism discusses the sacrament in terms of mutual commitment between God, the believer, and the church and makes no mention of the mode of baptism. The article on "Male and Female" makes no attempt to address the heated issue of women's roles in the church, but discusses male and female as equal in God's image, created to be together, and created to be different. The article on "Spiritual Gifts" takes a balanced approach that neither forbids nor demands exercise of the gifts today, but recognizes that the Holy Spirit is still at work among us giving "gifts which match our needs today" (p. 381).

This book provides a concise, helpful overview of the Bible and its major themes. It will be of greatest value to those who are relatively new readers of Scripture and to Sunday School teacher surveying sections of the biblical canon. For private Bible reading, *The Bible for Everyday Life* offers a solid summary that could profitably be read as a preface to devotional reading in each book of the Bible.

Karen H. Jobes., Ph.D., Westmont College, Santa Barbara, CA

The Collegeville Bible Study Atlas, Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990, 20 pp. \$6.95.

David F. Payne, *The Collegeville Bible Time-Line*, Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990, 16 pp. plus centerfold, \$7.95

Harry Thomas Frank, ed., *Atlas of the Bible Lands*, rev. ed., Maplewood, NJ: Hammond International, 1997, 48 pp. \$12.95.

The first two, brief study helps are part of the line of Bible Study products from Liturgical Press. These are intended as companions to the *Collegeville Bible Commentary*, which is available as a single hardcover or as 36 softcover volumes, each of which contains the complete text of one longer or several shorter Biblical texts--including the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical books--along with extensive annotations. The *Collegeville Bible Time-Line* contains an astoundingly condensed tour of Biblical

history from Abraham to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. While this treatment often crosses into over-simplification (but how could it avoid this?), it nevertheless presents a fine overview of a vast stretch of time and civilizations. The centerpiece of this guide is a fold-out, semi-laminated time line (eight panels) which represents world history and milestones in civilization, Mediterranean/Levantine history, and Israelite/church history side-by-side. As a resource for Sunday school or a lay person's first introduction to this material, this thin volume is to be commended.

The *Collegeville Bible Study Atlas* contains 14 maps, many of which cover a full page. These include trade routes in the ancient Near East, the Exodus and Conquest of Canaan, the Davidic and Solomonic Kingdom, the Greek world, Jesus' movements in Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, Paul's missionary journeys, and modern Jerusalem. The *Atlas* also offers inset maps of a reconstructed Jericho, Megiddo, Jerusalem in the Solomonic period, Qumran, Jerusalem in the time of Jesus, and Athens. Artist's conceptualizations of the Solomonic Temple and the Temple in the time of Jesus, together with diagrams of the layout of each temple, are also included. It concludes with a page of time-lines (which chart biblical history and the history of major Levantine and Greco-Roman civilizations with 2300 BC to 160 AD) and an index of place names keyed to the various maps.

The *Collegeville Atlas* compares unfavorably with Hammond's *Atlas of the Bible Lands*. Though the latter is almost twice the price, it is well worth the additional spending for its additional maps of ancient cities and sites (Ur, Nineveh, Babylon, Alexandria, Corinth, Ephesus, Masada, Rome, Antioch, Caesarea, Jerusalem during the Maccabean period), details of famous battles (Gilboa, Michmash, the siege of Jerusalem in 70 AD), and additional maps (I count 33). These maps are also far more highly detailed, including pictorial depiction of the different climatic and vegetative zones. The Hammond *Atlas* also offers a wealth of photographs of places, coins, artifacts, and inscriptions. While *Collegeville Atlas* includes a number of reproductions of coins and artifacts, these pale in comparison with regard to quality, number, and selection.

David A. deSilva

G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, *The Holy Land: A Pilgrim's Guide to Israel, Jordan and the Sinai*, New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1996, 224 pp.

Looking for a helpful manual to enhance your time in the lands of the Bible, or even pondering the value of such a trip? This concise and easy to carry book is a good place to start. There are hints on where to go and when, how to get there, and what to wear. There are historical summaries and up to date descriptions that unlock the many puzzles apparent in the present mix of population and architectures in the area. There are suggestions for itineraries ranging from the space of a few hours in Jerusalem to tours that can fill weeks, if that kind of time is available. Something of the tremendous richness that is accessible in this land--to the tourist, and even more to the pilgrim--is captured in very usable form in this book.

The material is organized in eight itineraries inside the country of Israel, one

Book Reviews

through the country of Jordan, and one in the Sinai area of Egypt. For each route the significant places are described, along with facts (that Constantine built the Church of the Holy Sepulcher within the Roman city which had been Jerusalem), traditions (the location of the olive garden where Jesus prayed), legends (that Moses was buried at Neb Musa south of Jericho, now marked by an empty Islamic mausoleum), and sometimes even rumors, that add to one's interest and understanding. Scripture references mentioning various sites are given, as the author's stated purpose is to bring together the earlier history of Israel and the places connected with the life of Jesus Christ for the visitor.

For preparation ahead of time and actual reading on the spot this guide is excellent. It provides details that personal guides can miss, especially in Jordan where national guides (legally required), though very knowledgeable in Jordanian history and affairs, may not know how to make connections with biblical history. A special plus are the more than one hundred thirty illustrations which include modern road maps, historical sketches, typical views of sites, plans of ancient cities, and layouts of buildings, complexes and gardens. Even with the excellent coverage provided by studies at the Jerusalem International University (to which the reviewer led a study tour this past summer), this book adds details and connections that are invaluable. Though the author admits not being able to include every site, this is an excellent guide and could prove to be a treasured prompt for memories.

Grace Holland

C-B. Costecalde, ed., *The Illustrated Family Bible*, illustrated by P. Dennis, New York/London: Dorling Kindersley, 1997, 384pp., \$29.95.

Dorling Kindersley is justly famous for its beautifully produced and imaginatively illustrated books, and this is no exception. This volume takes excerpts from the NIV and helps understand the story" in a brief comment at the end of each. It also supplies relevant artwork, with annotations tying it to the text, photographs of relevant scenes and artifacts, maps, and side panels which provide information on aspects of the text.

Brief introductory remarks, with helpful illustrations, discuss "the books of the Bible" (the differences between Jewish and Christian, both Protestant and Catholic, canons, authorship, textual history, etc.), "covenants of the Bible" (Adam and Eve, though the term is not used there, Noah, Moses, David, and Jesus), a map of Bible lands and the text and dating of the OT (giving the Exodus an early, 15th century BC date). A number of individual books also have separate, 1-2 page introductions.

The readings are of necessity selective. For example, in Genesis one finds parts of probably 30% of the text, and none of Leviticus. In the NT, Luke seems to be the main Gospel text for the early part of Jesus' ministry, while Matthew is highlighted toward the end. John gets very short shrift. Acts is well represented and six chapters of Revelation are included, but one looks in vain for any of Paul. The volume concludes with an 8 page annotated list of the more important OT and NT people, an index, and an acknowledgment for art and photography.

The book is a delight and should be of great interest for families with children. It

should be in all church and public libraries, and all will find fascinating illustrative material.

David W. Baker

John Barton, *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study*, rev. ed., Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1996, xviii + 294 pp., \$25.00.

Barton, professor of biblical interpretation at Oxford, has edited an edition of this work published in 1984. The main body of the original was left relatively untouched, with two new chapters discussing new approaches such as reader-response and deconstruction. Arising from a course of lectures the author gives, he explains his purpose as follows:

A part from the obvious aim of helping students to understand what lies behind the often puzzling 'methods' used by Old Testament scholars, I was also looking for an opportunity to develop a long-standing interest in the relation of biblical studies to literary criticism.

With the student always in mind, Barton explains various methodologies and gives examples of them, many based on Ecclesiastes. He also tries to show the logical connections between various methods and the order in which they might be approached. He also points out the danger of thinking that 'method' always and in the same way applied will result in a correct interpretation. He would rather see reading the biblical text as an art than simply a reductionistic science.

Each chapter as a rule begins with a brief "Preliminary Reading" section other with a chapter or two from biblical texts and/or introductory textbooks. A "Further Reading" section of 2-5 articles or book excerpts follow each chapter for those whose interest is piqued. Topics covered include source, form and redaction criticism, the canon and canonical criticism, structuralism/semiotics, "new" literary criticism, "rhetorical criticism" and the aforementioned reader-response and deconstructionism. Full notes and thirteen page bibliography enhance the usefulness of an already very useful text.

The book should be in undergraduate and seminary libraries. It would make a useful introductory textbook, or an entrée into some of the approaches which might not be entré familiar to some conservatives.

David W. Baker

Bernard F. Batto, *Slaying the Dragon: Mythmaking in the Biblical Tradition*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1992, 248 pp.

The thesis of Batto's book is that "myth is one of the chief mediums by which biblical writers did their theologizing." He is of the opinion that "texts from all periods and of virtually every literary genre reveal that biblical writers borrowed old myths and extended their meanings in novel ways for the purpose of expressing new theological insights" (p.1). With this single assertion, Batto reflects the completion of the paradigm

Book Reviews

shift away from the older Biblical Theology perspective that history is the chief medium of Biblical revelation. Instead, he offers this volume as "a case study in the methodology of biblical writers in using myth and mythmaking speculation to express their most profound theological insights" (p. 4).

The author is careful to make a distinction between "mythopoeism" and "mythopoetic." The former, along with its adjective "mythopoeic," is "myth-making." For Batto, this denotes the process by which new myths were created or old myths were extended to include new dimensions. But "mythopoetic" refers to symbolic use of mythic images in artistic literary compositions. As such, mythopoetic asserts that the older mythic elements have lost their value as operative myths and survive only as literary images (p. 12). In other words, "mythopoetic" stresses the historicized forms of images formerly used as mythological. Many have assumed this is the way in which mythic images were used in the Old Testament. Batto, however, attempts to demonstrate that biblical authors adapted older myths from Babylonia and Canaan, and consciously applied them *as myths* to new situations.

Chapter 1 ("Mythopoeic Speculation in Babylon") surveys the three Babylonian epic myths *Gilgamesh*, *Atrahasis* and the *Enuma Elish*. Batto's assumption is that much of the Old Testament is dependent on Canaanite myth, but the Primeval History (Genesis 1-11) is heavily dependent upon the mythic traditions of Babylonia. While no one can deny the obvious influence of the Atrahasis Epic especially, I am more inclined to admit the significant historicizing process involved in Genesis than is Batto (i.e., the "mythopoetic" connections with Babylonia). In chapter 2 ("The Yahwist's Primeval Myth"), the author argues that the Yahwist created a new primeval myth borrowing mostly from the older Babylonian myth of *Atrahasis*. This was the first Israelite attempt to define the place of humans within creation.

With the destruction of Jerusalem and the beginning of the exile, new questions were raised about the Yahwist's myth. The Priestly writer relied on the common Semitic combat myth preserved in the *Enuma Elish* to rewrite the myth (Batto's chapter 3, "The Priestly Revision of the Creation Myth"). Batto's next assumption is more daring and more susceptible to charges that he has engaged in his own form of "mythopoeic speculation." He moves to the exodus narrative, which he asserts is also a reinterpretation of myth as a second act of creation (his chapter 4, "The Exodus as Myth"). The Egyptian host represents not an earthly enemy, but an incarnation of the chaos dragon, reflecting again the common Semitic combat myth. This theme was supposedly promoted within Israel's cult (chapter 5, "Crossing Dry Shod: Mythopoeic Speculation in Cult"). Finally, Ezekiel developed the combat myth into an eschatological hope in order to portray the definitive victory of the Creator over chaos (chapter 6, "Egypt and Gog as Mythic Symbols in Ezekiel").

Of course, we have been aware for some time that portions of the Old Testament are historicized myth, borrowed from Canaanite (or Babylonian) culture and altered for Israelite ideology. But in the final analysis, Batto's distinction between "mythopoeic" and "mythopoetic" is impossible to maintain and is nonsensical because it can neither be proven or disproven. The question becomes one of evidence. Upon what basis can it be said that Israelite authors used older myths from Canaan and Babylonia to express

themselves theologically while at the same time describing events that took place in their own national history? This is an especially troublesome part of Batto's approach since so much of the Old Testament is presented as historical narrative about events that occurred in Israel's past.

There can be no doubt that Batto has correctly analyzed many points of contact between older ancient Near Eastern myths and the Israelite parallels. But at least three things need to be said about these comparative observations. First, the literary context in which they have been preserved is markedly different in these two cultures. The ancient Oriental myths were normally presented in poetic form, with little or no historical frame or point of reference. Important events were those that took place outside of time and space, and the literary form is suitable to the topic. But in Israelite parallels, even the Primeval History is carefully located in *this* world, beginning in the garden "in the east" where a river flows forth with four branches. From this point, events of the Primeval History are narrated as actual events in this world, unlike the literary context of *Enuma Elish* and *Atrahasis*.

Second, the de-mythologized myths served a much different function in Israelite literature than the myths of Babylonia and Canaan served in those respective cultures. *Enuma Elish* and *Atrahasis* served to determine the destinies (Akkadian, *wimtu*) for humankind, and to maintain the status quo for the entire cosmos. But in the Old Testament, the parallel materials serve to define the boundaries for relationship with God, subsequently to establish the national covenant, and ultimately to prepare for the end-time resolution of Israel's relationship with God and the other nations of earth. If these are really myths, as Batto would have us believe, their function is unlike other myths of the ancient world.

Third, Batto's comparisons between Israel's use of myth and that of her neighbors become especially difficult to maintain when he applies his methods to the exodus (his chapter 5). The evidence here is strained and forced into a preconceived mythological straightjacket, despite the fact that perfectly acceptable explanations can be given for the historicity of the events in question. Indeed, recent archaeological evidence makes it possible to reconstruct scenarios that make the exodus, crossing of the Red Sea, and the wilderness wandering entirely plausible as real historical events (see now James K. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of The Exodus Tradition*. [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997]). Ironically, such historical reconstructions take less "faith" to accept than some of Batto's mythopoeisms!

At the end of the day, the best explanation for the presence of Israelite parallels to the ancient Near Eastern mythic texts is still the mythopoetic one, rather than Batto's mythopoetic, or mythmaking explanation. In other words, the ancient Near Eastern myths were occasionally historicized for polemical purposes, and used as a literary means of contrasting the Israelite view of God and the world with the other views available at the time. The Biblical Theology movement may have gone too far in stressing the role of history in the Bible. But with Batto, the pendulum has swung too far in the opposite direction.

Bill T. Arnold, Asbury Theological Seminary

Book Reviews

G. J. Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, Vol. 8, *lākad-mōr*, trans. by Douglas W. Stott, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997, xxiv + 560 pp.

Although not yet complete, *TDOT* has established itself as an indispensable resource for the study of the Old Testament. The current volume contains essays, written by many of the top scholars in the field, on more than seventy Hebrew terms. The format resembles that of its New Testament counterpart, the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, and the entries incorporate a number of features that make the essays more accessible to the non-specialist. First, all Hebrew quotations have been transliterated, and a key to transliteration has been provided. Second, many common terms are given their own entry, so that one does not always have to identify the root of the term in order to find the entry. This is not always the case, however, and more often derivatives of a single root are discussed together (as in *TDNT*). These features will cause a certain amount of frustration for those accustomed to working with Hebrew, but may allow others to make fuller use of the information. The essays themselves are relatively free of scholarly jargon. In addition, most of the entries contain footnotes that provide an excellent bibliography for further study (although a majority of the citations comprise works in German and French). All in all, the series (and this volume in particular) provides a rich resource for the study of Hebrew vocabulary.

Daniël L. Hawk

Leila Leah Bronner, *From Eve to Esther: Rabbinic Reconstruction of Biblical Women*, Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994, 186 pp., \$20.00.

"Who can find a virtuous woman? Her value is far above jewels . . . [For] strength and dignity are her clothing (Proverbs 32)." Sound like a modest proposal? Well, according to rabbinic folklore, it is just that: a proposal for modesty. The Rabbi's taught that women should follow certain biblical models to become women of virtue. Professor Leila Bronner, a Hasidic Jew, knows well those female characters who exhibit exemplary behavior and even better those who do not. She is currently a professor at the Institute of Jewish Studies in Los Angeles. Prior to this position she taught Biblical and Religious studies at Witwaterstrand University, Johannesburg Africa. Her scholarship is deeply rooted in critical analysis and feminism, which she employs as a way of bringing authenticity and fairness to scripture, rather than a platform for opposition.

In her book, *From Eve to Esther*, she analyzes female characters in scripture as perceived through the aggadic (rabbinic lore) tradition of Talmud and Midrash, instead of the typical law code traditions. Thus, she poses an old question with new insight: should the basic Jewish traditions designed to canonize women's behaviors be reexamined and reinterpreted? Enveloped in folklore and feminism, she orchestrates a unique text rich with both rabbinic hindsight and insight.

Her intent in writing the book was to show a frequent pattern in the rabbinic

interpretation of female stereotypes, such as, weakness and sexual allurements. These stereotypes were used to formulate codes of behavior enforcing female confinement to domestic roles. Among those codes, the overriding themes are modesty and privacy. The rabbis say that a virtuous woman is one of modesty who hides herself from the public eye. In fairness to the rabbis, she explains they could not help but view biblical women within the confines of their own culture.

After laying a groundwork on the various rabbinic literature and defining Jewish terms which the average reader may not be familiar with, she spends the next seven chapters exegesis various women, as well as, the rabbis' interpretation of the women. In her study, she reveals some of the rabbis' inadequate use of exegesis to create those attributes they desired their females to emulate. An example of this agenda is in their interpretation of the Creation story. In the most egalitarian interpretation, the rabbis believed that God created the first human as a hermaphrodite. The male occupied the front half, and the female the back half. The rabbis placed the woman on the submissive side of the figure.

Other chapters look at various situations such as the rape of Tamar and the courage of Esther. She emphasizes that the rabbis were able to recognize heroism and virtue in female characters, even though their retellings are full of stereotypes and contradictions.

Bronner successfully develops and substantiates her position by providing solid definitions of Jewish terminology as an aid to readers of all faiths. The book brought new insights and powerful illustrations of wrongful interpretation to old arguments. Bronner effectively explains those discrepancies in Jewish thought. It, thus, reveals the importance of critical scholarship in light of old tradition and preconceived notions. The mark of a good book is one that is shared with friends and colleagues. This is one of those books.

Sunny Worthington

William P. Brown, *Character in Crisis: A Fresh Approach to Wisdom Literature in the Old Testament*, Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U.K.: William P. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996, 164 pp., \$17.00 (paper).

The stated aim of this work is "... to demonstrate that the idea of character constitutes the unifying theme or center of the wisdom literature, whose *raison d'être* is to profile ethical character" (p. 21).

While the author does much to validate the existence of ethical development in the wisdom corpus, he fails to substantiate the notion that such reflection lies at the heart of the biblical writers' intent. If anything, the book helps one to see how the themes of ethics, integrity and character transcend the intentions of the biblical writers by way of *sensus plenior*. Perhaps that is a more compelling testimony to the importance of character in the wisdom corpus than even the author intended!

That possibility notwithstanding, the strength of this book rests in its reliance on Scripture in establishing a framework for ethics and character development. The sections examining Job and Ecclesiastes were particularly strong, as was the concluding section on the Epistle of James. For this reason it would make a good companion text

Book Reviews

in either an ethics or an Old Testament curriculum but would prove inadequate as the main text in an exploration of either.

In addition, the author's regular use of literary categories makes this book useful to those interested in exploring the value of such methods in biblical studies.

Glenn A. Robitaille

Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997, xxi + 777 pp.

This is a major work, by a leading scholar, written throughout with lucidity and passion. In an obvious sense, it sums up much that Brueggemann has been speaking and writing about in recent years. Interestingly, however, it does not take the form that we expected from some of Brueggemann's preliminary essays, which suggests that Brueggemann's preliminary essays, which suggests that Brueggemann's thinking is still developing (a point which both admirers and detractors need to bear in mind).

The main body of the work is framed by a retrospect and prospect about the discipline of Old Testament Theology, which shows many an incisive and provocative insight. One primary feature, here and throughout the work, is a passionate resistance to what Brueggemann sees as a "too easy" Christian approach to the biblical text, in which interpreters are inclined to know (and prejudice) the answers before they have even formulated the right questions. On the one hand, he resists recurrent Christian attempts to downgrade the value and significance of the Old Testament by categorizing it as "law" or "promise," for Christians regularly misconceive the nature of *torah* and of Israel's cult, and ignore or downplay the disputatiousness and questioning of God that is so important within Israel's faith. "Old Testament theology must live with that pluralistic practice of dispute and compromise, so that the texts cannot be arranged in any single or unilateral pattern. It is the process of dispute and compromise itself that constitutes Israel's mode of theological testimony" (p. 710). On the other hand, he insists that Christians must recognize the extent of common ground and task which they share with Jews, and so take with full theological seriousness the nature of Israel's witness to God as scripture for Jews independently of Christ. "If we are to interpret the Old Testament in our circumstance, it is clear that Jewish faith and an actual Jewish community must be on the horizon of Christians" (p. 734).

While these emphases are familiar in other contemporary O.T. scholarship, Brueggemann firmly roots them in a postmodern context in which the arrogant claims of Christian "hegemony" (as Brueggemann understands classic Christian theology) must become more humble and fully recognize their position as one claim among others, with no special privilege. Brueggemann gives further sharpness to his position by a consistent emphasis upon rhetoric as foundational to his theology; that is, Israel's language about God, which Brueggemann suggestively construes in terms of *testimony* (and counter-testimony), cannot be grounded either in appeals to Israel's history (a move both similar and dissimilar to that of von Rad) or in appeals to ontology (as is characteristic of classic, ecclesial theology). On the one hand, the "fideistic" nature of

Brueggemann's position is clear, as in his comments on Genesis 22:16-18: "Everything about Israel's life in the world depends on these words having been uttered by Yahweh. Of course, beyond Israel's insistence, we have no evidence that Yahweh has uttered these words. The testimony of the Bible would have us take Israel's word as certification that these promises have indeed been uttered with ensuring power and significance. Beyond such testimony, Israel can provide no warrants for the claim, and certainly historical research cannot touch the issue" (p. 165f). On the other hand, the legitimate use of the language implies particular kinds of human living: "Yahweh, as given in Israel's testimony, never comes 'alone' but is always Yahweh-in-relation" (p. 409); "the drama of brokenness and restoration, which has Yahweh as its key agent, features *generosity*, *candor* in brokenness, and resilient *hope*, the markings of a viable life" (p. 562); and, in short, "justice as the core focus of Yahweh's life in the world and Israel's life with Yahweh" (p. 735). Thus Brueggemann sees the use of Israel's testimony to God as inseparable from the practice of justice; here, and not in history or ontology, is that which grounds testimony in reality.

The exposition of the Old Testament is set out under four main headings: 1) Testimony, i.e., Israel's primary affirmations about God, set out in relation initially to those verbs of which Yahweh is subject, though also with particular focus on the adjectives of Exodus 34:6-7. Brueggemann's presentation here breaks fresh ground; though the gain of seeing the "grammar" of Israel's language about God needs to be set against the fact that the narratives and poems, within which this grammar is set, often receive limited attention as narratives and poems. 2) Counter-Testimony, i.e., those passages where Israel recognizes the hidden, ambiguous and difficult character of God. 3) Unsolicited Testimony, where fresh ground is broken in discussion of the nations as Yahweh's partner (though with no reference to the basic Hebrew concept of "fear of God," which is expected of the nations as much as of Israel). 4) Embodied Testimony, where torah, king, prophet, cult and sage are considered as mediations of Israel's life with God. This overall structure works reasonably well, though it is surprising only to encounter Election under Unsolicited Testimony, and some of the material in section 4 lacks the freshness of some of the other sections. As always with Brueggemann, there is extensive bibliography, much of it beyond the specialized sphere of Old Testament studies (though he does not always engage with the works cited; for example, he continues to treat Christian "supersessionism" towards the Old Testament and Jews as a negative and undifferentiated phenomenon [e.g., pp 330, 449, 734f]; my *The Old Testament of the Old Testament*, which tries to break new ground is noted [pp. 22, 414] but its arguments are ignored).

Brueggemann situates Old Testament Theology unambiguously within a postliberal context (p. 86). He is clear about the need for rooting such theology in a "community that is unembarrassed about commitment that, in the pariance of 'objective rationality', may be categorized as bias or ideology" (p. 743), and that such an undertaking "is not in principle a second-rate or secondhand enterprise, but it can be a serious intellectual and moral undertaking that is not enthralled to a Cartesian attempt to think without body" (p. 744). There is a clarion call to the integration of Old Testament study and life which goes way beyond the standard fare of Old Testament

Book Reviews

Theologies, and which opens us vistas vital to the future of theological study of the Old Testament.

This is therefore a work of biblical study which needs to be heeded. There will be many, not least in the USA, whose theological and political positions are not those of Brueggemann. All the more important, then, to engage with the theological and moral issues Brueggemann raises with the seriousness which they require, and to allow Brueggemann's work to help move biblical interpretation into fresh categories of understanding which can help us escape from some of the old labels and trenches.

Of the many possible issues for further discussion, I select one, that is Brueggemann's detachment of Old Testament language about God not only from history but also from ontology (and the classic Christian theology which Brueggemann sees as prepossessed with ontology, reductionism and control). He is clear that is theology means "an attempt to exposit the theological perspectives and claims of the [sc. OT] text itself, in all its odd particularity, without any attempt to accommodate to a larger rationality, either of modernity or of classical Christianity" (p. 86). This means that classic Christian concerns about the "reality" of God are misplaced: "I insist that it is characteristic of the Old Testament, and characteristically Jewish, that God is given to us (and exists as God 'exists') only by the dangerous practice of rhetoric. Therefore in doing Old Testament theology we must be careful not to import essentialist claims that are not authorized by this particular and peculiar rhetoric. *I shall insist, as consistently as I can, that the God of Old Testament theology as such lives in, with, and under the rhetorical enterprise of the text, and nowhere else and in no other way*" (p. 66). So when, for example, we are told that the God of the Old Testament (a character within Israel's rhetoric, not an ontological reality) is "sometimes unreliable and notoriously cunning" (p. 132), needs to be "talked into something Yahweh had not yet entertained or imagined or intended" (p. 439), and displays "negligence" and "mean-spirited irascibility" (p. 560), this is not an occasion for the misplaced Christian question, "But how does this relate to the God in whom I trust?", but an occasion to celebrate the denseness and daring of Israel's testimony and to resist reductive attempts to resist or explain away such language.

At the risk of oversimplifying, it seems to me that there are two basic options in Old Testament Theology. One is to hold that although we have no access to God except via the language of scripture and appropriate ways of living, such language and living are media of engagement with a reality beyond themselves (a "classic" position). The other is to hold that the language and living themselves constitute the reality of God, and that there is no "further reality" beyond them (a "postmodern" position). Brueggemann, as far as I can see (unless I misunderstand him), has opted for the latter, and in so doing has surrendered something that Jews and Christians alike down the ages (*mutatis mutandis*) have believed to be integral to their faiths. For it is only when you hold to the former position that classic theology can be recognized for what it truly is, namely the disciplining and regulating of testimony to God so that it may be faithful and true, rather than idolatrous and self-serving. For the Christian this means engagement with the truth of God in Jesus Christ, for here the truth of God and humanity is known supremely. The fact that Brueggemann can so easily and sweepingly dismiss classic

Christian theology in favor of a rather easy appeal to contemporary postliberal theologians, suggests a failure to grasp Christian theology's true significance. Do not Eastern Orthodox theologians, for whom a critique of facile ontology is basic to their apophatic Trinitarianism, have something to teach us? Are Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin and Barth really such men of straw? (I am sure that Brueggemann does not think so, but his book gives the impression.)

Towards the end of the book Brueggemann restates his concern to free Old Testament Theology from being endlessly seduced "by the ancient Hellenistic lust for Being, for establishing ontological reference behind the text. Thus, for example, Brevard Childs reaches for 'the Real'. Perhaps such thinking is inevitable, given our Hellenistic, philosophical inheritance. The truth of the matter, as far as Israel is concerned, is that if one believes the testimony, one is near to reality. And if not, one is not near reality, for the Real is indeed uttered. Such a construal will not satisfy modernist historicism nor the philosophically minded... It may well be that I have not given correct nuance to these matters because I lack knowledge in the appropriate adjunct disciplines. I have no doubt, nonetheless, that Old Testament theology in the future must do its work in reliance on the lean evidence of utterance" (p. 714).

Three comments on this. First, Brueggemann misrepresents Childs, who is simply rearticulating the classic Jewish and Christian concern to speak of God via the biblical text, on the historic/classic/orthodox assumption that there is more to God than biblical religious language, ancient history, and contemporary human actions. Secondly, Brueggemann sees only history and philosophy as the prime disciplines which might be offended (and about which he confesses that he may be insufficiently informed), with no sense that theology itself might be a discipline which could take exception to his dismissals of history and ontology. Thirdly, it is all very well to say that "if one believes the testimony, one is near to reality." But how is one to assess testimonies which conflict? This is the classic issue of truth in relation to language about God that the Old Testament itself raises in the context of true and false prophecy. Yet about this Brueggemann has little to say, and what he does say is disappointing. When discussing divine calling of prophets (which remains a kind of template within Christian faith today), he can only say that these "make a claim of authority that is impossible to verify. That is, all of these claims and uses are reports of a quite personal, subjective experience. No objective evidence can be given that one has been in the divine council... No verification of a call experience is possible" (p. 631). At the very place where one needs the language and insights of moral and spiritual discernment - the perennial primary form of theological hermeneutics - Brueggemann, who is usually so critical of Enlightenment rationality, himself lapses into the language of unreconstructed positivism, with its neat dichotomy between the "objective" (accessible, public, discussable) and "subjective" (inaccessible, private, non-discussable), whereby encounter with God (and truthful speaking for God) is relegated to the insignificance of the latter. Of course, Brueggemann's major emphasis on justic and community moves in the opposite direction. But I suspect that something rather important has not yet been fully thought through.

To sum up, Brueggemann is rightly trying to relocate Old Testament Theology

Book Reviews

within a context that is more truly theological. Yet the book is, in my judgement, insufficiently rooted in the disciplines of theology to be fully persuasive. Why a postliberal Christian theologian who wishes to respect the integrity of the Old Testament and of Jewish faith should thereby feel obligated (in effect) to marginalize Jesus Christ in his theological work in a manner rather similar to that of a liberal historian is, to me at least, puzzling. And although one could do far worse than an account of God rooted in compassionate and just contemporary communities, many a believer may still feel shortchanged. Indeed, and ironically, the very reductionism with reference to God, to which Brueggemann is so opposed, will be felt by many to characterize his own account of God which, by the dismissal of history and ontology, is itself thereby reduced.

Walter Moberly, Durham, United Kingdom

J. Andrew Dearman, *Religion and Culture in Ancient Israel*, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1992, 281 pp.

The volume examines the relationship between religion and culture in the Old Testament period. The author has organized the presentation in two parts: one sequential, the other thematic. In Part one, Dearman analyzes Israelite religion and culture in three chapters, one each devoted to pre-monarchic Israel, the period of the state, and the exilic and post-exilic communities. Though he pays careful attention to Israel's cultural material where pertinent, his chief focus here is on the narrative traditions of the Old Testament, particularly the Primary History (Genesis-2 Kings), 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, and 1-2 Maccabees. The second part has four chapters devoted to the following topics: covenant instruction in Deuteronomy, pre-exilic prophecy, the wisdom movement and apocalypticism (especially as contained in the Book of Daniel).

In a general introduction, Dearman defines the terms in his title that are admittedly tricky, "religion" and "culture" (pps 1-6). In an effort to make his treatment non-sectarian and as objective as possible, he follows the noted anthropologist, Clifford Geertz in defining the terms. "Religion" is accepted as "a set of symbols" acting to establish moods and motivations of individuals by formulating a general order of existence. "Culture" denotes a "pattern of meanings" embodied in symbols, which are inherited conceptions, and by which individuals develop their knowledge about life. Obviously then, religion and culture are closely intertwined and relate to each other in interesting ways. Religion is often shaped by the particular culture in which it is developed. But religion can also shape, interpret and critique the culture to which it speaks. Using these helpful definitions, Dearman devotes the volume to exploring various aspects of religion and culture in ancient Israel. Also in the introduction, Dearman is considerate enough to inform the reader of his own presuppositions regarding some of the most controversial developments in current Old Testament research. After a brief overview of recent emphasis on sociology, anthropology, archaeology and narratology, Dearman states flatly that he "does not share the skepticism of those who reject the historical analysis of the biblical text," especially with

regard to the pre-monarchic period. This is an especially helpful discussion since so much of mainstream Old Testament scholarship today denies there was an "ancient Israel," or at least, that we can reconstruct its history.

Dearman's volume is refreshing in the current context in which so many scholars are taking extreme positions on early Israel. After carefully maneuvering his way through thorny issues such as the Origins of Yahwism, the nature of Israel's tribal confederation, and the history of monotheism, Dearman critiques the current situation. Many scholars today reject the biblical presentation of the early Israelites as "outsiders" (or tribal groups who came from beyond the borders of Canaan). Instead, this outsider status takes on a symbolic value, and as such, it contributes to the religious symbols that became part of the culture of later Israel. Dearman concludes that this sort of skepticism toward the conquest traditions of Israel is "an overreaction to earlier theories that identified tribal Israel too closely with a romanticized notion of nomadic outsiders" (page 49). We could add that modern historians who take this position are also guilty of a common mistake called the "fallacy of misplaced literalism," which involves misconstruing a figurative or hyperbolic account as literal (D. H. Fischer, *Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought*, New York: Harper and Row, 1970], 58). Too many modern biblical scholars and historians assume the Book of Joshua narrates a massive military campaign, including the burning of numerous Canaanite cities. These scholars then proceed to deny the book has any historical point of reference, because Palestinian archaeology has not attested a large-scale military conquest at the beginning of Iron Age I. In point of fact, Joshua mentions the burning of only three Canaanite cities, Jericho, Ai and Hazor.

As elsewhere in his book, Dearman provides the reader with fresh interpretations on many points. Rather than a simple strident attack on current biblical scholarship, his is an honest attempt to interact with all the data available and to contribute genuinely to the ongoing academic discussion on ancient Israel without sacrificing a Christian perspective on the text. I recommend the volume to readers of this journal as an example of moderate evangelical scholarship, and may we see more of its ilk in the future!

Bill T. Arnold

William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger, Jr., editors, *The Context of Scripture*, vol. 1, *Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*. Leiden/New York: E.J. Brill, 1997. xxviii + 599 pp., \$109.50.

This is an important beginning for a major project involving the literary world of the Old Testament. For years, the standard major resource for extra-biblical texts has been J.B. Pritchard's *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (ubiquitously known as ANET), which was first published in 1950, with subsequent editions. While this text has served several generations of scholars well, the time has come to provide for the next century with newly discovered texts as well as translations and annotations of texts previously known but now better understood.

The volume is divided into five main sections, dealing with 'canonical

Book Reviews

compositions' translated from Egyptian, Hittite, West Semitic, Akkadian, and Sumerian. Each has four subsections, presenting texts in which the focus is divine, royal, or individual, as well as a concluding bibliography. Individual texts are preceded by an introduction to its contents, textual history, and significance. The translation is presented in two columns, with a cross-reference system between the columns to relevant biblical passages. More esoteric matters of translation, text, history, interpretation, etc. are presented in footnotes, so that they are accessible for the serious student, but do not distract those for whom they might be less relevant. There is a concluding list of references, indicating previous publications and translation.

Many of the translations are fresh for this edition, though some appeared first in other places, some from as early as 1973. In addition to the two editors, 35 others were involved in the project, from the US, Britain, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium. Many are well-known as leaders in their field, so the user can be confident in their competence. It is good to see evangelical scholars well represented among these.

Prior to the texts themselves, William Hallo provides a brief preface in which he outlines the history of the present project, and also an introduction entitled "Ancient Near Eastern Texts and their Relevance for Biblical Exegesis," in which he discusses the history of this aspect of study, as well as its methods. While brief, it is a helpful, readable contribution, as are all of Hallo's writings.

One query which will naturally arise, but is not addressed in the volume, as far as I was able to determine, is the definition of 'canonical,' the subtitle for this volume. Biblical scholars will have a different understanding of the term from that used by students of ancient Near Eastern texts more generally, and even there the term is not clearly defined. Since meaning comes from context, further volumes in the series might be able to serve to define what is meant by 'canonical' when comparison can be made with other types of literature which will be included in them. In the meantime, the term must remain puzzling.

The excellent volume, which bodes well for the entire series, will be a necessity for the library of all seminaries, Bible colleges, and other departments and schools of religion. It will probably not find a place in church libraries, or those of most pastors, but will need to be consulted by all Old Testament professionals. David W. Baker

Amélie Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East, c. 3000-330 BC*. 2 volumes. Routledge History of the Ancient World; London/New York: Routledge, 1995. 782 pp. \$60.00.

Amélie Kuhrt, Reader in Ancient History at University College, London, is an expert in the latter part of the period covered by these volumes, but she shows an admirable grasp of sources from all of the periods covered. She has a deft, very readable style, and has provided what, to my mind, is the best recent history of the ancient Near East. She ably introduces the available sources, the geography and chronology, as well as looking in detail at the socio-political events which have so much impact on the Old Testament.

This is not a biblical history, and that is one of its strengths, showing how the

descendants of Abraham, while of major theological import for Jews and Christians, played only a relatively minor role in the broader history of the area. While we could wish for a little more discussion of some historical events, e.g. the Exodus from Egypt, she seems to be more concerned with extra-biblical information sources. This is unfortunate, since, for a number of events, the Bible is the only extant source of information. With the sources she does use, however, Kuhrt does an excellent job.

The work includes a comprehensive bibliography which is divided up by chapter, and an index of topics. An index of ancient sources would have made access for those with an interest in biblical topics somewhat easier. This work should be in all academic libraries, and serious students of the OT will find it enlightening and an enjoyable read, something all too rare these days.

David W. Baker

Bruce V. Malchow, *Social Justice in the Hebrew Bible*, Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996, 83 pp., \$8.95.

In a very accessible book, Bruce V. Malchow presents the issue of social justice from the perspective of the Old Testament writers. A professor of Hebrew Bible at the Sacred Heart of Theology in Hales Corners, Wisconsin, he expounds on two previously-published articles on social justice in the Israelite Law Codes and Wisdom Literature. This work now encompasses the other OT genres, as well as ancient Near Eastern literature. It is his premiss that just as Israel adapted the surrounding cultures' views of social justice to its own unique problems, so Christians might learn from Israel's experience. The author suggests, in order to better confront the problems of injustice facing the world today, Christians would benefit by examining the non-Christian thought and integrating it with their own.

Professor Malchow examines ancient Near Eastern literature to give the reader an overview of past cultures' concern for this issue. He looks at non-Israelite documents from various countries of the Fertile Crescent from Ur to Egypt. Malchow then gives background on the specific development of Israel's class structure, the deprived of society, their legal process, the monarchy's responsibility in maintaining justice, and the Israelites' perception of justice and righteousness. Attention is then given to the various genres of OT literature, citing examples from the Law Codes of Exodus, Deuteronomy and Leviticus, the Prophetic Books, the Psalms, Narrative Works and Wisdom Literature to illustrate the authors' treatment of this issue.

Malchow offers a clear overview of the subject of social justice in the Old Testament and gives the reader numerous starting points for more in-depth study. In his concluding chapter he restates some of his introductory questions, which not only are left open for the reader to answer, but also raise additional questions. The author refers to OT texts as being non-Christian. Yet Jesus' ministry to the various oppressed peoples of society had its foundation in OT prophecy. Is Malchow implying the Hebrew Bible has had no bearing on Christian thought in this area?

While showing the similarities in thought between Israel and its neighbors and how Israel adopted, adapted, and transformed Near Eastern ideas to its own situations, the

Book Reviews

challenge remains for the reader to determine how to take the ground work given here and effectively put it into practice. Social injustice is not just an issue of the past but one against which Christians today must struggle if they are "to be true to their own traditions and ethically responsible" (p. 78). *Social Justice in the Hebrew Bible* is a valuable and interesting place to begin to understand this matter which lies at the heart of God and His work here on earth.

Victoria A. Wheeler

J. W. Marshall, *The Ten Commandments and Christian Community*, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania/Waterloo, Ontario: Herald Press, 1996, 128 pp.

This short study aims to show the continuing relevance of the Ten Commandments for God's people. Presented in an easy to read style, with frequent illustrations, many drawn from the author's own experience, it conveys in a thoughtful and challenging manner the spirit of these commandments. Taking each commandment in turn Marshall helpfully highlights its significance for the modern community of faith.

Although the style of presentation is decidedly popular, Marshall is obviously conversant with current scholarly discussion of the Ten Commandments. Much of this, however, he judiciously omits, preferring to focus on the significance of each commandment for contemporary Christians. Marshall focuses sensibly on how the commandments address broad areas of behavior and thought, reflecting the type of community that God desires to create. The sixth commandment, for example, cannot be reduced to the simple prohibition, 'You shall not murder'; it covers much more than intentional homicide.

While Marshall's study is obviously the result of extensive reflection and is carefully presented throughout, the very last sentence of his book struck this reviewer as lacking the same consideration, and provides an opportunity to emphasize the necessity of placing the Ten Commandments within the wider context of God's redemptive purposes for humanity. Marshall writes, 'It [The Ten Commandments] produced a stable, vibrant faith community then, and it can do so now, as God continues to call the faithful into community' (p. 120). Yet, the OT reveals that the Israelites rarely, if ever, constituted 'a stable, vibrant faith community'. Indeed, it was this very failure that prompted the need for a New Covenant (cf. Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:7-13), centered on Jesus Christ's sacrificial death and the regenerating activity of the Holy Spirit. In the light of this, the Ten Commandments alone cannot establish a wholesome community. They do, however, as Marshall indicates, define the type of covenant community that God wishes to create.

With this brief caveat, Marshall's study is to be warmly welcomed for both highlighting the positive aspects of what are normally viewed as very negative statements, and challenging the reader as regards the demands of Christian discipleship.

T. D. Alexander, The Queen's University of Belfast, N. Ireland

David L. Petersen and Kent Harold Richards, *Interpreting Hebrew Poetry*, Guides to Biblical Scholarship, ed. Gene M. Tucker, Minneapolis: Fortress, 117 pp., 1992.

One of the challenges for students of the Old Testament is to move beyond a reading knowledge of Hebrew narrative (typically acquired in Beginning Hebrew) to a level of competence with Hebrew poetry. Nearly one-third of the Hebrew Old Testament is in poetic form, and some of the narratives were most likely written in poetry originally (such as the Book of Ruth). This little volume in the popular series "Guides to Biblical Scholarship" is a welcome addition to the tools available to expedite the student's transition into the next level of competence.

The basic nature and characteristics of Hebrew poetry have been well known since Bishop Robert Lowth's seminal work in the mid-eighteenth century. But several studies have appeared in the past fifteen years that have challenged accepted scholarly dogma concerning ancient Semitic poetry in general. Petersen and Richards have provided here not only a guide to the recent scholarship, but an attempt to understand Hebrew poetry itself.

Chapter one opens the volume with the problems of definition, explaining why it is sometimes difficult to distinguish poetry from prose in the Old Testament. Chapters two and three treat the basic features of Hebrew poetry: parallelism and meter. Here the authors update the discussion of parallelism, broadening the definition and using the analytical categories derived from the study of grammar. Hebrew parallelism is more than mere correspondence of semantic elements. Petersen and Richards review the involved debate over the possibility that Hebrew poetry uses meter, weighing in decidedly with those who demur: "Hebrew poetry possesses rhythm, not meter...[O]ne may read Hebrew poetry looking for both rhythmic regularity and variety, not metric predictability." (p. 47).

Chapter four provides a brief overview of recent literary discussions of Hebrew poetics, emphasizing specifically simile and stanza, with examples stemming mostly from Hosea. They are impressed by the diversity of literary devices open to the Hebrew poet, and illustrate the interdependence of parallelism, rhythm, and other stylistic devices, such as inclusios, chiasm, paronomasia, etc. The final chapter offers analysis of selected portions of Old Testament poetry in order to demonstrate the possibilities for interpretation. Their selections include a variety of poetic types: Deuteronomy 32, Isaiah 5:1-7, and Psalm 1.

Petersen and Richards have provided a service to all of us interested in reading Hebrew poetry. They go beyond a mere introduction to the issues by providing a helpful survey and critique of the most recent developments in the secondary literature. Particularly, chapter two is helpful for summarizing how recent scholars have taken us beyond Lowth's basic categories of synonymous, antithetic and synthetic parallelism. We now have to recognize that approximately twelve percent of Old Testament poetry exhibits nonparallel lines, and the simple equation between poetry and parallelism must be abandoned. The recognition that Hebrew poetry and prose are on a continuum has led to a new approach, relying largely on the application of modern linguistics. Petersen and Richards include a helpful discussion of this new approach, which moves beyond

Book Reviews

the poetic line to words, grammar, sounds, and syntax, so that now we must speak in terms of both semantic and grammatical parallelism.

Bill T. Arnold

Rolf Rendtorff, *The Problem of the Process of Transmission in the Pentateuch*, Trans. John J. Scullion, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series 89, Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 214 pp., 1990.

This important volume was originally published in Germany in 1977 (*Das Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Problem des Pentateuch*). Rendtorff's work had an immediate impact on Old Testament studies, serving as a major criticism of the Documentary Hypothesis, or the JEDP theory. The volume's appearance in English is a welcome development, making Rendtorff's new approach available to students just beginning their work in Pentateuchal origins.

Rendtorff believes the tradition-critical approaches of his predecessors in Germany, especially Noth and von Rad, was incompatible with the conclusions of classical source criticism as defined in the nineteenth century (and canonized in the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis). In particular, the tradition-critical method of moving from the smallest units of the text through the larger complexes of tradition and ultimately to the final form of the text excludes the possibility of independent literary sources such as J, E, and P. Therefore, the traditional understanding of the Documentary Hypothesis must be abandoned.

Instead, Rendtorff argues that the Pentateuch was comprised of large strands of material that have been joined end to end. The primeval history (Genesis 2-11), the Exodus history (Exodus 1-15), the Sinai materials (Exodus 19-24), and the various cycles of patriarchal narratives were brought together during the time of Solomon. Unlike many scholars today (see for example, T. L. Thompson and John van Seters), Rendtorff assumes the various blocks of materials in the Pentateuch reflect a level of actual historical events, and he values the ancient Near Eastern control data more seriously. Rendtorff suggests P and D redactions of the whole, but in general he argues against the classical source analysis of JEDP and its tendency to atomize the text.

Rendtorff emphatically, therefore, abandons the notion of continuous sources, and prefers to begin with the smallest elements of tradition and to attempt to show how these smaller elements were used to construct, first intermediate complexes and then larger blocks of material, each with its own theme. The larger blocks were independent of each other until late in the process, when they were combined into a comprehensive narrative. For example, Rendtorff uses the obviously central themes of the Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob stories of Genesis to demonstrate the structure and composition of the patriarchal story in general, and its over-arching reworking (see pages 74-84). He highlights the development of the promise of Yahweh's guidance through the divine addresses, and combined with the promise to become a blessing for others, these elements stamped and unified the patriarchal stories. The final product in Genesis 12-36 is an independent larger unit, which has been reworked theologically in different stages. The divine promise addresses have dominated this reworking and its interpretation,

fitting these three collections into one composite whole.

Rendtorff has obviously advanced the current debate over the validity of the conventional JEDP approach. His analysis, however, though often providing fresh and insightful readings, moves us in the direction of the older fragmentary and supplementary hypotheses of the nineteenth century. The Pentateuch, in his approach, developed through time as the stories were retold and linked by editors. He differs from most of today's scholars in suggesting that we stop referring to a J-source altogether. Though he has not been widely accepted, he has certainly called the conventional wisdom into question and forced today's Old Testament scholars to reconsider assumptions previously accepted as dogma. Readers of this journal who want to stay current on the latest trends in Pentateuchal criticism will not want to miss the English translation of Rendtorff, and it is necessary reading for scholars of the Old Testament. This little volume would also be an important acquisition for libraries devoted to biblical studies.

Bill T. Arnold

Martin J. Selman, *1 Chronicles: An Introduction and Commentary* and *2 Chronicles: A Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. Leicester/Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1994. Two volumes. 551 pp. pb.

The *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries* draw on Christian scholars and target a Christian audience. They seek "to provide the student of the Bible with a handy, up-to-date commentary on each book, with the primary emphasis on exegesis. Major critical questions are discussed in the introductions and additional notes, while undue technicalities have been avoided" (p. 5). Martin Selman's work, following the above guidelines, is not a highly technical commentary for the critical scholar, nor a homiletical guide for the preacher, nor a devotional reading of Chronicles. It will best serve the serious Christian student of the Bible: 1) who wants an informed depth of scholarship with much detail, but without getting mired down in the technical language and debates of text, source, and form criticism, etc.; 2) who wants not just an analysis of details, but a reflective, theological synthesis of the Chronicler's communication to his original audience; and 3) who wants to understand how the message of Chronicles ties into the themes and purposes of both the Old and New Testament and has abiding meaning for the community of faith today.

In terms of format, Selman first provides a seventy-page introduction to Chronicles and an extensive analytical outline of its contents. The reader should note that although the volumes in this work are titled separately, *1 Chronicles* and *2 Chronicles*, the second volume cannot stand alone since all of the introductory matters are covered in the first volume. In the commentary proper he presents a general overview of the content, themes, and theological significance of each major section and then begins to narrow his focus. For the major subsections he begins with a quotation from that section which provides a summary of its main theme and he provides references to parallel passages elsewhere in the Bible. He discusses such matters as the Chronicler's themes, sources, structure, and flow of thought, but not in a rigidly formulaic manner. He then usually

Book Reviews

moves to a more focused look at the smaller subunit. Again, without any formulaic monotony, he integrates a discussion of the text's content, function, and theological value while identifying interpretive problems, bringing in matters of textual concerns and the meaning of Hebrew phrases where needed.

Selman is well immersed in Chronicle's research and draws on the recent important works of de Vries, Japhet, and Williamson, to name a few. He brings to this work not only the standard skills of historical-grammatical biblical scholarship, but he also draws as well from scholarship which has recognized the literary structures and artistry of Chronicles. Moreover, he shows that he has lived intimately with this biblical work.

In regard to introductory matters, Selman does not particularly break new ground, but works within the range of current scholarly opinion, recognizing diversity where it exists and entering into the debate in places, but without a heavy hand and dogmatism. He sees Chronicles as a work distinct from Ezra-Nehemiah (p. 53) and as the work of one primary author, the "Chronicler." Accepting the latest genealogies and lists as primary (with some question as to how many generations of the Davidic lineage are intended in 1 Chron. 3:17-24 [pp. 70-71]) and seeing Chronicles as dependent on Ezra-Nehemiah, Selman dates the work to the late fifth century, with around 400 BC as the probable time of composition (pp. 70-71).

The most unique emphasis of Selman's positions is in regard to the genre and purpose of Chronicles. With others he sees the Chronicler as employing a historical methodology, as having a theological bent, and as sounding like a preacher in places, but Selman concludes that the main task that the Chronicler set out to do was exegesis, "to offer an interpretation of the Bible as he knew it" (p. 26). Concluding that the Chronicler's audience was expected to know the earlier biblical material in order to understand the Chronicler's message, Selman takes a synoptic approach to his interpretation of Chronicles, providing the reader with the parallel passages that the Chronicler is interpreting, and explaining to his reader the Chronicler's interpretation of the work of God in the history of Israel. The Chronicler's main intention according to Selman was to communicate a healing gospel message by demonstrating the continuity of God's dealings with Israel in the past, particularly through the everlasting Davidic covenant, to the present community in order to give them hope as the continuing people of God at a time when they "lived in a greatly diminished version of the Promised Land" (p. 44, cf. pp. 9, 10, 26, 42, 45-65). The two particular foci of continuity for the Chronicler were the everlasting Davidic dynastic covenant, associated with the reality of the kingdom of God, and the institution of Solomon's temple as the sign of God's graceful ever readiness to forgive and restore his people (27-31, 39, 44-65).

Although this reviewer would disagree with some of these, Selman emphasized and accepts some of the other scholarly positions that he rejected or de-emphasized, in most of these cases Selman offered arguments that were thoughtful and that helped to refine the overall scholarly picture of the Chronicler's work. Still, a few matters bothered this reviewer. First, more work could have been done of a "literary" nature. I would have liked to have seen greater sensitivity to the various kinds of narration and narrative comments and their functions and I would have liked the introduction to have given the

reader more guidance in what to look for to become a better reader of Chronicles. Secondly, there were places in which Selman's Christian theological "spectacles" saw more theological import in a few verses than seemed supportable. Also, for all the emphasis Selman places on the everlasting David dynastic covenant as central to the Chronicler's message, he nonetheless claims without convincing support that the Chronicler did not intend to give his audience hope for a Davidic king resuming the throne or for raising general messianic expectations. In conclusion, however, Selman's commentary represents a very well researched, thoughtful, and insightful tool to students of the Bible.

Rodney K. Duke, Appalachian State University

Daniel Berrigan, *Isaiah: Spirit of Courage. Gift of Tears*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 196 pp., hb, \$17.00.

Berrigan, a well-known peace activist and member of Plowshares, offers a poetic rendering (not a translation as he claims, p. 4) of selected texts of the book of Isaiah. He classifies this effort as "an exercise in pastoral prophecy" (p. 1). Berrigan's goal is to demonstrate that the contemporary world is much like the one described in the biblical text--oppressive and opposed to divine truth--and so still in need of that ancient word. One term best describes the tone of this book: passionate.

The author's discussion of Isaiah is divided into six parts. The first four deal with passages from chapters 1-39, the last two with the message of consolation in chapter forty and the four Servant Songs. From Isaiah Berrigan gleans two primary lessons. First, God continues to communicate through his chosen ones a message of justice and nonviolence against earthly powers and a perverse culture; the prophet and the Servant both serve as models of steadfast courage to speak truth in the public square, no matter the consequences. At the same time, the prophetic word also empowers those committed to peace and divine justice to persevere in the face of inescapable opposition and also comforts them with the hope of ultimate vindication.

This is a very focused approach to Isaiah and in no way a comprehensive commentary in the traditional sense. Every observation and application revolves around the twin themes of peace and justice. Modern appropriations of this prophetic book's concerns that continually surface are those involving the experiences of the Plowshares community in the North American legal system and of others, such as in Central America, who have suffered for questioning the status quo. These powerful paraphrases and fervent exposition do fulfill their function: to force the reader to seriously reconsider the nature of government policies and possible Christian complicity in defending a misplaced patriotism and a consumer society.

Three further comments are in order. To begin with, one must remember that Berrigan is not a biblical scholar. Consequently, there is the occasional error in historical detail. The most glaring mistake surfaces in his opening comments on 14:4-21: "'This magnificent *mashal* was, we are told, in all probability composed by Isaiah himself against Nebuchadnezzar" (p. 47). Second, the author can sometimes surprise the reader with a different understanding and presentation of the biblical

Book Reviews

material. For example, the Servant is portrayed in the feminine ('she', 'her'), and the notion of an expiatory self-sacrifice of the Servant in Isaiah 53 is rejected. 53:1-10 are said to be the witnesses' account of the Servant's rejection, a rendering both piously vague and devoid of any true acceptance of responsibility for that repudiation. Only in verses 11 and 12 does God speak to praise the Servant's commitment to justice. Lastly, Berrigan does not stress any direct connections between the prophetic message and ethical demands and the person of Jesus. For example, the Emmanuel and royal hope passages of Isaiah chapters 7-11, he mentions in passing, were applied to Jesus by Christians "in a daring midrash" (p. 43). On the other hand, while the attitudes and actions of the Suffering Servant are illustrated in the life of Jesus, there is little sense of a direct correlation; rather, these texts stand on their own merits to help school all of God's in the self-denying vocation of standing for truth.

This is a book that aims to disturb. It provides the reader with a new lens through which to appreciate the book of Isaiah and to begin to sense the breath (and ongoing relevance) of its ethical indictment. All may not agree with some of Berrigan's interpretive moves, but none can fail to feel the impact of his passion.

M. Daniel Carrol R., Denver Seminary

William R. Baker, *Personal Speech-Ethics in the Epistle of James*, WUNT 68, Tubingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1995, xvi + 364 pp.

The Epistle of James is surely one of the most overlooked book in the New Testament. Scholars who do focus on it tend to deal with the age-old question of the relationship between James and Paul and the seeming "antagonism" between the two. Baker's book offers a refreshing change of pace as he attempts to deal with the concern in the Epistle over the tongue and speech.

The thesis of this work is to demonstrate that speech-ethics is a major concern in the Epistle of James. This is shown by Baker to be reflective of the larger concern of the ancient Mediterranean world for speech-ethics. The premise is that James utilizes common ideas found in much of the literature of that time period in writing his Epistle while, at the same time, adding some distinctively Christian thoughts. With this premise in mind, Baker does a masterful job of surveying ancient literature that might have had an influence on the author of James. Baker looks at Near Eastern Wisdom literature, the Old Testament, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, Qumranic literature, Rabbinic literature, Greco-Roman literature, Philonic literature, and New Testament literature in relation to speech-ethics.

In part one, Baker focuses in on the rudiments of speech-ethics by looking at the sub-topics of controlled speech, listening, words and deeds, and the power of words as presented in all the types of literature listed above. He then applies this to his exegesis of James 1:1-27. Part two consists of exploring the ancient literature for insight into the evil of the tongue. Baker uses this as the background for his exegesis of James 3:1-12; 4:1-2b. Part three deals with speech in inter-human relationships.

The sub-section of Old Testament literature is particularly rich as Baker addresses such topics as gossip, slander, cursing, partiality and reproof. His application for James consists of his exegesis of James 3:18; 4:1-2b; 4:11-12 and 5:9. Part four concerns speech in human - divine (*sic*) relationships. This becomes the backdrop for his exegesis of James 1:5-8; 4:2c-10; 4:13-17; and 5:13-18. Specifically in the analysis following his exegesis, Baker focuses on praise, prayer, and blasphemy. Part five consists of the treatment of the relationship of speech to truth as found in the ancient literature. His exegesis for this final segment consists of one verse - James 5:12.

In his conclusion, Baker suggests that the primary influences upon James come from Jewish, Greco-Roman and Christian thought, with the literature of the New Testament providing numerous parallel ideas. While this conclusion should come as no surprise to the student of New Testament, Baker does show how James uniquely contributes to the pervasive topic of speech-ethics from a Jewish-Christian point of view. This book is certainly valuable as a reference guide to the views of the ancient world concerning the tongue and speech, and his detailed exegesis and explanation of the passages Baker chooses to use provides new ways for reading the Epistle of James on its own merits.

Melissa Archer

David R. Bauer and Mark A. Powell (eds.), *Treasures New and Old: Contributions to Matthean Studies*, Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996, xiv + 454 pp., \$34.95.

This volume presents a collection of twelve essays incorporating a variety of methodological approaches representing the broad spectrum of modern Matthew research. Most were originally written for and presented to the Matthew Group of the Society of Biblical Literature. An introduction by the editors locates the twelve essays within the context of ongoing scholarly inquiry, the titles of which are: "The *Sitz im Leben* of the Gospel of Matthew," Donald Hagner; "Matthew's Understanding of the Temple Tax," David E. Garland; "Matthew and the Law," Klyne Snodgrass; "The Literary and Theological Function of the Genealogy in Matthew's Gospel," David Bauer; "Characterization on the Phraseological Plane in the Gospel of Matthew," Mark Powell; "Power and Powerlessness: Matthew's Use of Irony in the Portrayal of Political Leaders," Dorothy Weaver; "Wisdom Passages in Matthew," Russell Pregeant; "Matthew: Sermon and Story," Janice Anderson; "Matthew's Gospel as a Test Case for Hermeneutical Reflection," Rudolf Schnackenburg; "The Final Judgement (Matt 25:31-46): An Exercise in 'History of Influence' Exegesis," Ulrich Luz; "A Sound Map of the Sermon on the Mount," Bernard Scott and Margaret Dean; and "Discharging Responsibility: Matthean Jesus, Biblical Law, and Hemorrhaging Women," Amy-Jill Levine.

Because they were written for the academy, a number of these essays may move at too rarified and esoteric a level to be of immediate usefulness to the non-specialist. For example, the essay by Scott and Dean presents an outline of the Sermon on the Mount based on an analysis of repeated Greek sound patterns. While the ten pages

Book Reviews

which discuss that outline and compare it with those promoted in recent commentaries will be of use, the sixty pages which develop that outline may be wearisome. Nevertheless quite a few of the essays are written so as to be edifying for the pastor or teacher of the Word, and indeed treat issues of central importance to the interpretation and proclamation of Matthew's message. Hagner's essay on the situation and needs of the community addressed by the gospel is exceptionally useful. He seeks an understanding of the community's situation which honors, on the one hand, the emphasis in Matthew on Jesus' exclusive mission to Israel and on the importance of keeping Torah and, on the other hand, the universal vision for the gospel reaching to all nations. This essay also provides a balanced view of the relationship between non-Christian Jews and Christians throughout the first century, critiquing the common view that the so-called "council of Jamnia" signalled a decisive and innovative break in Jewish/Christian relations. Also quite illuminating is Snodgrass's analysis of Matthew's interpretation of how to keep Torah, leading to a thoughtful exegesis of 5:17-20. His emphasis on Matthew's linking of the Law and the Prophets leads him to conclude that Jesus is promoting a Torah-obedience which places the values of "holiness as mercy" in the center, rather than the "holiness as separateness" advocated by the Pharisees. His reflections are worth the attention of any who would teach or preach on the Sermon on the Mount. David Bauer's article on the genealogy of Matthew stands as another witness to the meaningfulness of these carefully designed genealogies: far from being a tired list or mere formality at the introduction of the gospel, the genealogy is shown to be pregnant with a theological and pastoral significance which the chapters that follow underscore and unpack. Luz's article on the great vision of the last judgement (Matt 25:31-46) also aims at providing provocative suggestions for the application of this parable to the modern setting of the church.

The volume gives a wider access to some of the fruitful work which "has been done in a corner" of the Society of Biblical Literature, and those wishing to explore more fully the historical setting, structure, and exegesis of Matthew will do well to consult this volume.

David A. deSilva

J. Harold Greenlee, *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*, Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995, (Revised edition, 1964), 160 pp.

Greenlee's monograph enables beginning students to grasp the essential principles of New Testament textual criticism because he presents the information in a clear, concise, explanatory manner. This helps make this highly technical field accessible and understandable not only for a seminary student but also for an interested lay person. For example, Greenlee takes time to describe the writing utensils used by the scribes and in doing so enables the reader to visualize what the instrument looks like, thus arousing the interest of the reader. "To make a reed pen; the reed stalk was dried, sharpened to a point on one end, and slit somewhat as a modern pen point is split. Beautiful writing was possible with such pens" (12-13):

Greenlee's writing style is definitely a major strength of this book.

Greenlee moves the reader through the concerns and principles of New Testament textual criticism in a logical, progressive manner. In chapter one, he defines textual criticism as "the study of copies of any written work of which the autograph (the original) is unknown, with the purpose of ascertaining the original text" (1) and then explains the importance of New Testament textual criticism. New Testament textual criticism is necessary because the original writings no longer exist and all we have are numerous copies of which no two are identical. In chapter two he discusses topics concerned with Paleography. The ancient writing materials, writing utensils, book forms and handwriting styles are explained. Chapter three introduces the reader to the three primary sources from which the Greek New Testament is reconstructed. They are Greek manuscripts, translated versions of Greek manuscripts and patristic quotations. Chapter Four explains the transmission of the text and the variants (changes) that naturally accompanied the copying of texts. Chapter five, six and seven present a historical review and explains the establishment of a critical New Testament Greek Text, a very helpful segment. However, for the seminary student and Pastor-teacher with the ability to work with a Critical Greek New Testament, chapter seven will be the most valuable because it is here where Greenlee explains "The Praxis of Textual Criticism." In this chapter, he explains how to read a critical apparatus and introduces the student to the important symbols used in a variety of critical editions of the New Testament, including UBS 4th edition and Nestle-Aland, 27 edition. He also includes a helpful selected bibliography and an appendix of abbreviated Latin terms and their meanings.

Greenlee's book is an insightfully helpful introduction to New Testament criticism that would be beneficial to anyone interested in the subject. One does not need a working understanding of New Testament Greek to grasp the basic principles. It will be very helpful for those beginning Greek students who are attempting to do textual criticism. The selected bibliography highlights important and more technical works for those who desire to further peruse New Testament Criticism. The book could be used in a small group bible study, or Sunday school class, thus helping the laity better understand the production and transmission of the New Testament.

Ken Archer

Jacob Jervell, *The Theology of the Acts of the Apostles*, New Testament Theology, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, xiii.+ 142 pp.

Jervell is no newcomer to Lukan studies and those familiar with his previous work will not be surprised by this attempt at theological synthesis with reference to Luke's second volume, the Acts of the Apostles. Long a proponent of the Jewishness of Luke and Acts, here he maintains that "Luke's main interest is to demonstrate the church as the one and only true Israel, the unbroken continuation of the people of God in the time of Messiah-Jesus" (pg. 4). Indeed, in arguing for his position, Jervell goes so far as to assert that "Acts would be incomprehensible to

Book Reviews

Gentiles" (p. 12).

The outline of the book is largely determined by the focus of the series in which it appears, *New Testament Theology*. Thus, two introductory chapters treat "The Author and His Sources" and "Purpose and Historical Setting." Jervell believes that Acts was written by Luke, the companion of Paul, a Jewish Christian, to Christian Jews under pressure from other Jews in order to assure them of their identity as the people of God and to prevent their relapse into Judaism. Pivotal for this purpose is Luke's presentation of Paul, since Paul and the churches that stem from his mission constitute the greatest obstacle to Luke's position. In order to claim that the church is "restored Israel," Luke must demonstrate that Israel has been restored, not replaced by Gentiles within God's purpose, and that, through the Jews, Gentiles also receive a share in God's salvation. Luke draws from a variety of sources in Acts, including Scripture, which is for him the source of Israel's history but also of the story of Jesus and the history of the early church. Luke was an eyewitness to part of the story he recounts (thus, the "we-passages" in the latter half of Acts); additionally, he has access to oral traditions stemming from the earliest period of the church, letters or recommendation for missionaries, reports about the life of the various congregations on which his narrative touches, and traditional elements incorporated into the speeches of Acts.

The third chapter, "The Theology of Acts," constitutes almost two-thirds of the book. Here Jervell treats in considered seriatim the following topics: God, the Messiah, the divided people of God, the Spirit, the law of Moses, the Scriptures, the place of the Twelve, Paul, salvation, life in the Roman empire, and the last days. Each of these is developed with primary reference to the narrative of Acts, though the testimony of Luke's Gospel surfaces from time to time. The relevant theological data are organized around the central theme of the restoration of the people of God. Jervell declares that the christology of Acts, for example, is distinctively Jewish, and that "the christological frame is the history of the people of God" (p. 34). Concerning the nature of the church, the restored Israel, he contends, "The church is a church primarily of Jews and for the Jews. The identity of the church, then, is clear: it is Israel, the one and only" (p. 37). The law is the sign of Israel as God's people and is therefore neither altered in the Lukan narrative nor treated to innovative interpretation: "Because Jewish Christians are the restored Israel, circumcision and law become the very marks of their identity" (p. 58). And so on.

It is in this central chapter that the strengths and weaknesses of Jervell's contribution to the study of Acts best surfaces. For three decades, his has been a significant voice in calling for an appreciation of Acts within first-century Judaism and not as a Gentile-Christian document written by and for Gentile Christians. Today, however, his mantra has less force or appeal precisely because others have learned from him to nuance their positions in ways that account for more of the evidence in Acts. Few have been convinced that Luke and his audience could only have been Jews, or that the converts to Christ in Acts are only Jews or, at best, God-fearers; instead, evidence has been put forward that might encourage Jervell to nuance his own position. In this book, however, such transformations in the study of

Acts are little noticed. Instead, Jervell continues to think in terms of a three-stage development of Christianity--from Palestinian Jewish Christianity to Hellenistic Jewish Christianity and Gentile Hellenistic Christianity--that fails to account fully for the diversity within Judaism and, by extension, within early Christianity. Today, it hardly seems possible to think in terms of Jervell's either-or categories, not least within Acts, which invites consideration of the influence of the Christian message in everwidening circles within the Roman world.

Jervell's final chapters situate the theology of Acts within the broader New Testament, describe the contribution of Acts to our knowledge of early Christianity, and point in the direction of the contribution of the theology of Acts for theology today. With reference to this latter agenda, Jervell's comments are disappointingly vague. A helpful bibliography, including commentaries and more focused studies--is included for persons interested in further study of Acts.

Jervell's perspective on Acts as Luke's theological interpretation of the history of the church within world history is a helpful one, and there is much to learn from this synthesis of the theology of Acts. His book helps to fill an important lacuna in Acts-studies, even if greater balance and more reflection on the contribution of Acts to the constructive theological enterprise today would have made it even more useful.

Joel B. Green, Asbury Theological Seminary

Irina Levinskaya, *The Book of Acts in Its Diaspora Setting*, *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*, vol. 5, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, Carlisle: Paternoster, 1996, xvi + 284 pp.

It is delightful to read the thoughtful work of a classicist who brings her considerable breadth of learning and erudition to the study of the Acts of the Apostles. Levinskaya, an ancient historian at the Institute of History of the Russian Academy of Sciences, recognizes Acts as a valuable historical work, and does so without neglecting the canons of contemporary historiographical study. Where she parts company with many skeptics from within the modern tradition of biblical studies is in her refusal to adopt an historical positivism that assumes a necessary and debilitating dichotomy between theological concerns and historical issues.

This inquiry into the "diaspora setting" of the Book of Acts is the fifth volume in a projected six-volume series, the aim of which is to bring interdisciplinary perspectives to the study of the place of Acts in its own historical context. The particular aim of this contribution to the series is to gather and analyze the available evidence on the diaspora in the first century in order to provide the background for ongoing discussion of Acts in relation to the Jewish diaspora. Levinskaya's work is divided into two parts, with the first seven chapters dealing with questions of Jewish identity and the final five chapters devoted to detailed descriptions of Jewish diaspora communities. Three appendices, treating conceptual issues and providing additional inscriptional evidence, together with a selection of photographic plates and a series of helpful indices, contribute to the overall usefulness of this volume.

Book Reviews

One of the primary obstacles an investigation of this nature must overcome is methodological. As Levinskaya observes, "the first century is extremely poorly represented by epigraphic evidence and among excavated synagogues only one belongs to this period" (viii-ix). An analogous deficiency exists among literary sources for Jewish diaspora communities outside of Egypt. Consequently, the historian is faced with an onerous conundrum: To what data might one turn to evaluate the historical picture one finds in the Book of Acts? Levinskaya's approach is to take the evidence of later periods both seriously and cautiously; she is especially drawn to inscriptions originating from the same region in the diaspora even though from a century or two later. While admitting the inherent unreliability of any reconstruction of an earlier period based solely on later sources, she argues that one is on more solid ground when one finds earlier source material (in this case, such as is found in the Book of Acts) that is corroborated by later evidence. When this is also supported by additional, earlier material, so much the better.

Having established her methodological parameters, Levinskaya turns first to the Jewish world in the diaspora as this is described in Acts. On this subject, she avers that the question of who was and was not a Jew was an important one in first-century Rome, and that this boundary consisted in two parts, a religious and an ethnic one. This historical picture coheres well with the picture of Jewish identity in Acts. Secondly, she takes up the issue of Jewish proselytes, taking the position that Judaism in the first century was possessed of no active "missionary strategy," but that it did welcome those Gentiles who were attracted to its religion and practices. More discussion is devoted to the much-debated evidence for "God-fearers"--persons who figure importantly for the narrative of Acts but whose historical existence has been suspected or rejected by some late-twentieth-century scholars. For Levinskaya, the Aphrodisias inscription tips the interpretive balance, proving the existence of a category of friendly Gentiles in the first-century diaspora. The existence of such Gentile sympathizers corroborates their importance in Acts, where they appear either as the backbone of new Christian communities or as fierce impediments to the spread of the Christian mission.

Throughout her discussion of Jewish identity--Jews, proselytes, and sympathetic Gentiles--Levinskaya demonstrates exemplary care in her weighing of the evidence. She also turns the spotlight in helpful ways on particular issues in the Acts of the Apostles. For example, with regard to the question of Jewish identity, she devotes a lengthy treatment to the circumcision of Timothy (Acts 16:1-3), arguing that Timothy's identity was an ambiguous one. Born to a Jewish mother and Gentile father, he was a Jew ethnically, but a Gentile in terms of religious practice. Against those who insist that the matrilineal principle, whereby Timothy would have been regarded an ethnic Jew on account of his mother, did not exist in the first century, she insists that later rabbinic legislation did not "come from the blue" but developed over time in response to the tensions of Jewish life. From her vantage point, it is reasonable to believe that the matrilineal principle in rabbinic law emerged in the Jewish diaspora as Jewish communities struggled with the problems arising from interethnic marriages, influenced by Roman law which privileged the

status of the mother in cases of marriage between a citizen and noncitizen.

In the final section of her study, Levinskaya turns to particular Jewish communities in the diaspora mentioned by Luke: Antioch, Asia Minor (Ephesus, Miletus, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium), Macedonia and Achaia (Thessalonica, Beroea, Athens, Corinth), and Rome. In each instance, she examines what is known of these communities from especially epigraphic testimony, indicating that the available evidence supports the general picture provided us by Luke in the Book of Acts. It is disappointing to find no treatment of Philippi, particularly given the curious account Luke provides in Acts 16, with Paul and his companions seeking the "place of prayer." Levinskaya notes, however, that such places as Philippi have appeared on the map of the first-century Jewish diaspora exclusively from the pages of Acts; the opportunity for comparative historical study is thus limited.

Some of the material published in this series has disappointed because it has focused so fully on "the first century setting" without comparable interest in locating the Book of Acts in that setting, in spite of the series title. At times, particularly in the later chapters of this book, Levinskaya's own work falls prey to this same tendency, with the result that readers of Acts might reasonably have expected more in the way of indications concerning how this data bears on our reading of Acts. This is a welcome addition to the study of Acts nonetheless, especially for its thoroughgoing examination of Jewish identity and the problem of the "God-fearers" in recent study, for the light it sheds on particular texts in Acts, and for the way it helps overall to paint the sociohistorical mural against which we might read the Acts of the Apostles.

Joel B. Green

Edward P. Meadors, *Jesus the Messianic Herald of Salvation*. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1995. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2:72, 381 pps. ISBN 3-16-146251-3

This book is a revision of the author's Ph.D. thesis written at the University of Aberdeen (1993) under the supervision of Prof. I. Howard Marshall. It represents a challenge to the growing scholarly assumption which regards the Q source as a "second sphere of early Christianity." While the author affirms the validity of Q as a *Vorlage*, he seriously questions the hypothesis of a distinct Q community, the Q source as a document composed in multiple stages which reflect differing theological emphases, and the supposed conflict between the christology of Q and the Gospel of Mark. A concomitant purpose of the work is to show that the Q tradition is based on the authentic teaching of the historical Jesus.

Chapter 1 presents a survey of the study of Mark and Q. The rise of form criticism had a decisive impact on Q studies. With the contrast in forms correlated a contrast in christology. The lack of a passion narrative soon emerged as material evidence cited to support the hypothesis that Q represented a distinct theological tradition. A growing consensus has emerged which sees Mark's christology as representing the orthodox beliefs of early Christians who attributed redemptive and

Book Reviews

soteriological significance to Jesus' death and resurrection. In contrast, the christology of Q is said to emphasize Jesus' role as the Son of Man in the final judgment.

The hypothesis of a Q community is the subject of chapter 2. The author defines what scholars are saying about the carriers of the Q tradition and he weighs the value of the Q community hypothesis. The sheer lack of historical data supporting the existence of an isolated Q community or series of communities, the scarcity of qualitative information documenting the *Sitz im Leben* of its supposed counterpart--the Jerusalem community, and the unconscious manner in which Jesus' teaching suddenly becomes community pronouncement are all cited as difficulties for the hypothesis of a distinct Q community.

The author attempts to show that many characteristic themes of Q (wisdom, prophecy, the Son of Man) are present equally and in similar ways in Mark. Meadors makes the claim in chapter 3 that there exists no evidence that Q or the Q community ever interpreted Jesus along the lines of a "wisdom myth" or proclaimed a wisdom christology which contrasted in some fashion with the general portrait of Jesus as proclaimed in the Synoptic Gospels. In chapter 4, the author holds that Jesus' prophetic demeanor in Q accords fully with the role Jesus plays in Mark. The author addresses the contemporary Son of Man debate in chapter 6 and gives reasons for the view that Mark and Q refer to the Son of Man in ways not altogether dissimilar.

A comparison of themes in chapter 5 indicates that the OT and Daniel in particular provides the most likely conceptual background for the major components of Jesus' Q sayings. This is an important observation in response to tradition critics who isolate and interpret Q according to a single speculative OT or Hellenistic tradition. Because wisdom, prophecy, eschatology, and apocalyptic are present in Daniel--a document which precedes Jesus chronologically--these concepts may have been amalgamated already within Jesus' perspective of his own ministry. Hence modern theories which attribute an individual layer of redaction to a single theme may be considered superfluous.

The kingdom of God in Q is taken up in chapter 7 and then the kingdom of God in Mark is compared with the kingdom of God in Q in chapter 8. In analyzing the 13 kingdom of God sayings which are attributed to Jesus in Mark, the author evaluates the hypothesis that Q bears witness to a radically different "kerygmatic" response to Jesus as opposed to Mark which orients around the preaching of the cross. It is the author's thesis that a comparison between the kingdom of God sayings in Q and Mark reveals not diverse but similar traditions with compatible conceptual and background features.

The final chapter 9 poses the question, "Is Q from a 'Second Sphere' of Christianity?" The author believes that there are good textual grounds for claiming that Mark and Q have compatible christological and soteriological emphases. The author analyzes the appropriate texts to see if indeed diverse incompatible streams of tradition originally shaped the form and content of Mark and Q. According to the author, Q represents a simple collection of Jesus' sayings and teachings composed by

eyewitness followers of Jesus, who passed on their memory of Jesus said and did during his earthly ministry. The Q material is Jewish in background, synoptic in context, and dominical in origin according to the documents in which Q exists.

Meadors summarizes his conclusions in the form of six statements: (1) Comparison between Q and Mark indicates that Q is not from a "second sphere of Christianity"; (2) Q and Mark are compatible in areas where they can be compared validly, that is, in the themes and concepts which they have in common; (3) The Q material, like Mark, is unified by the person and work of Jesus; (4) The overwhelming evidence of OT allusions and quotations in Q demand that Q's conceptual background be classified as Jewish; (5) The content of Q does not provide landmarks for its division into separate strata of community contemplation; and (6) The relationship and historical development of Mark and Q in which both are considered to represent basically conservative redactions of orthodox or mainstream tradition.

Whether the author succeeds in challenging the emerging scholarly consensus regarding various aspects of the Q source is for the reader to decide. Meadors certainly does raise important questions which cannot be ignored. The author demonstrates that many of the hypotheses of a "critical orthodoxy" regarding the Q source are subject to other possible interpretations. Some of the examples employed to show that Mark and Q are compatible seem a bit contrived at times. However, there are many excellent exegetical arguments presented throughout the discussion. The book rightly calls into question the christological incompatibility of Mark and Q and whether the elaborate theories about a esoteric Q community producing a multi-layered redaction is nothing more than a scholarly construct which goes beyond the historical and textual evidence. B. Keith Brewer, Drew University Graduate School

Vernon K. Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation*, Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1996, x + 148.

The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology, London: Routledge, 1996, xiii + 278, \$19.95 (paper).

Robbins has provided for the reader of these two books the fruits of a decade of methodological reflection, which should be welcomed and read by all interpreters of Scripture. Socio-rhetorical interpretation is not merely another method for reading texts: it co-ordinates multiple approaches to reading a text into an integrated method. The method begins with the understanding that texts speak within contexts. As one discovers the contexts within which the text was written and read, and adds these dimensions to the reading of the text, the closer one approaches the full meaning and impact of the text within a particular setting (in the exegetical enterprise, usually the setting of the first hearers and readers). Robbins has codified contexts for reading under four categories: inner-texture, inter-texture, social and cultural texture, and ideological texture (in *Exploring*, he adds a fifth -- sacred texture). Within each of

Book Reviews

these, one will find recognizable aspects of other exegetical disciplines. The poetry of the method is, again, in the integration and dialogue created between these approaches.

Inner-texture takes the interpreter into areas regularly associated with literary and rhetorical analysis. One looks for clues within the text itself for units of narrative or thought (opening-middle-closing texture), themes of interests of the passage (repetitive texture), movement within a story or argument (progressive texture), and the way in which a passage seeks to be persuasive (argumentative texture). This can be further expanded through attention to the evocative power of a text in a number of arenas usually missed by those who are focussed on intellectual content alone (aesthetic or sensory texture).

Inter-texture calls the reader to look for other "texts" which are at work in the primary text. Most readers of the New Testament will be accustomed to investigating "oral-scribal" texture in a very basic sense (looking for quotations within a New Testament text of a passage from the Hebrew Scriptures). Robbins' discussion of intertexture introduces us to the complexity and richness of a fuller view of inter-texture. The interpreter is called to look for recitation (verbal quoting, often with some significant modifications of the original), recontextualization (using verbal echoes from a traditional text in a new setting without indicating a quotation), and reconfiguration (the patterning of larger narratives after traditional ones). The interpreter is called, in this enterprise, not to limit herself or himself to Hebrew Scriptural intertexts, but to explore the full range of Jewish and Greco-Roman texts which might be in dialogue with the passage or book under investigation. But written "texts" are not the only meaningful source of intertexture. Our exploration of the biblical text is enriched as we explore the cultural intertexture -- the allusions to or echoes of cultural phenomena such as the message of Stoic and Cynic preachers, Roman imperial ideology, Greco-Roman theorists on education -- and the social intertexture -- the social roles, codes, and institutions which make up the everyday context of the readers (e.g., honor, patronage, army, athletic competitions, etc.). Finally, historical intertexture enters the investigation as the interpreter looks for references or allusions to the fabric of historical events and data.

Social and cultural texture leads the investigator to focus on the social world of the readers of a particular text and how that text locates them in and moves them to respond to that world. Here Robbins finds it helpful to consider the work of sociologists such as Bryan Wilson, who has classified the types of responses of a sect to the larger society (conversionist, introversionist, reformist, etc.), and to determine what types of response to the society are present in, or motivated by, a text. Within this texture one is also invited to explore the "cultural location" of an author by examining the relationship of the values prioritized by that author to the values of other groups and of the dominant culture. Here again the cultural scripts of the first-century Mediterranean world appear, as the interpreter is asked to explore how honor, purity, kinship, and patronage codes are operative in the text, and how these scripts contribute to the shaping of the readers/hearers' responses in the world.

The fourth texture, ideological texture, asks the investigator first to look at his

or her own convictions and commitments concerning the text and the world. Why is the investigator looking at this text? What does he or she believe about the text itself, and how do these beliefs shape the way he or she will (even, can) read the text? How does the interpreter's social location affect his or her interpretation? It is imperative for the interpreter to conduct such self-examination (and to examine the ideologies of the interpreters he or she reads) in order to understand what he or she brings to the text and how the ideology operates in limiting and guiding what reading will be possible for the interpreter. Second, the interpreter is challenged to uncover the ideology of the author. How does the author develop his or her authority to instruct the readers/hearers? How does the author lead the addressees to move in the direction favored by the author? This calls the interpreter to read the author as shaping reality rather than merely mirroring reality, and to inquire into the interests which motivate and effects which follow such shaping.

Sacred texture, discussed only in *Exploring*, focusses the interpreter on the discourse about God and the sacred in a text. Perhaps the most important effect of including this chapter is to remind the interpreter that sacred texture emerges through the study of the other textures. Most interpreters deal primarily or exclusively with this last texture, resulting in a "disembodiment of their sacred texture from the realities of living in the world" (*Exploring*, p. 130). This is a useful caveat, showing how attention to the disciplines of exegesis reward even the busiest pastor, who must communicate the message of the text to "the realities of living in the world."

In the investigation of each texture, it is imperative that the image of the tapestry (textures intertwined, braided, woven together) not be lost. For the sake of presentation, each texture is discussed separately from the others: for the sake of an integrated interpretation, the actual practice must include dialogue between the textures, always returning to consider, for example, the inner-texture of argumentation after the inter-texture of social and cultural scripts has been explored, or to ponder social and ideological texture in light of discoveries made within the study of intertexture (e.g., how does the author select traditions on which to build, and how does this selection reveal his interests for the community's self-understanding and response to the world?). If practiced in this mutually-informing way, attention to the various textures will result in a finely nuanced reading of the text, one which is certain to bring forth valuable insights for the application of these texts to the new inner-, inter-, social and ideological textures of ministry situations.

While both books will introduce the reader to this method, the two differ in some significant respects. *Exploring* functions more as a textbook on the method itself, introducing the reader to various components of the four textures and providing ample models of the models at work (mostly taken from Mark 15, which provides continuity from section to section and shows how each texture adds layers of appreciation and understanding to the same text. This book is the preferred tool for learning to apply the method. *Tapestry* reads more as a history of investigation, taking the reader through a critical review of the work of dozens of New Testament scholars, showing where each contributes to a socio-rhetorical reading but going on to show how a fuller understanding of the socio-rhetorical enterprise would have

Book Reviews

taken the investigation further. This second volume makes for richer reading, as it delves into the theoretical aspects of socio-rhetorical interpretation more deeply. It also provides a detailed model of the method at work, this time using I Corinthians 9 to illustrate the fruits of the avenues of investigation opened up by this method.

Socio-rhetorical interpretation is still in its formative stages, but this also adds to its strength and usefulness -- the method is not so dominant that the text is in danger of being given second place to methodology. Indeed, socio-rhetorical analysis consciously centers itself on the text (something often lacking in social-scientific criticism) while still en fleshing that text in the real-life concerns and situations of authors and addressees. Because it is aware of the many contexts in which one must read a text to arrive at a rich, full interpretation, it will not tend toward the reductionism of any single method (e.g., too narrow a focus on the lexical, the literary, the social, and so forth). These two books are strongly recommended for all interpreters of the Bible as essential "continuing education" in the art and science of interpretation.

David A. deSilva

Sondra Ely Wheeler, *The New Testament on Possessions Wealth as Peril and Obligation*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

Sondra Ely Wheeler makes a useful contribution to the debate about method in applying the NT to current ethical questions. She chooses a theme (Possessions) and a number of selected NT texts to focus the question of method and give it "concreteness and specificity." After a critical review of the methodological approaches of Gustafson, Birch and Rasmussen, Verhey, Hauerwas and Ogletree, (useful for those well-read in ethics, but too brief to offer much to the beginner) she offers her own constructive proposal and then plunges into the chosen passages.

The proposal? The NT is an in-house document that invites those who have accepted Jesus as Lord further into the particular relationship of disciple to master. The "ethical" material of the NT is "tertiary" - two steps removed from the central concerns of the canon, which are first, what God has done in Christ, secondly the relationship into which he invites us, and only thirdly specifics of behavior. However, the first two levels of the NT message provide the reality base from which its value claims are derived. Though tertiary, these ethical values are essential, as the disciple relationship can have no substance apart from "concrete acts of obedience." With all this I agree heartily.

She then sets forth 4 common patterns of moral reasoning from theological principle to moral demand: the imitation of God, the pursuit of holiness as a requirement of fellowship with God, the application of general moral principles, and acting wisely. This section is useful discussion for any student of NT ethics.

Wayne Meek's sociological analysis of NT ethical behavior is introduced next as a help to understanding how moral injunctions were received and understood in the original situation. This, says Wheeler is an essential stage in discovering how they should function in the present.

Her methodological conclusions (or working principles) follow:

1. Attention to the whole canon with a weighting of ethical instructions commensurate with the degree of weight given then in the NT.
2. Frank dealing with divergences as manifestations of different norms, or by "reasoned judgement about what must take precedence."
3. NT rules must be taken as binding (given "presumptive force") unless there are particular circumstances causing them to be overridden.
4. The unspoken assumption of the "moral world" which lies behind moral instructions must be recognized.
5. Exegesis must not be overridden by method.

This last consideration is particularly important in my opinion, and my impression is that in dealing with her exemplar texts Wheeler does in fact place the emphasis here.

In dealing with her first exemplar, Mark 10:17-33, she proceeds with sensible caution declining to base conclusions on a supposed historical background, and opts for an analysis of the story. My feeling is she gets the right answer: Mark's focus is discipleship, not possessions - "The decisive weight of this passage falls on wealth's feature of being a potential obstacle to discipleship, rather than on the need to give to the poor...it is not the state of being wealthy that is in question, but the fatal state of being unable to abandon wealth to follow Jesus."(53) Her path to get there is, however, questionable: in issuing his command to sell Jesus is turning from the second table of the Decalogue to the first; loving God with a united heart "gives intelligibility to all that follows."(45) It may, but does it arise from an analysis of the text? Her next stage is to assert that love of God takes the form of discipleship. She is on firmer ground when she reasons that discipleship at that moment meant the road to Jerusalem and death. Why Jesus should tell the man to go sell his possessions at that moment, however, remains mysterious. The proof of her conclusion is there in Mark, though she appears to overlook it: Jesus does not commend those who abandon all for his sake and the gospel's (house and brothers and sisters and mother...), but those who for his sake leave anything ("house or brothers or lands"), and of course they are promised much more in return in this time.

As for the moral use of the story in today's world, she makes the excellent point that unless the kingdom of God is understood still to have some concrete value it has no moral use at all: "Without a concept of a kingdom that can command allegiance, the idea that wealth might compete for that allegiance has no purchase or weight."(56)

Other key NT passages on possession follow with preliminary critical remarks, a literal translation of the passage, discussion of structure and, relation of the passage to the broader themes of the book, and finally discussion and conclusion about the contemporary moral use of the passage.

Luke 12:22-34 is correctly (in my opinion) seen in the context of Jesus desire that his disciples should be liberated from fear, though she overlooks (also in my opinion) the fact that this fear arises precisely from the threat of persecution and loss

Book Reviews

of livelihood which following Jesus brings; we are dealing not with a simple wisdom discourse on the possibility of a fearless and generous life for those who have faith, but a desperately necessary assurance to those who decision to follow Jesus entails the threat of deprivation.

In these first two exemplars Wheeler makes the point that for them to function ethically in the modern church some belief in the Kingdom of God as a real blessing is required. This is certainly the case with the former. With the latter, the focus is rather on the Father who can be trusted to provide-unless one understands "treasure in heaven" as the kingdom. At this point Wheeler's exegesis is thin; there is no attempt to clarify this key concept.

The criticism of insufficient attention to careful exegesis can be made at other points in the study. The chapter on 2 Corinthians 8:1-15 is in many ways insightful and enlightening, but little attention is given to what Paul means by "equality," though much is made of the concept in later chapters and suggestions of far-reaching social consequences advanced. Indeed there may be a violation of Wheeler's own hermeneutical method (point 1) here, for the notion of equality apart from this text is absent from the NT and the OT, though it has an important place in Greek ideas of friendship (which may provide the key to its use by Paul).

Wheeler's fourth and last example is James 5:1-6 for which she provides a useful and to my mind faultless exposition.

A chapter follows in which she attempts to summarize the teaching on possession of Matthew, the Johannine literature, the deutero-Paulines and the General Epistles. The intention is sound: to place the teaching of individual texts within a wider canonical context. The difficulty is the brevity which necessitates doubtful matters of extreme importance to be asserted without support. For example: in Matthew "both Jesus and the disciples are depicted as poor..."(109). I question whether this is so.

Chapter 8 unites the material of the study in a delineation of the various themes in the NT's treatment of possessions: "Material wealth is problematic because it is often a hindrance to heeding the gospel; it is dangerous because it is a temptation to the sin of idolatry; it is suspect because it is frequently the result or the means of social injustice, finally, its disposition is a matter of great moral weight, as the response to human needs is a sign of the advent of God's kingdom and a test of the love that identifies Jesus' true followers."(134)

The final chapter suggests that the best way of using the NT's teaching on possession today is neither as a set of rules, nor even ethical principles of fixed application, but as questions which the Christian community puts to those who share its view of moral authority. Wheeler very helpfully puts some of these into concrete form under the headings of Questions about Liberty, Worship, Justice and Care. For this approach to work-indeed for the NT to work as an effective ethical guide-she restarts what she has said before; there must be a Christian community whose belief in the coming kingdom, saving death and resurrection of Christ, and in a personal mission which follows from individual redemption shapes its moral world.

Otherwise much of the call to a different way with possessions has no rational foundation.
David Seccombe, South Africa

M. E. Boring, Klaus Berger, Carsten Colpe, ed., *Hellenistic Commentary to the New Testament*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1995, 633 pp., \$69.95.

Scholars and exegetes have long realized the necessity of reading the New Testament documents against their Greco-Roman and Jewish environments. The linguistic, philosophical, theological, social, cultural, and political world of the first-century Mediterranean provides the indispensable context which allows the text to have meaning. This collection of Greco-Roman and Jewish texts, newly translated and expanded from the original German edition of 1984, stands in a long line of Biblical reference tools which seek to make readily available these background materials, going back to the groundbreaking *Novum Testamentum Graecum* of J. J. Wettstein (1751-52). Wettstein's compendium of comparative texts focused on lexicography -- refining our understanding of the semantic field of a particular Greek word or phrase through seeing that entry used in a variety of other ancient texts (an approach which survives in G. Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*). The *Hellenistic Commentary* stands in the tradition of the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule* ("history of religion school") which rose to prominence in nineteenth-century Germany. This approach looks for point of contacts between the forms of religious expression (concepts and actual practice) in the New Testament and in the larger Hellenistic and Greco-Roman environment. It is interested primarily in reconstructing the implicit or explicit dialogues between the New Testament authors and other shapers of first-century religion. The *Commentary*, like the "history of religion school," is primarily interested in comparative texts which bring to light the process of discussion, differentiation, and self-definition occurring among the early church, traditional Greco-Roman religion, mystery religions, philosophical religions (the line was not so clear in this period), magic, other Jewish movements, and the like.

The *Commentary* is organized according to the canonical order of the New Testament literature, presenting 976 extra-biblical texts for comparison with single verses of or larger passages within our twenty-seven canonical books. This is not a "commentary" in the traditional sense, with some exposition of every verse of the New Testament: rather, comparative material is simply given underneath a Scriptural citation, with some annotations drawing out some possible conclusions about the New Testament text based on the comparison. The only snag in the book-by-book outline occurs within the three Synoptic Gospels. Comparative literature relevant for parallel passages in Matthew, Mark, and Luke are located within the section devoted to Matthew, making the sections on Mark and Luke remarkably short. A newly compiled Scripture Index, however, makes it quite easy to find the appropriate places in Matthew where Marcan and Lucan parallels are discussed. The "Introduction to the English Edition," together with the translated original introduction to the German

Book Reviews

Edition, provide some very helpful methodological guidelines and cautions concerning the use of comparative texts and the safe use of "parallels." Scholars have been very wary of using parallels to argue for supposed genetic relationships between, say, Qumran and the early church, or mystery cults and Pauline Christianity, and the fruits of a generation of such methodological reflection and clarification are made available to the reader in these introductions.

The actual distribution of texts is rather uneven. The four gospels are given more attention than the other twenty-three books combined. John, for example, enjoys seventy pages of comparative texts, while Acts (a longer book with more points of contact with the wider Mediterranean world!) is afforded only twenty-six. The peculiar slant of the "history of religion school" often provides some very helpful background information. The treatment of Revelation, for example, is excellent. Texts illuminating Roman imperial religion and ideology are given in abundance, so that John's conversation (really, his argument) with this strain of Mediterranean religion is made clear for the modern reader and irrefutably documented. The few pages which are allotted Acts are also very helpful. The reader learns from these Greco-Roman texts that early Jewish-Christian criticism of worship even at the Jerusalem Temple as unsatisfactory (cf. Stephen's speech in Acts 7, and also the argument of Hebrews) reflects a wider rejection of worship bound to artificial representations and human-made temples. An excerpt from Suetonius portrays magic as receding in the face of the arrival of "true" religion (Augustus' revival of traditional Roman religion), which sheds some light on the frequent portrayal of magicians and magic losing their following after Peter or Paul has preached the gospel (Acts 8:9-13; 13:6-12; 19:18-20). Romans, similarly, receives helpful clarification from a number of comparative texts: Paul's discussion of God's grace, forgiveness, and justification of the unrighteous is shown to be conceptually quite at home within Judaism (the Qumran *Community Rule*), and so the reader is forced both to re-think Judaism (as more than the legalistic, external religion that nineteenth-century German scholars would have us still believe) and probe deeper for Paul's distinctive contribution.

This *Commentary* will thus reward the patient reader with such insights as will drive him or her deeper into the world of the text and therefore into its meaning. The more familiar we become with this foreign world, the less we will be likely to read our cultural and religious presuppositions into the New Testament writings and the more we will be enabled to hear it on its own terms. I cannot fault this volume for being limited in scope, but a word must be said about its particular limitations. The *Commentary*, like the "history of religion school," will only take the student so far. There are indispensable backgrounds to reading the New Testament which are completely unrepresented here. These areas comprise the rhetorical context of the ancient world and the cultural context of its inhabitants -- without which our reading of the New Testament will be quite skewed. For example, while there are numerous texts for Phil 2:5-11, showing possible parallels to the Christ-hymn (all of which are a bit of a reach, actually), there is nothing which illumines Paul's use of political and civic language to create a sense of unity among the believers (an illuminating

comparative text is readily available in Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 48). Similarly, the "unchangeableness" and eternal "sameness" of Jesus in Hebrews is often read by the modern reader through the lens of fourth-century Christology as belonging to a discussion of ontology: a citation of Dio, *Or.* 74.4, however, would show the modern reader that this is a topic more at home in the ancient world in a discussion of reliability or trustworthiness. This lack of coverage becomes even more crippling to a reading of the Corinthian correspondence, where the rhetorical practice of first-century Sophists and their followers is an essential background to understanding the divisions of I Corinthians 1-4, and the low evaluation of Paul's apostleship in both letters.

The second neglected area is that of the cultural world of the ancient Mediterranean. That which was taken for granted by the authors and hearers of the New Testament is a critical context for us to recover if we are not to read what we take for granted (our cultural presuppositions) into the text. The discussion of Hebrews, for example, is very strong on comparative literature for the concepts of a "son of God," a "priestly Messiah," and an eschatological "Melchizedek" figure, but equally illuminating for the letter would be some discussion of patronage and brokerage in the ancient world (though this latter is intimated in a text which speaks of priests as securing divine gifts for the people). Troublesome texts like Heb 6:4-8 could then be helpfully illuminated by texts which speak of the necessity of honoring and remaining loyal to one's patron, and never to risk exclusion from favor by insulting a benefactor (see Dio, *Or.* 31.65).

Of course, a single volume cannot be expected to cover all the necessary territory. These comments, therefore, should not be taken as criticisms of the *Hellenistic Commentary* itself, as much as a caution that a true reading of the New Testament always depends on looking at more aspects of the ancient world than can be included between the covers of a single volume, and an attempt to map out some aspects of the terrain left uncovered. The *Commentary*, like any collection of ancient texts, should be welcomed and used with gratitude, but must also lead the student ever deeper into the treasure rooms of the library of Greco-Roman and early Jewish literature as the place to find the best conversation partners for biblical interpretation.

David A. deSilva

Douglas R. A. Hare, *Mark*, Westminster Bible Companion. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996. x + 230 pp.

This popular commentary credibly "seeks both to explain the biblical book in its original historical context and explore its significance for faithful living today." It aims at a lay audience, but offers insights that will be helpful to pastors and seminarians as well. Each section begins with a reproduction of the NRSV text, proceeds with clear and uncomplicated textual, philological, historical, and narrative comments, and (usually) closes with some pastoral comment about the contemporary meaning of the passage. Hare addresses the relevant scholarly issues including the

Book Reviews

question of "the Messianic secret" and the use of the phrase "son of man," though he seems less interested in some recent work on genre and the role of women in Jewish religion and culture.

Because of the relative paucity of Jesus' teachings in Mark and Mark's sustained attention to the passion narrative Hare emphasizes the gospel's portrait of Jesus, through whose "life death, and resurrection ..., God's love for us becomes visible" (p. 3). He adopts and frequently refers to Kähler's famous dictum that Mark is "... a passion narrative with an extended introduction." Hare also assumes that Jesus was aware of the fact that he was the Messiah.

Hare has helpfully and sensitively applied his understanding of the historical context, especially of first century, Palestinian Judaism. This is of particular importance in the light of the prevalence of anti-Semitism in our culture and can be seen in his treatment of purity issues, the Pharisees and the respective responsibilities of the Jewish leaders and the Romans for the death of Jesus. In a few cases, Hare seems to base his portrayal of first century Judaism on something other than first century sources (for example, "the scribes appropriately supported their rulings by citing precedents and earlier opinions, not by claiming unmediated authority," p. 28). Generally, however, his attention to history is well-informed and sensitive to the distance between the gospel's first readers and its contemporary readers as well as the distance between Mark and the historical events themselves.

In spite of the general excellence of the content and presentation of the commentary, there are a few, minor weaknesses. Occasionally Hare offers an interpretation that may (or may not, depending on one's point of view) be a little anachronistic. For example, his proposal that the use of the aorist tense in 1:11 may represent a conscious rejection of adoptionism seems unlikely.

Finally, although Hare generally maintains a coherent interpretation of the gospel as a whole, he often neglects the coherence of the gospel by treating the contemporary meaning of the passages rather atomistically. The suggestions are generally helpful, but often more appropriate to the particular passage taken in isolation than to the passage as one piece of the larger gospel. For example, the casting out of demons by Jesus' disciples is taken to mean that "Today's gospel must likewise be clothed with concern for the physical and emotional needs of those to whom it is addressed" (p. 72). This obligation, itself quite valid and important, overlooks the broader message of the kingdom of God, inaugurated by the death and resurrection of Jesus and characterized by victory over the forces of evil, in which this world's social norms are turned upside down so that the servant is the greatest, the last is the first, and the child is most to be honored.

Hare is to be thanked for producing a balanced and readable, popular commentary that introduces lay readers to the scholarly issues while remaining focused on the message of Mark.

Patrick A. Tiller

Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, New American Commentary 24, Nashville: Broadman, 642 pp.

Sharon H. Ringe, *Luke*, Westminster Bible Companion. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995 \$20.00

Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51--24:53*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament 3B. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996, 1162 pp. \$34.99.

The 1990's will prove to have been a fruitful decade with respect to the number of commentaries published on the Gospel of Luke. Three such commentaries are listed above.

Robert Stein's commentary represents solid evangelical scholarship on the Third Gospel. The hallmark of the work is Stein's methodological clarity. He has chosen not to provide yet another excavation and appraisal of Gospel sources and traditions. Rather, he has attempted to write a commentary on *Luke*. To this end he has applied *composition criticism* to Luke's text. A methodological sister to redaction criticism, composition criticism focuses not only on those elements in the Gospel that may be directly traced to Luke's hand, but on the totality of Luke's Gospel (and Acts) as a literary whole. The goal of Stein's commentary is "to seek to understand what the author of Luke 1:1--24:53 wanted to tell Theophilus" (58).

The simplicity of Stein's procedure for accomplishing his interpretive goal is apparent in the organization of the commentary. Each unit from the NIV text is followed by three sections: Context, Comments, and The Lukan Message. Under "Context" Stein sets forth the relationship of the passage to its literary (and sometimes historical) context. Depending on the passage, one may find explanations of a passage's function within its immediate context, the Gospel as a whole, or against a specific Old Testament background. Often the passage is viewed through a Synoptic prism (comparison to Parallels in Matthew and/or Mark) or the question of historicity is entertained. Although these two lines of inquiry are not in themselves illegitimate, they tend to detract from Stein's task of interpreting what *Luke* has to say to Theophilus in 1:1--24:53. Stein's verse-by-verse "Comments" are succinct, and since relevant words or phrases are printed in boldface, the reader may easily find comments on specific points of interest. Here is standard, evangelical interpretation: straightforward commentary marked by a close lexical and grammatical reading of the Greek text. "The Lukan Message" is intended to be a distillation of the message which Luke sought to convey to Theophilus. It is usually no more than a collection of theological themes culled from the passage, many of which have already been adumbrated in the introduction to the commentary. Often these segments have a systematic theology "feel" to them that is not consonant with the nature of Luke's project as a work of *narrative* theology. Overall, Stein has produced a no-nonsense commentary whose chief value lies in its clearly-defined method that may be replicated with profit by preachers and students. However, Stein could have contributed to an advance in Lukan scholarship by employing formal

Book Reviews

literary studies (drawing from narratology or audience-orientated criticism) or social-scientific criticism in order to explore how ancient readers like Theophilus might have apprehended Luke's narrative world.

Sharon Ringe has written an accessible commentary on Luke that will not only benefit laypersons with no formal theological education, but preachers and scripture scholars as well. She has offered a fresh interpretation of Luke that utilizes a variety of critical methods and grapples with the Lukan text on many levels (e.g., as a NT scholar, as a contemporary woman, as a believer) in a relatively small compass. The commentary employs the NRSV text, but Ringe's comments evidence a familiarity with the Greek text. Like Stein, Ringe concentrates on Luke's work as a literary whole; but she advances further by being attentive to the narrative cues within the text: narrative setting, characterization, point of view, etc. She also incorporates insights from cultural anthropology to assist in understanding the social dynamics that are operative in Luke.

Ringe has a two-pronged emphasis. First, she believes the dominant theme in Luke is like liberation theologians' "options for the poor." Second, she is interested in the Lukan portrayal of women. Throughout the commentary she highlights how at the heart of the gospel there is an overturning of the oppressive structures of honor and shame, patronage, and economic exploitation. She also captures the full-orbed nature of salvation which goes beyond simply the salvation of "souls" to the reintegration of fragmented lives, the restoration of individuals into communion with God and their neighbors, and the demolition of protocols of behavior that enslave or dehumanize. This broadly-conceived salvation is made evident in Ringe's elucidation of Jesus' healing miracles as acts of social and spiritual as well as physical restoration. However, Ringe reads *against Luke* at points where she thinks he has not been sufficiently liberated from the dominant world view that the gospel opposes. She criticizes how Luke casts slaves and women in their customary roles within Greco-Roman society, hence legitimizing the oppressive systems of slavery and patriarchy. But Ringe unfairly and anachronistically critiques Luke from a modern vantage point. She does not, for instance, distinguish between slavery in the ancient world and that in nineteenth-century America (slavery in the Greco-Roman world was not universally associated with low status, social isolation, or poverty, and could even present opportunities for upward mobility). Ringe could also give Luke more credit for his "pro-woman" stance, even though it does not rise to the level of a twentieth-century feminist social ethic. All in all, Sharon Ringe has engaged in a vigorous dialogue with the Third Evangelist and has invited her contemporaries to do the same so that they, too, may be challenged by the liberating truth of the gospel.

Finally, there is the massive second volume to Darrell Bock's commentary on Luke. The commentary is billed as historical, exegetical, and pastoral, and it seems to live up to the first two of these objectives. The layout of the book--including the running outline at the top of each new section and the use of shaded text--is pleasing to the eye and assists the reader in finding particular portions of the commentary. Each passage is discussed in six sections: First, an overview of the passage; second, a discussion of sources and historicity; third, a listing of the identifiable forms

within the passage, an outline, and a synopsis of the themes within the passage; fourth, Bock's literal translation of the passage followed by verse-by-verse exegesis; fifth, a summary of the passage; and sixth, additional notes devoted primarily to textual questions. The summary of the passage--intended to serve the pastoral function of answering the question, How did Luke want the reader to respond to this event or teaching?--is more often than not only a summary of the unit's themes and is usually repetitive of comments made in sections one and three.

Bock's work differs from the two commentaries reviewed above in that in several senses it is not strictly a commentary on *Luke* (to borrow Stein's emphasis). First, a bulk of the work is interested in establishing the historicity of the traditions and sources from which Luke drew. Throughout the commentary Bock maintains an ongoing debate with the Jesus Seminar. Second, Bock's commentary is nearly as much a commentary on Matthew and Mark as it is on Luke, for he is continually making Synoptic comparisons which could be easily observed in a Gospel Synopsis. Third, the authentication of traditions tends to downplay the uniqueness of Luke's own creative, interpretive contributions. The singularity and artistry of Luke is blurred by a constant concern for complementarity among Luke and his sources. Fourth, Bock is heavily indebted to a core number of commentaries on Luke, and he frequently presents a barrage of issues and theses concerning given passages from which he customarily selects one or two options which he deems amenable to conservative approach to the text. Yet Bock has thereby performed a service for students of Luke by making accessible to English readers the views of a number of German scholars. Above all, within the confines of his own historical interests, Bock has aimed at being as comprehensive as possible. He has not forged a new path in Lukan studies, but he has provided a compendium of past historical-critical scholarship that has been brought before the bar of conservative judgement.

Kevin L. Anderson, London Bible College/Brunel University

Philip Wesley Comfort, *I Am The Way, A Spiritual Journey Through the Gospel of John*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994, 212 pp.

In introducing his most recent study of the Fourth gospel Philip Wesley Comfort comments on the way that the gospel has intrigued him and been his constant companion throughout his entire Christian journey.

It is this notion of a journey that provides the conceptual backdrop for *I Am The Way*. Comfort locates the concept of journey as a key to unlocking both the text of the gospel as well as its effect upon the reader. The gospel itself depicts three journeys - the journey of the Son sent by the Father, the journey of the disciples into the reality of God and therefore eternal life and the journey of all believers towards the full enjoyment of God. As a reader Comfort suggests that we participate in this final journey as he has discovered through his many years of reading and reflection.

Following a brief discussion of preliminary issues where the author's conservative position on issues of authorship, genre and audience are stated Comfort

Book Reviews

takes the reader on a journey through the gospel commenting along the way.

Comfort's love and appreciation for the text is evident throughout and this is really the major attraction of this work. There are insights borne out of a lifetime's experience with the gospel and listening to the voice of God speak through it which are well worth hearing.

However there are a few observations to be made. While most definitely being significant, the theme of journey fails to bear the weight as interpretative key that Comfort would have it do. This particular study falls into the trap that awaits any thematic examination of such a complex work as this gospel with its many tightly related themes--that of reducing or oversimplifying that complexity to an unnecessary extent.

In terms of approach Comfort's book appears to fall between a number of stools. At times it feels like a devotional/spiritual reading, at other times a literary reading; excurses of a theological nature are placed within the narrative flow and there is also some helpful exegetical comment, chiefly confined to the footnotes. This leads to some confusion and frustration from the reader's point of view. The desire, occasionally felt, for more rigorous exegesis and more extensive explanation or justification taken for a particular position jostles with an appreciation for a spiritual reading which is in turn mingled with reservations at points concerning the method used to derive such a reading.

The ambiguous approach leads to an unevenness in the treatment of the text which is at times disconcerting--an inordinate amount of attention, comparatively speaking, appears to have been given to the exegesis of 14:2 for example--not a problem in its own right but why here and not elsewhere when other controversial passages are dealt with in relatively summary fashion, e.g. 16:8-11? "

Having expressed these reservations however it remains to be said that there remains much benefit in joining Comfort in his journey through John's Gospel.

W.H. Salier, Moore Theological College, Newton, Australia

Douglas J. Moo. *The Epistle to the Romans*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 1996.

In 1991, Professor Moo of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School published his commentary on Romans 1-8 in the now defunct Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary series. Happily, a revision of that work, along with Moo's discussion of the remainder of the epistle, has now appeared--all 1,102 pages--in the highly respected NICNT series, replacing the long-outdated volume by J. Murray. Since Cranfield's publication of his two volumes in the ICC series (1979), we have seen J. D. G. Dunn's two volumes in the WBC (1988), J. Fitzmyer's large volume in the Anchor Bible series (1993), and now Moo. Moo's contribution fits well among these other major works; in fact, it is needed to even out the landscape.

At many points Moo defends and reasserts traditional views that have come under criticism in the two decades since Cranfield. At the same time, he challenges

some well-established traditional positions, as we will see below. His comments are thorough and precise; one easily follows the reasoning of this seasoned exegete. The massive and extensive footnotes testify to Dr. Moo's comprehensive research on all significant issues. Only rarely does the reader feel that Moo has stopped too soon without sufficiently explaining a text or an issue. An example for me occurs in his comments on 10:21. Surely a commentator who has come to Moo's conclusions about God's sovereign election of some for salvation and of others to damn ought to attempt to explain God's apparent frustration at Israel's "stubborn resistance to that grace" (p. 669). But such slights seem few in the commentary overall. This is a thorough work that presents the author's arguments in a very convincing manner.

A most telling result of Moo's exegesis is his refusal to jump on the E. P. Sander's bandwagon of what J. D. G. Dunn has called the new perspective on Paul," *BJRL* 65 (1983) 95-122, and *Romans 1-8*, WBC (Dallas: Word, 1989), [xiii-1xii, inter alia]. Moo also appears to reject N. T. Wright's perspective on the "righteousness of God" [*What Saint Paul Really Said*] (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Cincinnati: Forward Movement, 1997). Dunn and Wright, formidable British scholars, represent a growing movement to revision the Reformation-motivated (starting with Luther) tendency to see Jewish legalism as the "culprit" against which Paul wrote in Galatians and Romans. The traditional view was that "works of the Law" described the Jews' attempts to earn or merit righteousness with God. Sanders [see his *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (London: SCM, 1977)], Dunn, Wright, and others have argued that the phrase "covenantal nomism" describes first century Judaism's relationship to the Law better than the pejorative "legalism" that grew out of Luther's rejection of Catholicism. This new perspective understands the Jews' concern for obedience to the Law as a concern to "stay" in the covenant, not to earn their way into it. Their mistake, according to this view--and against which Paul directed so much of his polemic--was that they were trying to impose their Jewish "boundary markers" (e.g., circumcision) on the Gentiles, rather than realizing that God accepts Gentiles via faith in Christ apart from such "works of the Law."

Moo finds such a position very unlikely in view of his exegesis of Romans. On one side, even if the covenantal nomist position has merit, the Jews were still *working* to stay in (even if not to gain entrance into) the covenant. Paul's point is that one cannot use works in any way to bring about justification. But Moo goes farther questioning the entire construct. He argues, ". . . Palestinian Judaism was more 'legalistic' than Sanders allows, and that Paul is also responding to Jews who did, in some sense, think to be justified by doing the law" (p. 215).

Likewise Moo goes against a tendency to understand the genitive case use of the word of "Jesus" in the expression "the faith of/in Jesus" as subjective or possessive: the faith or faithfulness that Jesus exhibits. Moo defends, correctly I think, the traditional view of the objective genitive: humans place faith in Jesus as the object of the faith. Also, he finds that the Greek term *hilastērion* (3:25) inescapably means propitiation, the turning away of God's wrath (p. 234f.), against many who see the term referring to expiation, the covering or removal of sin.

A short review can only tackle a few matters. One striking conclusion of Moo's

Book Reviews

work occurs in his discussion of 7:13-25. Going against the Lutheran and Reformed traditions and most modern interpreters (that these verses describe the “normal” Christian experience of struggle with the flesh in the new life in the Spirit), after presenting the arguments on both sides Moo concludes that they rather describe and *unregenerate* person. Specifically, Moo says, “Paul is characterizing his pre-Christian situation from his present Christian perspective” (p. 450f.). Though he argues cogently, in the end I feel he fails to convince. He does not sufficiently account, in my estimation, for the placement of these verses in the overall argument of the letter. Why discuss his pre-conversion state at this point? After all Paul has argued in chapter 6, would he now return to an issue he dealt with in the early chapters: viz, the pre-Christian struggle?

Importantly, Moo concludes that creation’s ultimate destiny is transformation, not annihilation (see pp. 516ff.). Moo’s exegesis of the “election” texts is decidedly Calvinistic and Reformed. On the question of what means “all Israel will be saved” (11:26), Moo persuasively contends that “Israel” refers to the nation Israel (or at least the elect within Israel). “All” refers to the nation as a whole, but not every specific individual Jew. “Salvation” occurs at the end of this age at the return of Jesus. But salvation is only to be found in Jesus; Jews will not find salvation by their faithful adherence to torah. No, there will be a mass turning of Jews to their Messiah Jesus just prior to his return.

If you don’t have a comprehensive commentary on Romans, Moo’s very accessible work should figure high on your list. If your only critical commentary on Romans is Dunn, you need Moo as a counterweight. Certainly it is not for the beginner or the popular reader. But for pastors, scholars, and teachers, it will serve as a reliable guide through this most crucial book in the Bible. Even where you decide to part company with Moo, you will know clearly what is at stake, for he comments not merely on the grammatical, historical, and textual significance of the issues, but he draws out the theological implications of the various choices and options.

William W. Klein, Denver Seminary

Lewis R. Donelson, *Colossians, Ephesians, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus*, Westminster Bible Companion, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1996, viii + 192 pp.

In this entry in the Westminster Bible Companion series, Lewis R. Donelson, Associate Professor of New Testament at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, accepts the daunting task of providing lay readers with concise treatments of five of the most theologically and critically complex writings of the NT. Two convictions guide Donelson’s treatment of these epistles, one of which may be surprising and disconcerting to many readers while the other prods readers into critical reflection on how Christians are to apply the ancient sources of their faith to very different modern situations.

The first of these convictions is that these epistles are pseudonymous letters originating in the subapostolic church as rearticulations of Pauline theology in

different locations and times. The writers of Colossians, Ephesians, and the Pastoral Epistles each give distinct readings and reformulations of Paul's writings while remaining faithful to Paul. Colossians addresses the theological issue of power, affirming the supremacy and victory of Christ over all powers in the universe (8). Ephesians is a commentary on Colossians written as a blessing to God for God's blessings to us (59), authored by a student of Paul who used Colossians as a basic literary and theological outline for his own work (60). The Pastorals were written by a potent moralist who viewed certain heretics within the church as teaching and practicing a form of Christianity that was not theologically Christian and was not leading to salvation, for which the author urges correct teaching of the apostolic gospel leading to virtuous living (173).

In a sort of appendix, Donelson addresses the question of authorship, outlining in broad strokes the evidence leading to his conclusion of pseudonymous authorship of these epistles (182-89). While the detail given in support of pseudonymous authorship of these epistles (182-89). While the detail given in support of pseudonymous authorship will not satisfy many adherents to this position, the evidence Donelson notes in favor of Pauline authorship is given very short shrift and is cursorily dismissed. While more detailed treatments of the evidence can be found by inquisitive readers in the provided bibliography, less motivated readers might view Donelson's conclusions as the final word on the matter.

Donelson's second conviction is closely related to his first and is stated at the outset of his work:

All Christian theology must be both conservative and creative; it must be both old and new. It must be old because it must be faithful to the ancient truths of the gospel. It must be new because the gospel requires new formulations in new moments. To conserve this living gospel we must say new things (1).

Donelson sees the authors of these pseudonymous epistles as exemplars of this principle. Writing in the name and authority of Paul, they take the substance of Paul's gospel and apply it to new situations. Donelson argues that we today must also take the gospel and articulate it in terms applicable to our own time.

Donelson gives some excellent examples of the tensions inherent in doing this type of work. In discussing the issues of the silence of women in church in 1 Tim. 2:9-15 (129-30) and of hierarchical power structures in the household codes of Eph. 5:21-6:9 (101-3), Donelson notes that these texts genuinely conflict with our cultural sensibilities and require careful reflection for contemporary application. Unfortunately, examples of such application are few, owing primarily to space limitations and the number of epistles discussed. The major impetus for Donelson's challenge to modern believers to rearticulate the ancient gospel in creative ways must come primarily from the examples of these subapostolic biblical writers rather than from illustrations of how they did this.

The issue of pseudonymity, however, is the aspect of this work that proves most

Book Reviews

troublesome. This book may be the first exposure to the issue for many whose own Bibles introduce these letters as written by Paul. While Donelson claims that the issue of authorship plays little role in shaping his interpretation of the letters (185), the book itself portrays quite a different picture. Donelson's argument that the gospel tradition must be reformulated in succeeding generations seems to rely on pseudonymity. If the Bible itself gives evidence of subsequent creative rearticulations of the apostolic gospel, then modern readers have warrant for doing so. However, it is questionable whether pseudonymity is a necessary condition for arguing this case. Would it not equally be true that the apostolic gospel needs contextual articulation if such articulations came from the apostle himself as he encountered different situations? Indeed, if Paul himself did such, would not an apostolic exemplar argue at least as strongly for this practice as would later thinkers writing pseudonymously? Pseudonymity is not prerequisite to Donelson's argument and its interweaving throughout the book may be more distractive than conducive to his program.

More troubling is the candid admission that these biblical writers were in fact being deceptive to their audiences by claiming to be "Paul." At several points Donelson highlights the fact that these writers wanted and needed their readers to believe Paul was writing these letters and the autobiographical details and personal greetings were designed to carry off this deception (e.g., 54, 78-79, 117, 134). What is interesting is that Donelson is quite open with the fact that no examples of accepted orthodox Christian epistolary pseudepigraphy exist and that when such letters were discovered they were rejected (79). Apparently these letters were the exceptions. Nevertheless, readers of this companion may wonder about the counsel to lead virtuous lives grounded in the truth of the gospel when the writers of these letters themselves were intentionally deceptive when composing this counsel. Nor will the irony of the command from the fictitious Paul for Christians to be truthful to each other be lost on Donelson's readers (Eph. 4:25).

Donelson's book offers some sound elucidations of the biblical text for laypersons. But this fact may be overshadowed by his insistence on the pseudonymous authorship of these letters. It took courage to present this work to this target audience, but I wonder if championing this position will not ultimately undermine his important conviction that all generations of the church must be in creative conversation with the ancient sources of their faith. Jeffrey S. Lamp

Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991. 499 pages.

Grant Osborne's *Hermeneutical Spiral* is one of the better recent textbooks on hermeneutics written from an evangelical perspective. A professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Osborne has written many articles of exegesis and biblical theology. His hermeneutics text intends to take the interpreter from inductive Bible study through exegesis and application to sermon

preparation. The book is particularly aimed at pastors because of Osborne's contention that "the final goal of hermeneutics is not systematic theology but the sermon" (12).

After some introductory chapters, the volume is organized according to general hermeneutics (context, grammar, semantics, syntax, historical/cultural background) and special hermeneutics (genre analysis). Useful chapters follow on biblical and systematic theology and their relationship to hermeneutics. The interpretive process concludes with two chapters entitled "homiletics" that cover the application of Scripture. Appendices provide a lucid and helpful orientation to recent discussions of meaning.

Osborne's perspective is evangelical, although he shows an awareness of (and engages in dialogue with) other perspectives. He maintains the priority of the author's intended meaning for exegesis, but contends that the goal of interpretation is contextualizing the biblical message for today (6). His process thus moves from "textual meaning" to "contextual meaning" (14). Like many evangelicals, he employs E. D. Hirsch's distinction between meaning and significance to allow for a stable meaning with multiple applications.

Both the exegetical technique and the application model are heavily influenced by linguistics, drawing particularly on the work of translator Eugene Nida. In application, for example, the interpreter is to determine the "deep structure" (principle) underlying the "surface message" and then apply that principle to parallel situations today. One can contextualize at either the general or the specific level (336-338). Just as dynamic equivalence translators take seriously both the original language and the receptor language, Osborne's approach attempts to take seriously both "horizons"--that of the biblical interpreter and that of the biblical text.

The Hermeneutical Spiral achieves its aim of being comprehensive. Someone who worked through the entire volume would have a good grounding in recent research on hermeneutics and would take away applicable principles and practical techniques. Osborne tries to find a balance between information and transformation, beginning with his declaration that hermeneutics is not only a science and an art but also a spiritual act (5). The emphasis he gives to application and proclamation assists this aim. However, the focus on homiletics is too narrow a framework in which to discuss the application of scripture; it may turn away readers who would benefit from the discussion.

The volume's biggest drawback is its visual presentation. Pages appear dense, with narrow margins, crowded lines, and a small type font. The eight-page table of contents is very busy; a profusion of horizontal lines dividing sections and connecting titles with page numbers makes it difficult to read. The appearance problems make the sometimes technical discussions even more daunting.

This book would be an excellent resource for teachers, intermediate students, or pastors who have some background in hermeneutics. It is perhaps overly technical for beginning students, and it is rather lengthy and academic to be a practical resource for sermon preparation.

Brenda B. Colijn

Book Reviews

Charles J. Scalise, *From Scripture To Theology: A Canonical Journey Into Hermeneutics*, Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1996, 150 pp. (paper)

Scalise's book is an easy to read introduction to theological hermeneutics which includes a very extensive, selected annotated bibliography. He creatively presents his information by means of a "travel motif" which guides the reader through some thorny territory into a clearer understanding of both the importance and necessity of a "canonical" hermeneutical model. If you are a seasoned traveler of this territory then you may want to read his earlier more academically and technically argued work, (*Hermeneutics As Theological Prolegomena: A Canonical Approach*, Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1994).

In "Beginning the Journey: From Bible to Doctrine", Scalise's helps the beginning traveler prepare for the theological trip by addressing important evangelical theological presuppositions concerning scripture. He concludes this chapter by giving an overview of terrain that will be covered in the remainder of the book.

In "Investigating Old Roads: The Bible and History" Scalise explains ways to prominent twentieth century evangelical routes are inadequate for the task. "The-Facts-of Revelation" or data for propositions approach views the Bible as a storehouse of theological facts that simply need to be logically systematized into the doctrinal presuppositions. The "Facts of Revelation" approach has many pitfalls, the most challenging being the reduction of scripture to a history book, thus confusing historical accuracy with the truthfulness of scripture. The second route Scalise identifies is "The Events-of-Revelation" or the history of salvation. This approach also has many obstacles, such as reducing revelation to the saving acts of God and attempting to read all of the Bible as ancient history. This chapter would help evangelical's better appreciate the many difficulties facing those who desire to move from scripture to normative theological formulation.

Scalise suggests that a better mode of transportation for the journey of traveling from scripture to theology is a slightly modified version of Brevard S. Childs canonical approach to Biblical interpretation. He explains the "canonical approach" in chapter three, "Discovering a Better Route: The Bible as Canon" and further clarifies the importance of this approach for evangelicals. After explaining the interpretive approach, he then sets out to show how the canonical approach can make the transition from scripture to doctrinal exposition. The Doctrine of God is a test case. Thus Scalise, a seasoned traveler of theological hermeneutics, becomes an able guide, helping the novice traverse the difficult terrain of moving from scripture to theological exposition, a terrain beset with pitfalls and obstacles, many of which evangelicals are simply unaware, or just ignore. If you are looking for a "reader-friendly" presentation and examination of Child's canonical approach for biblical interpretation or simply desiring to revisit hermeneutical concerns, then this book would be a helpful guide.

Ken Archer

William Crockett, ed. *Four Views on Hell*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996 (orig. 1992). 192 pp, \$14.99 pb.

The Counterpoint series offers an evangelical forum for the discussion of hot topics such as the charismatic gifts. Each major viewpoint is presented, and then the other contributors respond. In this way the possibility of misunderstanding, talking past one another, or casual misrepresentation is lowered (but not eliminated!).

Evangelicals had become used to familiar terrain in the views of hell. Purgatory was a Catholic invention, conditional immortality ("conditionalism" is the view that humans are not naturally immortal, and thus may be annihilated in hell) was limited to a few Protestant sects, and anyone else who softened on eternal fire was a liberal. In the recent decade that pattern has broken down. Today all sorts of opinions may be found among professing evangelicals. Most notable is the blooming of conditionalism among some leading British Christians. Paradoxically, the newly evolving Worldwide Church of God is questioning whether its conditionalism was biblical after all.

In *Four Views* Clark Pinnock promotes a version of the Conditional View. John Walvoord and William Crockett (a New Testament scholar; the others are theologians) defend traditional approaches, that hell is everlasting torment either in literal fire (Walvoord) or in an indescribable state that is represented by fire and other metaphors (Crockett). Zachary Hayes of the Catholic Theological Union supplies a fine presentation of the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory. Incongruously Hayes says little about hell, but he does spark a riveting discussion of the role of apocryphal literature and church tradition in theology, and the effect that the doctrine of justification had in closing down purgatory.

All the authors look at biblical, theological, and historical material, with varying degrees of success. Walvoord looks at all the right passages, but his essay comes off as pedestrian. He also fails to appreciate that Crockett's so-called "metaphorical" position is virtually the same as his "literal" one. Pinnock tends to minimize the deep roots of the traditional view, trying to pin its popularity on Augustine and Jonathan Edwards, while asserting (mistakenly) that early works such as the *Didachē* taught annihilationism. He also notes that hell began to absent itself from evangelical preaching as early as the 17th century. All four writers address the kerygmatic obstacles preachers face with the doctrine of hell, and ask after the motivations of those who affirm or deny eternal torment.

What becomes perfectly clear is that all four men appreciate the need to comment on the history of this doctrine. The defenders of the traditional view must argue that the early church got its theology straight, while Pinnock must counter that history is not that clear-cut, and besides, Protestants are not supposed to revere tradition anyway. One wishes for an historical overview such as was included in Zondervan's *The Rapture Question*.

This volume is useful as an introduction. The essays are clear and readable and they generally stick to the issues. The student would be well prepared by doing some prior lexical study of *aiōnios*, by skimming Matthew, Luke and Revelation, by

Book Reviews

looking at the relevant portions of *I Enoch* and Justin Martyr's *First Apology*, and by savoring the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*.

Gary S. Shogren, Seminario ESEPA, San José, Costa Rica

Jacques Dupuis, S.J., *Who Do You Say I Am? Introduction to Christology*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1994, 194 pps (paper)

The question posed by Jesus to his disciples at Caesarea Philippi (Mark 8:29; Matt 16:15), from which the title of this book is taken, continually calls for a fresh response. Jacques Dupuis, S.J., professor of theology at the Georgian University and former teacher in India, contributes to the ongoing christological reflection with this brief but comprehensive and well articulated introduction to "the mystery of Jesus Christ."

The place and significance attributed to Jesus Christ by the Christian tradition is distinct both from the viewpoint of comparative religion and from the vantage point of Christian faith. The person and work of Christ stands at the center of the Christian faith. Christian theology is essentially christocentric. Christology does not replace theology in that "Christ-the-sacrament" points toward the mystery of God. Christology leads to theology. Christology also implies anthropology in that the Incarnation of the Son of God establishes between God and human beings a "marvelous exchange" by which humanity becomes partners with God.

The author rejects the deductive methodology of both the "dogmatic" and "genetic" or "historical-evolutionary" approaches to christology and adopts an inductive method that begins with the context. The hermeneutical circle is replaced by triangle which consists in the mutual interaction among: (1) the text comprising Scripture, Tradition and the Church's Magisterium ("Christian memory"); (2) the concrete context comprising the entire surrounding cultural reality; and (3) the interpreter defined, not as the individual theologian, but as the local church. Contextual diversity such as that between the First and Third Worlds and within the Third World itself calls for Christology to be plural. In particular, this calls for a Christology of liberation, inculturation, and religious pluralism.

Chapter I gives a general survey of modern christological approaches and evaluates the merits and limitations of them. The christological approaches studied fall under two categories. Some are concerned with biblical christology; others refer to theological perspectives. Those approaches concerned with biblical christology include historico-critical, existential, and Christological titles. Those approaches which refer to theological perspectives include critico-dogmatical, salvation history, anthropological, liberation Christology, feminist liberation Christology, and Christology in interreligious perspective. After discussing them, some conclusions are drawn concerning the approach that is followed in the book. This is done by enunciating five principles: dialectical tension, totality, plurality, historical continuity, and integration.

The second, third, and fourth chapters proceed in chronological sequence as

Christology is traced from the Historical Jesus through the Early Church and then in the Apostolic Fathers and councils respectively. Chapter 2 shows that Jesus is truly at the source of the Church's christological faith or that there is continuity in discontinuity between Jesus' implicit Christology and the explicit Christology of the apostolic Church. The subject matter is divided into four sections: the mission of Jesus with the Reign of God as the central theme, the personal identity of Jesus implicitly emerging from his words and actions, Jesus facing his imminent death constituting an implicit soteriology, and Jesus' resurrection and the Easter experience which represents the irruption of eschatology into human history.

Chapter 3 follows the process of development of NT Christology through two main stages: (1) the proclamation of the Risen Christ in the early kerygma; and (2) from the proclamation of the Risen Christ to the confession of the Son of God. Explicit Christology begins with Easter. The Christology of the early kerygma is described as a Christology "from below" which is functional in nature. The organic development from the functional Christology of the early kerygma to an ontological Christology "from above" finds expression in the NT by the concepts of preexistence and incarnation of Jesus in the kenosis passage (Phil. 2) and finally culminating in the divine Sonship of Jesus in the Prologue of the Johannine Gospel (1:1-18).

The development of postbiblical christological dogma through the councils of the patristic age is the subject of Chapter 4. The exposition is limited to the main christological councils, from Nicaea (325) to Constantinople III (681), which have influenced significantly the evolution of the christological dogma. For each, the historical context, the significance of the Church's formulation of faith, and the abiding actuality today of both questions and responses, are briefly exposed. The direction a renewed Christology should take is described in terms of four aspects: the historical with an emphasis on event over doctrine, the personal or trinitarian with an emphasis on the relationship of the Son to the Father, the soteriological motive behind the Incarnation, and the dynamism of faith involving mutual interaction between Christology from below and from above.

Chapter 5 deals with the problem of the human psychology of Jesus in terms of his self-awareness and human knowledge, on the one hand, and his human will and freedom, on the other. The respective problems of unity-in-distinction, knowledge and nescience, distinction-in-unity, and freedom in dependence is presented. An attempt is then made toward a solution of each of these problems which ultimately involves the attempt to do justice to both the reality of Jesus' historical human condition and his personal identity as Son of God on the basis of the Gospel tradition.

The focus of chapter 6 is on two different dimensions. One consists in asking the meaning of Jesus Christ for and in the context of the created world and human history. Another consists in seeking the meaning of Christ and the place of the Christ-event in the vast context of the plurality of human cultures and religious traditions. The first way of seeking the place of Jesus Christ in God's plan leads to a cosmic Christology; the other calls for a Christology of religious plurality. In the section on Jesus Christ in the debate on religious pluralism, three main positions are

Book Reviews

distinguished: (1) the ecclesiocentric view of exclusivism; (2) the theocentric view of pluralism; and (3) the christocentric view of inclusivism. The inclusive position alone is capable of holding together and harmonizing the two basic axioms of the Christian faith that are obligatory for any Christian theology of religions: (1) the universal salvific will of God; and (2) the necessary mediation of Jesus Christ in every salvation mystery.

B. Keith Brewer

Millard J. Erickson, *How Shall They Be Saved? The Destiny of Those Who Do Not Hear of Jesus*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996, 278 pp pb, \$19.99.

There are many in this world who have not heard of Jesus Christ (arguably many more than have heard). The church has, from its earliest days, wrestled with what the fate of these people is. Are all such people condemned to eternity in hell? If not, on what basis are they acceptable to God? These are the questions which Millard Erickson addresses in this book.

The first half of Erickson's book is a survey of how the Christian church has variously dealt with the question of those who have not heard. He begins by describing traditional Roman Catholic and then Protestant exclusivism (that is, the view that only Christians shall be saved). Next he discusses classical universalism (the belief that everyone will be saved regardless of religious beliefs), twentieth-century pluralism (the belief that Christianity is not the only true religion), and finally Roman Catholic and then Protestant inclusivism (the view that Christianity is the true religion, but also that some may be saved outside of Christianity). In each case Erickson provides examples of representative authors, and then suggests both strengths and weaknesses in that system.

The next section of the book provides discussions of some of the theological issues involved: the extent of general revelation, the possibility of conversion after death, the biblical requirements for salvation, the question of whether Scripture indicates the how large the number of those saved versus those lost will be, and the question of annihilationism. There are few surprises here. In light of the categories delineated in the first section, therefore, Erickson may be described as a fairly conservative Protestant exclusivist.

This reviewer found the theological discussions in the chapters under consideration to be somewhat disappointing. First, their contents may for the most part be anticipated without difficulty by someone familiar with his earlier *Christian Theology*. More bothersome, however, is that Erickson seems to wobble on his central issue. In his critique of Protestant exclusivism he writes,

Perhaps the most serious problem with this view is that it has not really grappled adequately with the problem of human responsibility. That is to say, how can people who have not heard the gospel be without excuse if they could not possibly have believed and if such belief is indispensable to

salvation? As the statement of the position usually stands, people are condemned for failing to do what they could not possibly have done (63–64).

The problem is that Erickson never directly responds to this issue himself. He suggests at one point that those who have not heard may at best be regarded as "prepared for, but still in need of, the gospel" (158). He later writes that, since the death of Christ is the "reality" and the "only basis" of salvation, "only belief in this would suffice" to save (193). On the next page, however, he writes, "it must be correct to say that on some level persons responding to the God of general revelation are responding to the true God" (194). Salvation requires reliance on the true God, but Erickson leaves open the question of how much need be specifically known of that God. He concludes, "Perhaps there is room for acknowledging that God alone may know in every case exactly whose faith is sufficient for salvation" (194). This equivocation seems to greatly weaken his exclusivist position.

The book concludes with two chapters of "practical applications". First, Erickson considers those incapable of faith (the very young, the severely handicapped, etc.). Erickson's position is again the same as in his earlier work, that original sin is not imputed until actual sin is volitionally committed, and that if death occurs prior to such imputation then that person is accepted by God. Erickson finally suggests some implications of his views as regards missions.

Erickson has certainly chosen an important subject, and this book may serve as a useful introduction to both historical and contemporary responses to the problem. The second half of the book, however, where Erickson seeks to wrestle with the theological issues involved, seems light, cursory, and ultimately unsatisfying. While Erickson may be a good place to begin one's reading on the subject, the discerning reader may feel the need to press yet farther. (717) †David M. King

Stephen C. Evans, *Why Believe? Reason and Mystery as Pointers to God*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996, 154 pp., \$13.00.

I vaguely remember reading another book by Steven Evans almost twenty years ago when I first started to consider the possibility of the truth of Christianity. I must confess that book did not bring me any closer to embracing the truth of Christianity. But perhaps that is not the purpose of apologetics. As Evans points out, apologetics can do no more than remove some of the arguments or questions that prevent us from coming to the point of surrender. With this understanding, that Christianity is ultimately and essentially a matter of surrendering "our selfish, self-centeredness," Evans points out that such surrender requires a humility that reason cannot help us with. The best that reason can do is to take away some of the obstacles that might stand in the way of that surrender.

This book certainly succeeds at removing such obstacles. It is the work of a mature Christian who has obviously spent a great deal of time thinking about these issues. Not that the book's insights are exceptionally deep, this is a popular

Book Reviews

apologetics and not written to philosophers or scholars. Its purpose is practical rather than theoretical. Although I found myself underlining and noting several sections, it was always with the thought of using such a point to help someone who was facing such an obstacle to faith, rather than for a future scholarly reference.

The thing that I personally found most appealing was that this apologetic did not rationalize Christianity to death, and as the title implies, Evans concedes that aspects of Christianity exceed reason and are true mysteries. But although they are mysteries, we can still have insight into them. Evans offers such insights and uses these mysterious aspects of Christianity as further evidence to support the truth of Christianity. This evidence, however, is always presented as what Evans calls clues rather than proofs. I find this much more in keeping with the reality of the Christian faith, rather than a heavy handed apologetic which stresses the rational nature of Christian faith. Evans even argues that God would not want to provide hard, compelling evidence for his own existence. Such evidence would produce a surrender in response to God's power and might, instead of the surrender of a beloved to their lover.

I've noticed that Evans has been doing recent work on Kierkegaard and that seems evident in this work. There is an almost existential approach to apologetics that is refreshing and I believe brings us closer to the ultimate truth of Christianity.

Although many parts of the book are worthwhile, like his treatment of the problem of evil, or his analogy that explains our trust in God's faithfulness, the best thing about the book, and what distinguishes it from other apologetics, is the central and abiding theme that apologetics is not about winning lost souls with rational arguments. The lost are won by the witness of the Holy Spirit, and the purpose of apologetics is merely to remove some of the obstacles that might stand in the way.

On the back cover of the book, Arthur Holmes says that it is "one of the best popular apologetics I have ever seen." I concur. This is an easy and enjoyable read which takes on the most common (and some not so common) objections to the Christian faith and answers them with thoughtful responses that are true to the deepest spirit of Christianity.

James P. Danaher, Nyack College

Joyce Hollyday, *Clothed with the Sun*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994, 241 pp., \$12.99.

There are 189 women mentioned by name in the Scriptures. Joyce Hollyday presents some of them in her collection of 51 reflections on various women of the Bible, from Eve to the woman of Revelation who is "clothed with the sun." Drawing from her global travels as a writer and activist, and through her work with survivors of domestic violence, Hollyday includes compelling stories of women from around the world, women of faith who "continue to claim life in the face of the forces of destruction" (p. xii).

Clothed with the Sun, designed to be read throughout the year is appropriate for individual or group study. Ten sections, comprised of five lessons each, are briefly

introduced and conclude with several reflection questions for prayer, discussion, or journaling. Each lesson includes a meditation and a related Scripture passage. The book ends with a special ritual of closure.

The studies look at women of patriarchy who lived in a system that denied gender equality. They were faced with a variety of injustices. Some were victims of male abuse, while others became abusers themselves through treachery and guile. Yet the richest stories are of women who responded by using the power available to them to challenge and change legal policies, positively impacting history through their compassion and justice.

Women were often liminal figures in biblical society. Still, in times of political upheaval and war, they courageously defended the defenseless. They were examples of total trust in the faithfulness of God when the world had abandoned them. During his ministry, Jesus transformed and restored various women who were outcast through illness, shame, or foreign nationality. They remained closest to him, witnessing the despair of the cross and the hope of resurrection.

Hollyday writes from a 20th century, western perspective, which in many instances needs some socio-historical balance. To view patriarchal society only as bondage for, and the objectification of women fails to take into account the political and economical ramifications for those same women. This reader had the impression Hollyday has an ax to grind when she chooses to recount others' sexist remarks rather than shed new light on the characters. For example, she attributes Solomon's numerous wives to an overactive sexual appetite for foreign women, without introducing the possibility these arranged marriages secured international alliances. She makes several inflammatory remarks suggesting women's vulnerability to male dominated subjugation as "foundational to religious practice" (p. 39), and done with God's blessing. By assuming patriarchal society could successfully prohibit women from self-actualization she underestimates the spirit of women in general and the personal victories of those specifically mentioned in the book.

However, this book offers challenging studies. Hollyday begins by considering the maternal imaging which God uses for self-disclosure and adds that "when the church forgets that women, too, were created in God's image, it limits not only women but God also" (p. 4). Personal experience with oppressed women aids her accounts of atrocities suffered through the ages and around the world. The section on abuse can be particularly painful at times. Although a sarcastic tone hangs over the first half of the book, by the fifth part the author begins to offer meditations of ever-increasing hope and joy through to the final chapters.

Hollyday introduces the study in the spirit of presenting hope through the power of the word of God. While a mood of helplessness clings to the beginning lessons, "each has a pearl of wisdom to reveal to us" (p. xii). The struggles and victories of women of the ancient Near East are also contemporary. Biblical social justice is just as much our issue today. The reader must work through his or her own issues in the course of these studies. The one who finds hope in the face of despair, the one who finds wisdom, will find life.

Victoria A. Wheeler

Book Reviews

H. Wayne House, *The Role of Women in Ministry Today*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995, \$12.99.

Wayne House, who has been trained both in theology and law, has reissued an earlier Thomas Nelson edition (1990). His book has four purposes: to examine the arguments of evangelical feminists, to present his own understanding of the New Testament's teaching on women in ministry, to present the ministry role of women in the ante-Nicene church, and to suggest ways women can serve in the local church (10-11). In effect, he gives an accessible overview of the various often-discussed passages which evangelicals study when concerned with women's role in ministry, while critiquing the positions of evangelicals who conclude women may indeed have a God-given authority over men. Thus, he fits in the same genre as Susan Foh's 1979 *Women and the Word of God.- A Response to Biblical Feminism*.

After an introduction, he begins by critiquing evangelical feminists (ch. 2), then he discusses the place of women in ancient times (ch. 3), the value Jesus and Paul placed on women (ch. 4), the role of women in the second and third centuries (ch. 5), Galatians 3:28 (ch. 6), 1 Corinthians 11 (ch. 7), 1 Corinthians 14 (ch. 8), the roles of elder and deacon, and the ways women can minister (ch. 9). He concludes with a brief summary.

The refreshing strength of this book is House's attempt to be encouraging to women by listing the roles open to women in the church. Women can exercise *nonauthoritative* ministry roles such as giving their testimonies, coordinating visitation, team ministry of discipleship and counseling, teaching women and children, Christian education administration, chairing missions committees, counseling women, serving as deacons, reading Scripture, making announcements, leading songs, and offering public prayer. However, what they cannot do is provide the authoritative proclamation of written revelation to adult males in the capacity of elder, pastor, or teacher of Scriptures or of theology to men in churches, colleges or seminaries. His hermeneutic is that whatever parallels public prayer but is not teaching is acceptable for women to perform in a mixed group of adult men and women.

House also aims to write an objective, open, respectful, "gentle and accommodating" popular book (10-11). Objective, open, gentle and accommodating he is not, but his goals are laudatory and generally he is respectful. Being myself an "evangelical feminist," I found House, rather than objective, to have instead a number of authoritatively proposed, oversimplified statements, be somewhat circular in his reasoning, and at times overusing a chain of secondary quotations. In other words, he did not always give conclusive evidence or rationale for his views.

For example, House mentions two major problems with evangelical feminists: a low view of inspiration and an improper method of interpretation. As a member of the Evangelical Theological Society, I can appreciate House wanting to separate himself from exegetes who do not treat the Bible as consistent and reliable. However, he includes in his grouping of those with an improper exegesis simply people who disagree with his conclusions (19-20). Certainly only a few evangelical

feminists would agree that Galatians 3:28 "is the only real passage in the New Testament letters that might appear to prove their view on women" (18). Another generalization House makes is: "the biblical record says nothing at all about Christ considering a woman's role in ministry leadership"(21). How about Christ's affirmation of Mary learning in a rabbinic manner (Luke 10:38-42) or the angels sending women in an apostolic manner to report the resurrection (Matt. 28:7)? Paul, he says, nowhere ordains women as overseers nor encourages them to be apostolic representatives (21). However, Phoebe, Prisca, and Junia certainly appear to be overseers and the last an apostle. His disclaimer on Junia was especially weak and unclear (87). He mentions that Gen. 1:26-28 "has nothing to say about social relationships" (22). Evangelical egalitarians would argue that giving the male and female the same command to rule shows they have "social equality." He disagrees that *kephale* can mean "source," but then quotes Liddell & Scott's *Lexicon* which includes "life" as a definition. How can "the idea of source or origin" for *kephale* have "no clear example in the time of the New Testament" if one looks at Ephesians 4:15-16 and Colossians 2:19? For instance, House calls Ephesians 4:15-16 "metaphorical" when it means "grow up into him," but does not that show that "head" therein functions as a source of life? Moreover, all these references are metaphorical. The literal head is not a "leader," but a physical head (28, 30). How does saying, "God is the origin of Christ" deny "the full deity of Messiah" (31)? When God is called the "source" of Christ, evangelicals consider this would refer to the incarnation (Matt. 1:20).

He says that "no evidence exists that women had been teaching" in Ephesus (44). But, outside of evangelist Timothy, I Timothy no gives no evidence that men had been teaching either. How can he say no hendiadys may be found in Pauline literature (46), when we have such common examples as "they are beloved believers" (I Tim. 6:2)? He expends much effort arguing that in the orthodox community "women were not afforded opportunity to occupy positions of leadership in the church" (93), however, what about Philip's daughters, prophets, who were highly valued in the early church (Eusebius, *History* III.31, 37, 39; V. 18), as well as Bishop Theodora? How could he quote Origen to say that neither Deborah nor Hulda delivered "speeches to the people"? How could Deborah be a judge and never deliver a speech? Hulda spoke not merely to a man but to an entire government's leadership (2 Kings 22:14-22)! How can Paul not speak to "social issues or ramifications" in Galatians 3 (114) when he strongly reprimands Peter on lacking in orthopraxy in his relation to Gentiles (Gal. 2:11-14)?

House shows more effort to be open when looking at the practice of women praying and prophesying in 1 Corinthians 11. However, he never does list women exercising a "Spirit-controlled gift of prophecy" (125) in his contemporary examples (chs. 8-9). His difficulty is that though House relates prophecy to prayer but not teaching, preaching, and church leadership, Paul does not. Paul lists prophecy as more central or honored than teaching (1 Cor. 12:27). In 1 Corinthians 14 prophecy includes teaching (I Cor. 14:3, 15-19). Prophecy certainly is church leadership (Eph. 4:12). And nowhere is preaching honored over prophecy. How could someone who

Book Reviews

claims their words come right from God be *less* authoritative than someone who simply causes others to learn? Thus, House concludes with the aberrant view that "noninspired public teaching" has more authority than "inspired prophecy" (158).

According to House, understanding *gar* as "for" is extremely rare (1 Tim. 2:13; 162), however A. T. Robertson in his *Grammar of the Greek New Testament* says: "It is best, in fact, to note the explanatory use first" (1190). House's views on women's silence appear somewhat contradictory. On one hand, House says the Greek word for "be silent" in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 is "different" from that of 1 Timothy 2:11 (42), while on the other hand House says "the idea of quietness" in 1 Timothy 2: 11 "is very similar to the teaching of Paul" in 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 (164). Nowhere does House address the fact that the same word-family for "quiet" is used for women and for the whole church (1 Tim. 2:2, 12). He mentions that a woman "was not allowed" to "rule over the home" (176) but does not discuss wives as "lords over the house" (1 Tim 5:14). He concludes that God assigned specific roles to specific people (186) by citing examples such as Saul making an offering, but without considering the New Testament change in the church resulting in that now all Christians are priests (1 Pet. 2:9).

House concludes that "today's feminist movement within 'evangelical' circles is the outgrowth of a social agenda undertaken by militant feminists in general" (193) without showing any historical connection between militant feminists and all the biblical interpretations with which he disagrees. As a matter of fact, historical evidence shows that secular feminism is an outgrowth of Christian feminism, not the other way around (*Goddess Revival*: 181). Thus I did not find it "abundantly clear" that evangelical feminism "is an outgrowth of the secular feminist movement" (195). His argument is more along the line of: 1) we differ in interpretation, 2) my interpretation is correct, 3) therefore, any other view is from worldly, secular feminism.

One of House's most daunting statements is that evangelical feminists "frivolously go against the last two thousand years of Christian teaching (heretical movements excepted) on the subject of women"(152). The problem has been that every evidence against this statement is disagreed with. I find more truth in House's statement that since the ancient "world was primarily a man's world, the shining personalities of noble women of this era are hidden from view" (108).

Aida Besançon Spencer, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit*, Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996, pp.280, hb.

This is not only a stimulating readable account of the subject matter, but will also serve many as an introduction to theological method.

The book begins by looking at "Spirit and Trinity," because almost everything Pinnock wants to say springs from this ontology: the Spirit is the one who bonds the loving fellowship that God is and creates access to the Father through the Son. As

God is loving relationality, grace is primary, and creation is its expression. If God, who is spirit, also *has* Spirit in a trinitarian sense, this first emerges through the story of Jesus. But it was left to the Fathers, especially the Cappadocians, to explore this. Depending on Scripture, they fought off those who wanted to make the Spirit less than God, or less than personal, or just a way of speaking of the one God (modalism/unitarianism). Yet they also avoided the opposite danger of falling into tritheism. How? By insisting that the one God exists precisely as the profound, joyful, self-giving *communion* in love of Father, Son and Spirit. Within this it may be right (with Augustine) to call the Spirit 'the uniting bond of love', as long as that does not de-personalize him, but rather expresses his function in eternity, in creation and redemption. His goal is to introduce human beings - made in the image of the trinitarian social God - into full union with God, and to bring them to express the dance of the Trinity on earth, in loving fellowship.

Chapter 2 turns in more detail to the "Spirit in Creation." The trinity creates, not out the need for servants, but because 'God's being as shared love favors the coming into being of created communities' (55). As 'the Lord and giver of life' (Gen 1:2; 2:7; Ps 104:30; Job 33:34, etc.) the Spirit is also the *sustainer* of life (cf. Job 34:14), immanent to all. For Pinnock, Gen 1:2 means the Spirit is Green, always enhancing the world as the expression of God's glorious love, and seeking to overcome the chaotic and evil introduced through the fall. In terms of humanity, the Spirit's immanence to *all* means civilization, culture and art are the signs of the creative 'bond of love' at work even through flawed humanity. All this means 'redemption does not leave the world behind but lifts creation to a higher level' (54); the Spirit prepares for God's Son, who is the exemplar of creation in God's image, and for his final manifestation in new creation.

Next, Pinnock explores the implications of his model for Christology and Soteriology. In ch. 3, "Spirit and Christology," Pinnock argues that attempts at Logos christology tend to dehumanize Jesus. In many, Jesus can do it all on his own, because he is God. He has no need of the Spirit. Instead, Pinnock follows the path of Owen and Irving, insisting Jesus, although God, came in the weakness of true human nature - knowing the Father, combating temptation, and experiencing God's power, *only through the Spirit*. As in eternity, the Spirit is the bond of love that binds the Father and the Son in history - and so, in Jesus, the Spirit prepares for, and reveals, the work he will perform in us, as the Spirit of God's Son. Over against some 'penal substitution' theologies, Pinnock rightly emphasizes even the very moment of the cross as the ultimate display of the uniting bond between the Father and the Son, and between the Son and those he represents. Ch. 4, on "Spirit and Church," then naturally sees the church as a continuation and recapitulation of Jesus' sonship-by-the-Spirit overflowing into disciples. The Spirit is not merely an empowering given to the church-in-Christ for mission (though it is certainly this), the Spirit also *constitutes* the Church, bringing her to birth, and nourishing her. Correspondingly, ch. 5 on "Spirit and Union," rightly challenges Protestant systems that express salvation primarily in legal/forensic, rather than relational terms. Justification is undoubtedly important, but only as the gateway to reconciliation, union with God, and the

Book Reviews

deepening life of sonship. All this is profoundly pneumatological. Christian life begins by receiving the Spirit who alone brings us into union with the Father and the Son. The subsequent aim of the Spirit is to lead us deeper into Christ, to share more thoroughly in his holy obedience and death, and (by these means) also in the (often charismatic) power of his ministry and resurrection.

Ch. 6, on "Spirit and Universality," argues that neither universalism ('all will be saved') nor restrictivism ('only confessing and faithful Christians will be saved') is truly biblical. The Spirit - as God's outgoing love in creation for communion - is at work to that end wherever love, reconciliation, and holiness appear: in Abraham in Ur, in Cornelius (before Peter brings him the Gospel), and in many as-yet outside the community of confessing Christianity today. 'The tension between universality and particularity is eased when we do justice to the twin mission of Son and Spirit. The truth of the incarnation does not eclipse truth about the Spirit, who was at work in the world before Christ and is present now where Christ is not named' (194). But P also manages to avoid the danger of credulous affirmation of the worth of other religious structures.

Ch. 7, "Spirit and Truth," tackles the question of the development of doctrine. Pincock is refreshingly open to the value of the tradition of the churches - and to the sort of spiritual reflection which has led to them - while also ably securing the primary import of Scripture. Understandably, too, he thinks interpretation should be a *community* function (not an individualist one).

This book is challenging, yet eirenic; profound, yet with simplicity. A must for all who want to penetrate the doctrine of the Spirit.

Max Turner, London Bible College

Esther Dech Schandorff, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit: A Bibliography Showing Its Chronological Development*, 2 vols., ATLA Bibliography Series, No. 28, Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1995, 1265 pp.

Esther Dech Schandorff's two volume bibliography on the Holy Spirit is an outstanding accomplishment! She has compiled an astounding list of resources on the subject from the twenty centuries of Christian history. It will be the standard work for years to come for those wishing to research this doctrine.

Volume one is a comprehensive bibliography arranged alphabetically. The pertinent publication information is given to enable one to pursue a source in question. Volume two arranges entries by subject divisions in eleven chapters. Appendices list non-book media on the topic, and the volume concludes with three helpful indices. Researchers will want to consult this volume to focus upon aspects of the question of particular interest to them.

The work exhibits great breadth. Not only are biblical, theological, and ecclesial aspects of the topic covered, there are also categories for literature, drama, and poetry relating to the Holy Spirit. Authors of the western world across the centuries are included from the Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant traditions.

Twelve broad theological perspectives on the Spirit in the life of the Christian are represented in the listing, helpfully designated in volume two by appropriate codes. Over one hundred twenty North American academic libraries' holdings are reflected in the collection.

Since the shelf lists used to assemble the bibliography represent American holdings, one should not be surprised to discover little from the non-western world. In saying this I am not criticizing the excellent work of Esther Schandorff. All publications must work with self-imposed limits on subject matter. Yet it is an omission that should call for a companion volume on the Holy Spirit from the areas of the church not covered in these volumes

This publication reminds us that gratitude is due to others besides the compiler of these volumes. For this is the twenty-eighth religious bibliography sponsored by the American Theological Library Association. With each additional collection, scholars and students of religion are more in their debt for providing such excellent resources for research. Scarecrow Press, Inc. has our thanks as well for continuing to publish reference works for a limited public. For everyone involved, a hearty well-done!

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Michael Bauman and Martin I. Klauber, eds., *Historians of the Christian Tradition: Their Methodologies and Influence on Western Thought*, Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995, 631 pp., \$49.99.

Early praise of this book is well justified. It has to be the most significant book in church history that I have read in recent years. Twenty-eight chapters, individually written by a diverse cast of scholars, present studies on historians who have made a significant contribution to the Christian tradition. Each study presents a biographical sketch of the selected historian, a summary of his major writings, an analysis of his historical methodology, and an assessment of his approach to church history and his influence upon the discipline.

The first two chapters look at Old and New Testament historians: the Deuteronomist, the Chronicler, and Luke. Chapters on Eusebius and Augustine follow as representatives of the early church. Bede is the sole representative of the medieval church. The bulk of the studies (twenty-three) fall in the period between the Protestant Reformation and the present. Roman Catholic historians--John Henry Newman, Johann Adam Möhler, Josef Rupert Geiselmann, Christopher Dawson, and Hubert Jedin--are presented fairly and with appreciation, as are all the persons who comprised the study.

While individual chapters vary in style and substance, they maintain a high level of interest and information. The chapters conclude with selected bibliographies for the historian being studied, and with informative reference notes. So much is packed into each study that one is well-advised to read the book in chapter portions.

The only criticism I have of the book is in regard to the selection of the historians to be included. More should have been done with the patristic period as

Book Reviews

well as the medieval and renaissance eras. Georges Florovsky is the sole representative of Eastern Orthodoxy. Why not include John Meyendorff or Alexander Schmemmann as additional figures from the Eastern perspective? For a Broadman and Holman production it is surprising to note so few who represent Anabaptist, Pietist, and Puritan studies. American church history does not fare as well as the European church does. Admittedly a book of over 600 pages would not be helped by adding additional chapters to cover all concerns. But some deletions in areas that are well-covered might have created room for some of these neglected and under-represented areas.

The book should appeal to libraries, professional historians, and graduate students in church history. It would make an excellent text for a course in historical methodology. The reading level would allow for many others to enjoy it, if they could only be persuaded to try it. Everything considered, it is a book well worth its price.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

J. C. Fletcher, et. al., *Bill Wallace in China*, Nashville TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1996, 288 pp., \$24.99.

In reviewing this book, I am aware of two converging factors: 1) I grew up in an Eastern European communist country where Christians experienced daily many of the realities that Bill Wallace experienced in China, 2) this year (1997) Hong Kong is being returned to China and this event makes some believers excited about the new possibilities of evangelizing China and this event makes some believers excited about the new possibilities of evangelizing China, while others are anxious about the new restrictions that will be imposed upon them.

The life of Bill Wallace, missionary doctor to China, can be divided into three parts: Hearing the call, obeying the call and finishing the call as a martyr.

Hearing the Call - Bill Wallace was born to Dr. and Mrs. William Wallace. He lived an adventurous childhood and youth, showing a great propensity for mechanical activities. It was while he worked on a car on July 5, 1925, that he received an unmistakable call to become a missionary. He attended the University of Tennessee and received his MD from the University Medical School in Memphis. On July 25, 1935, he was appointed by the Southern Baptist as a medical missionary to the Stout Medical Hospital in Wuchow, South China.

Obeying the Call - Upon arriving on the mission field, Bill Wallace concentrated on using the great gifts with which God endowed him. The hospital in Wuchow became known as the "life of China, (90) while endearingly the Chinese called Bill Wallace "Waa I Saang". On two furloughs home he had opportunities for lucrative positions, but he never wavered from his call. During his tenure, the hospital was bombed by the Japanese. it had to be relocated with great difficulty and had to be defended from marauding communist soldiers. When the communists took over in 1949, five out of the eight hospital missionaries decided to leave; however, Bill Wallace decided that his God-given place was the hospital. "He was the one to

stay on in the face of the unknown, to give the Stout Memorial Hospital and the Baptist witness every chance to continue living once the Red blight arrived." (175)

Finishing the Call as a Martyr - Once the decision was made to stay, Bill Wallace experienced the wickedness of the communist system which in the beginning used toleration and restraint. This short stage was followed by forced parades, wholesale arrests and public humiliating trials. The communists arrested him for being a chief spy (after they implanted a gun under his mattress before his arrest). At the public trial no one from Wuchow spoke against him, but the prosecution countered that it had enough evidence to imprison him. He was discredited, interrogated at length, brainwashed and beaten. The communist story was that Bill Wallace committed suicide, but other Christians jailed in nearby cells reported that he was viciously beaten during the night. The communists buried him in an unmarked grave, but the Christians raised a monument with the inscription, "For to me to live is Christ."

In the foreword Jerry Rankin writes: "Bill Wallace symbolizes all that is right and good about Christianity. He fought the good fight. He gave his all. The enemies of Christ put his body in the grave, but his righteous spirit lives on to inspire us today as well as future Christian generations" (x)

Fletcher does a superb job of telling a great story. He is impressed by his subject, but this is not hagiography. The author lets the life of Bill Wallace show what God will do with a person committed to Him. Even though this life ended in death, it was a meaningful death for Bill Wallace and for those who witnessed this sacred event. "It seems that as the life of Bill Wallace was used for the healing of so many thousands in South China, the death of Bill Wallace has been used throughout the world, but especially in the SBC institutions to stir churches to great mission giving and people to respond to the mission call in their lives."

The book has important appendixes and questions for each chapter. It can be used for personal reading and as a textbook in a missions course in college or seminary. Three minor items could be added in future revisions: a map of China (or of the area where Bill Wallace worked), an English translation of Chinese words, and, from the publishers a list of the books in the Baptist Classics Series.

George Hancock-Stefan, Atlantic Highlands, NJ

Jesse C. Fletcher. *The Southern Baptist Convention - A Sesquicentennial History*. Nashville: Broadman & Hollman Publishers, 1994, xiv + 463 pp., \$29.99.

This concise book was written for the 150th anniversary of the Southern Baptist Convention which took place in 1995. As such, it was written to celebrate the accomplishments of a denomination that has received scant attention in regards to its importance. This omission is demonstrated by the well-known American church historian Sydney E. Ahlstrom who wrote his *Theology in America: The Major Protestant Voices from Puritanism to Neo-Orthodoxy* without mentioning one Southern Baptist or, for that matter, any one from the South.

Book Reviews

Jesse Fletcher has written an outstanding introduction about the Southern Convention. He mastered a vast amount of information, understands the functioning intricacies of this organization, has been involved in it as pastor, professor, historian and educational leader, has intimate knowledge of the major protagonists within the last fifty years, and had the first manuscript read by the leading denominational church historians.

The book is divided into ten chapters: *Ch. 1: Roots and Reason, 1609-1845* (pp. 9-41), *Ch. 2: A New Connection, 1845-1865* (pp. 43-72), *Ch. 3: Reconstruction and Survival, 1865-1900* (pp. 73-108), *Ch. 4: Defining a Denomination, 1900-1927* (pp. 109-46), *Ch. 5: Adversity and Challenge, 1927-1945* (pp. 147-78), *Ch. 6: The Great Advance, 1945-1964* (pp. 179-218), *Ch. 7 The Uneasy Consensus 1964-1979* (pp. 219-57), *Ch. 8: The Battle for the Gavel, 1979-1990* (pp. 259-305), *Ch. 9: New Initiatives, 1990-1993* (pp. 307-61), and *Ch. 10: Foundations for the Future, 1993-Forward* (pp. 361-88). The book concludes with four helpful appendixes, notes, bibliography and an index.

The Southern Baptist Convention during the last few decades has been known in the public press for its controversies between the moderates and the conservatives. Fletcher analyzes these controversies and shows that there have been mistakes committed by both sides. There have been individuals and groups whose actions are laudable and less laudable. While Fletcher may end up being criticized by both moderates and conservatives, he does attempt to be fair in his assessments.

Fletcher demonstrates that in spite of the various controversies, the major emphases of the Southern Convention are personal evangelism and missions. These foundational realities have propelled the Convention to become "a people numbering more than 15 million gathered in more than 38,000 churches organized into a national organization that includes work in every state of the Union and over 120 countries". (p. 1)

Fletcher keeps a flowing chronology, while evidencing those ideas that are being repeated or new ideas that become a part of the denomination's mainstream. Landmarkism (according to Leon McBeth, the concept without which it is impossible to understand Southern Baptists, p. 60), based on Prov. 22:28, which in its incipient form insisted that only Baptist Churches were authorized to baptize and to serve the Lord's Supper, was a constant source of friction, refining definition and vitality in the Convention (pp. 60-6, 104-7, 114-5, 375-6, 386). Biblical controversies such as Cranford Howell Toy controversy (pp. 89-92) who produced a major crisis at the Southern Seminary in 1879, Ralph Elliott whose publication of *Genesis* in 1961 forced him to leave the Southern Convention and join the American Baptist Churches Convention (pp. 205-210), and the editorial difficulties in the Sunday School Board (pp. 236, 310) are also evidenced.

While the congregational democratic style, the state conventions and the major boards (Home Missions, Foreign Missions, Women's Ministry) are of great importance, there is abundant evidence that the Southern Baptist Convention made tremendous strides because its leaders were courageous men and women who were able to envision great things for God. James P. Boyce and John A. Broadus are

foundational in establishing seminaries for the Southern Baptist Convention. They were followed by a plethora of great seminary presidents and professors. The Southern Baptist Convention continue to have some of the largest seminaries of our days. The Foreign Missions Board had people like Lottie Moon (pp. 84-8, 124-6) who the *Foreign Missions Journal* eulogized in 1912 as "the best man among our missionaries" and in whose memory Southern Baptists collect their special contributions for missions. Baker James Cauthen, the president of the Foreign Missions Board from 1953-79, expanded the missionaries appointments 300 percent and started new missions in sixty-seven countries. Fletcher summarizes this leader's impact: "Cauthen was one of the most effective speakers in Southern Baptist life, and Foreign Missions night at the Southern Baptist Convention each year tended to be the best attended and the most emotionally charged session". (p. 212). This is in addition to those pastors, seminary presidents and professors who were chosen as presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention because of their skills and effectiveness and whose names are well known today such as E. Y. Mullins, George E. Truett, Robert E. Lee, W. A. Criswell, Charles Stanley, Adrian Rogers and others.

There are other longer histories of the Southern Baptist Convention that one can use and Fletcher generously evaluates them. There are shorter works, written from a more selected thematic flavor. Fletcher's work is succinct, celebrant and an excellent introduction into a denomination which, in spite of all its controversies, is making a great impact in the USA and throughout the world. Laity, seminary students and professors will greatly benefit from reading this book. The only drawback that I hope will be remedied by the publishers in future editions is to use footnotes rather than endnotes.

George Hancock-Stefan

E. Glenn Hinson, *The Church Triumphant: A History of Christianity up to 1300*, Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1995, 494 pages.

This volume of church history by Baptist church historian E. Glenn Hinson begins in the first century and ends with medieval Scholasticism. He divides this period into eight parts: cultural contexts and the New Testament period; early expansion; growth under persecution; the "Christianizing" of the empire; life under the barbarian "invasions"; a time of transition; the new "dark ages"; the age of reform; and the thirteenth century. In each period, the book describes the spread of Christianity, its cultural context, and the developing life and thought of the church.

The contents of this volume reflect recent developments in historiography. For example, rather than equating history with the development of institutions and the acts of prominent figures (generally male), Hinson gives more prominence to the lives of ordinary people and the contributions of women. He intends to emphasize history over doctrine, although he does cover all major doctrinal developments. He also wants to give a more objective treatments of groups such as the Valentinians, Montanists, Novationists, and Donatists which are often labeled heretical and dismissed.

Book Reviews

Hinson's volume fills in some gaps left by most church history texts. For instance, it follows the development of Eastern as well as Western Christianity rather than ignoring the Eastern church after the early medieval period. It also traces through all periods the development of spirituality. Hinson's interest in spirituality leads him to give a more positive assessment of monasticism and the school of Alexandria than is common among Protestant historians.

Hinson brings an ecumenical perspective to characteristic Believers' Church concerns. For example, he takes issue with the view that the establishment of Christianity under Constantine was the fall of the church. Moreover, in response to the Baptist principle of "voluntary principle in religion" (xii), he gives special emphasis both to persecution *of* the church and to persecution *by* the church. The Believers' Church interest in church-state or church-society issues is reflected in the book's recurring theme of the church's struggle to retain its identity while reaching out to changing cultural settings.

This last concern is one of the most fascinating aspects of the narrative. In one discussion, Hinson contends that the drive toward institutionalism in the early church was not a negative development but was a result of the church's understanding of itself as a "covenant missionary people." Institutions were needed both to instill in believers their unique identity and to build bridges to a pagan society. Cultural accommodation was not an abdication to paganism but was evidence that Christianity was secure enough in its identity to adapt to new contexts. Its ability to contextualize the gospel message made it more successful than its competitors (53). Hinson has explored this theme more fully in another book, *Evangelization of the Roman Empire: Identity and Adaptability*.

Hinson's broad perspective apparently has brought him into conflict with some traditional Baptist institutions. He notes in his preface that the "takeover of the [Southern Baptist] Convention by a fundamentalist faction precluded publication [of his book] by Broadman Press" (xi).

Despite its title (*The Church Triumphant*), this is not a triumphalist or sanitized portrait. It is a thoughtful and stimulating discussion by a believer who loves the church yet can clearly see its imperfections. Its theme of the threat and opportunity of contextualization is as relevant to the church today as it was then. Hinson achieves a good balance between events, persons, ideas, and everyday life. He brings in helpful insights from sociology, and his descriptions of everyday life are rich with detail.

The double-column hardback volume is very attractive and usable, and the text is a pleasure to read. To orient the reader, the book includes a chart listing emperors, popes, and patriarchs with their dates. The topical organization of the book helps focus the reader's attention on important developments, although it means that information about a particular historical figure (such as Tertullian) will be spread across several chapters. For this reason the book would be more effective as a text to read through than as a reference work. It does contain an extensive index, however. This would be an excellent text for church history courses aimed at graduate students or upper-level undergraduates.

Brenda B. Colijn

Glenn Hinson, *The Early Church: Origins to the Dawn of the Middle Ages*, Nashville: Ashland Press, 1996, 365 pp., \$18.95 (paper).

One of the challenges facing modern believers attempting to learn about the origins of their Christian faith is the distance which exists between their own culture and that (those!) in which the faith developed. E. Glenn Hinson's book *The Early Church* is an attempt to provide a bridge over that distance by employing what is described as a "socioinstitutional" approach. Hinson's method is to emphasize not only the major councils and controversies but also to explain how Christianity was affected by (and itself affected) the culture around it.

Hinson's material is divided into five main periods: Beginnings to 70 C.E., 70-180, 175-313, 313-400, and 400-600. Hinson's work is especially good at tracing the development of Christianity from its Jewish roots through its development in the Graeco-Roman world, providing valuable introductions to the various worldviews which influenced these spheres. He carefully traces the spread of Christianity during each of the periods considered, and shows how life within the church changed as its role in society changed. Hinson includes material (such as on spirituality) which is often left out of shorter introductions of this sort, which means that even readers with some familiarity with the early church will benefit from reading this work.

There are, however, some shortcomings. More conservative readers may chafe a bit at Hinson's dating II Peter at c. 130 (p. 101), or his insistence that "[t]he fact that the resurrection was suprahistorical...takes it beyond the historian's realm of competence and puts it into the realm of faith" (39). Also, Hinson's method of emphasizing socioinstitutional information occasionally means that theological subjects are treated too briefly. For example, in Chapter 28 where he considers the christological controversies of the sixth century Hinson emphasizes the persons and events involved, but does not do a particularly good job at explaining the theological content behind the controversies, and the reader comes away knowing the "whats" but not the "whys". Conversely, Hinson provides a thorough description of the Pelagian controversy (Chapter 29). One suspects that Hinson, with his interest in spirituality, simply found the latter of more "practical" interest than the former.

Hinson's style is also not without problems. There are times when the writing seems flat, and when the book seems to be dragged down by Hinson's attention to detail (this was particularly apparent as Hinson carefully traced area-by-area how Christianity spread out over the empire and beyond). Most of what Hinson includes is interesting, however sometimes he allows the details to get in the way of the story, which is not desirable in what is ostensibly meant to be a popular-level introduction. Finally, Hinson's reference material is weak. Although he provides a very good bibliography of primary sources, his bibliography of secondary works is limited to the fourteen works actually cited in his text. Much better would have been bibliographic references which could have directed the reader to good sources for further reading on the subjects covered. Also, there is no index at all, which severely limits the attractiveness of this volume as a work to be turned to for future reference.

Book Reviews

On the whole, however, Hinson has written a solid introduction to the first centuries of the church. His writing is clear if not exciting, and he has been largely successful in providing a bridge by which the modern believer can understand something of the dynamics of that ancient world in which our faith developed.

†David M. King

Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe, *Charles G. Finney and the Spirit of American Evangelicalism*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996, xvii + 317 pp., \$15.00 (paper).

Unlike some earlier studies of Finney, this one succeeds in tracing thoroughly his theological and social connections. In doing so it provides a more carefully nuanced portrait of "the father of modern revivalism" and challenges some of the historical stereotypes accompanying that title. Making good use of the recently restored full text of Finney's *Memoirs*, the Finney papers at Oberlin, and Finney's many articles in *The Oberlin Evangelist* and *The Oberlin Quarterly Review*, Hambrick-Stowe does more than fill out our picture of the famed revivalist: In line with the goal of the series in which it appears (Eerdmans's *Library of Religious Biography*), he brings within his field of vision as well the broader cultural contexts and religious issues surrounding the man. In particular, as the title suggests, the author sheds helpful light on the American evangelical tradition, a culture that shaped Finney deeply and was ultimately shaped by him in profound ways as well.

Hambrick-Stowe's "dual calling in life as a pastor and an academic" has positioned him well to understand Finney's own blend of careers. It no doubt also prompted the author to include in his study significant aspects of Finney's life--neglected by some other biographers--that professionals in ministry will find familiar: the often-volatile politics of religious institutions; the ironies of theological controversy; the dilemmas of family life in the parsonage; the yearnings to flee from highly-visible public performance to some quiet, forgotten corner of the world, far from the burden of life in the limelight.

Again in keeping with the goals of the series, Hambrick-Stowe's writing is clear and readable, "free of footnotes and academic jargon." The loss of the jargon is welcome, but the notes are sorely missed. Even so, the author's fine bibliographic essay makes up in part for the loss and in itself is worth the purchase of the book by students of Finney and his times--who will find in this refreshing study as a whole a useful window into the American evangelical soul.

T. Paul Thigpen, Southwest Missouri State University

Charles Edwin Jones, *The Charismatic Movement--A Guide to the Study of Neo-Pentecostalism with Emphasis on Anglo-American Sources*, 2 vols., ATLA Bibliography Series No. 30, Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1995, 1220 pp.

The researcher is forever indebted to those who have gone before. To the

scholars, librarians and archivists who've sought, dug, collected, categorized and preserved the researcher must tip her hat. One of those to whom the Holiness-Pentecostal researcher is indebted is Charles Edwin Jones.

For forty years, this second generation Holiness adherent has researched the movement and its sister movement, Pentecostalism. Jones began his work at Peniel-Bethany College. A master's degree in library science was completed at the University of Michigan in 1955 and the Ph.D. in history was granted by the University of Wisconsin in 1968. During that time, he cataloged, collected and preserved significant works of history for the University of Michigan and Brown University. He also contributed his support to the Nazarene Archives in Kansas City and the Wesleyan/Holiness Studies Center in Wilmore, Kentucky.

From the publication of his senior paper at Peniel-Bethany on the Nazarene denominational structure until the publication of this bibliography on the Charismatic Movement, Jones has been a significant, if not "cutting-edge," voice in Holiness studies. His works include contributions to various journals on Methodism, tongues-speech, sanctification and Holiness and Pentecostal spirituality. His greatest works are three other bibliographical guides in the ATLA series (Holiness Movement, Black Holiness Movement, and Pentecostal Movement).

The vital function of the ATLA series is to provide reliable and extensive bibliographies in the various areas of religious studies. The series contains guides to the Wesleys, the Oxford Movement, the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit as well as those by Jones (listed above) so it is fitting that the series would include a bibliography on so important a movement as the Charismatic Movement.

Jones' two volume work contains entries divided into four areas: Part I - the "transdenominational" Charismatic Movement (i.e. - monographs or articles describing the movement); Part II - Denominational and Organizational Responses (both sympathetic and unsympathetic); Part III - Schools (i.e. - L.I.F.E. Bible College); and Part IV - Biography (listing all relevant publications relating to prominent persons in the Charismatic movement).

This is an enormously helpful, possibly indispensable work. Jones makes a significant contribution to the study of historical theology. The college and seminary student, as well as other researchers, will find the work essential for establishing primary sources for his or her work in historical theology. It is a pity that the cost of the Bibliography is prohibitive to its acquisition by most students. However, it should become a part of all reference libraries committed to contemporary religious studies.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the work is that Jones has here, as in his other bibliographical work, included grass-roots, non-scholarly contributors to theology. Spirit-movements are by nature movements which empower women, minorities and laypersons. These movements are fringe movements and those on the fringe (Arthur Blessit, for example, who carried a full-scale wooden cross around the world) have a great impact on the theology of the movement.

As with any volume of this nature, there are several areas which should be addressed. Owing to its layout and size (containing an impressive 10,910 entries) the

Book Reviews

volumes can prove to be a bit difficult to access. One must pay careful attention to Jones' detailed introduction, which explains his categorizations, and rely heavily upon the table of contents and indices. A use of bold print or other more distinct ways of designating major headings and subheadings would have made the work more user-friendly.

As with any volume of this nature, there are several areas which should be addressed. Owing to its layout and size (containing an impressive 10,910 entries) the volumes can prove to be a bit difficult to access. One must pay careful attention to Jones' detailed introduction, which explains his categorizations, and rely heavily upon the table of contents and indices. A use of bold print or other more distinct ways of designating major headings and subheadings would have made the work more user-friendly.

It is evident, both from the introduction and the work itself, that Jones has not quite understood the distinctions between the Pentecostal, Neo-Pentecostal, Charismatic, Renewal or Restoration movements although he does designate entries as either non-Charismatic or Charismatic. This failure is surprising given Jones' general knowledge of the diversity within the tradition. The categorizations tend to be confusing and sometimes misleading. For example, in Part III (Schools) there are listings for colleges fitting solidly within the tradition of classic Pentecostalism (Evangel Bible College, Emmanuel College) but others (Lee College, Church of God School of Theology) are omitted. First, one would ask why are the Pentecostal schools included in a listing of Charismatic schools? Secondly, if Jones hasn't chosen to make the distinction where it regards academic institutions, why has he left out prominent Pentecostal schools? A similar problem is seen in Part IV (Biography). Those persons who are not of Charismatic persuasion are designated by an asterisk. However, one wonders why such noted non-Pentecostals as Francis Schaeffer and Hal Lindsey are included at all. Again, there is a blurring of lines between classic Pentecostals (Ray H. Hughes is included) and Charismatic leaders. Many prominent Pentecostal scholars of the past two decades are omitted (Steven J. Land, John Christopher Thomas, Roger Stronstad) while others are included. It is possible that Jones' research was completed before these scholars became influential, but this is nowhere noted in the text. Therefore the reader assumes that the work is current as of 1995.

Since he began his life-work forty years ago, Jones has contributed much to scholarship's understanding of the diverse and inclusive nature of Holiness-Pentecostal studies. This work further contributes to that understanding and challenges academia's understanding of what "doing theology" is all about:

Kimberly Ervin Alexander, Lee University

Catherine Wessinger, ed., *Religious Institutions and Women's Leadership: New Roles Inside the Mainstream*, Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1996, \$24.95.

Catherine Wessinger has edited a helpful, informative volume giving an overview of the history and current status of women in religious leadership, both ordained and nonordained. After presenting an overview of the topic, fifteen different women discuss women's leadership among Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Jews. These chapters are roughly arranged chronologically by the institutions which addressed women's religious leadership earlier. The volume concludes with a chronology of key events for women's religious leadership in the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and a subject index (for a total 434 pages). Wessinger's main conclusion is that simply admitting women to religious leadership positions is not enough. Denominations need to use institutional resources as well, such as Women's Studies programs at seminaries and quotas for proportional representation (p. 31). The book is helpful as a resource on the basic historical events relating to women in each of the denominations. Unlike *Women and Religion in America* and *Women of Spirit*, it includes study of both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, listing by denominations, and focusing on the history of women's ordination.

The chapters give the reader a good sense of the unique issues in each denominational movement and also the similar issues across the various denominations. Especially informative were the chapters on the African Methodist Episcopal and Wesleyan/Holiness traditions by Jualynne Dodson and Susie C. Stanley. For example, the African Methodist Episcopal tradition had to deal with North-South discrimination based on socioeconomic class and Roman Catholic sisters with service to poor versus rich. On the other hand, even Unitarian Universalist women clergy have to answer the same arguments as do evangelical women clergy. The United States' late 1800's "crisis of effeminacy" after years of peace resulted in men having fears of masculinity, according to Cynthia Grant Tucker, which affected Unitarian Universalist clergy (pp. 82-90). Jewish female rabbis are concerned with similar issues as Protestant female clergy: balance, intimacy, and empowerment (p. 273 ff). Ironically, the same issues conservative Jews had to answer in this century (p. 313) were the ones apostle Paul had to answer (see *Beyond the Curse*, p. 47).

The book documents how inaccurate is the assumption sometimes heard today that the church's interest in women's leadership follows the twentieth century secular feminist movement. For instance, in the A.M.E. tradition Jarena Lee in 1809 was probably the earliest Black female preacher (p. 125). The holiness movement began in 1836 with Sarah Lankford and Phoebe Palmer (p. 349). Women were active preachers but their formal standing in the church may have taken time. The Congregationalists began ordaining women in 1853 and Hartford Theological Seminary in 1889 was the first seminary to vote to admit women to all courses of study (pp. 63-65). Because women wanted to speak out against social sins, such as temperance, their leadership by the church was questioned. Because suffrage and

Book Reviews

temperance were not an issue for Anglicans, the issue of ordination of women was delayed (except in places of need for religious leadership, such as Hong Kong) (p. 213).

Another possible surprise is Virginia Sullivan Finn's study on Roman Catholic women. Even though the Vatican has reiterated that women cannot be ordained as priests, 85 percent of nonordained parish leaders are women (p. 248).

Rebecca Prichard gives an overview of feminist study on John Calvin and the Presbyterian Church in the United States. Calvin did not recommend women for ordained religious leadership, however, he placed Paul's teachings concerning women's silence among the *Adiaphora* ("indifferent"), texts which might be interpreted contextually (p. 40). Three effects of the Protestant Reformation on women were to encourage the marriage of clergy, authority in the priesthood of all believers and Scripture, and a spirit of dissent.

A passing error in a synecdoche of the whole book. Wessinger notes that the NRSV is "the first English translation of the Bible that accurately translates Romans 16:7, revealing language that can be understood as naming a woman, Junia, as having been an apostle" (p. 27). The NRSV came out in 1989. However, Helen Barrett Montgomery, who is herself cited in *Religious Institutions*, in 1924 accurately translated Romans 16:7: "Andronicus and Junia, my kinsfolk and fellow prisoners, who are notable among the apostles." That is the message of the book that is startling. Often "reconstructionist" history is a more contemporary writing-OUT of women's early and active leadership in religious institutions and although some denominations have become more open to women's ordained leadership (Reformed), others have become more closed (Southern Baptist), and others have forgotten women's early and active nonordained leadership (United Church of Christ) because for women the call to do Christian ministry took priority over the recognition of their call.

The writers range among a variety of theological positions. The editor, Catherine Wessinger, and a few of the writers (Unitarian-Universalist ministry and Reconstructionist Rabbinate) do fall in a more liberal camp, assuming that practicing gays and lesbians should be affirmed by the church (pp. 18, 296, 337) and heterodox is acceptable (pp. 50, 97, 296, 376). If readers understand this perspective, even though disagreeing with it, they can still benefit from the many other chapters who do not voice such views. Especially helpful is the chronology with key events for women's religious leadership (pp. 347-401) and the list of studies on Jewish teachings and liturgy (p. 334ff). Overall, *Religious Institutions and Women's Leadership* is an informative compendium of historical data as a reference for today's clergy, scholars, and other interested people. Aida Besançon Spencer

Howard E. Butt, Jr., *Renewing American's Soul*, New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1996, 264 pp., \$19.95.

I must admit, he won me over. I was expecting a book on renewal; i.e., revival.

Within the first few pages, it was clear that the book focussed more on psychological healing than on the kind of "renewing" I expected. I was ready to turn the book over to someone else to review, but Howard E. Butt, Jr. won me over. He did it with clear, concise, engaging writing, wealth of experience, and his balance of personal experience, psy-chological insight, and Bible study. Let me give you an example of the author's style:

"If you don't have a problem in the world, then you won't like this book. It's for people who struggle with frustrations, setbacks, failures, or griefs. It's for those who wrestle with themselves and their relationships - in marriages, families, organizations, churches, and society - and who sometimes find it hard to feel positively or think confidently about what's happening to them.

Sound familiar? It ought to. I've just described everyone except Wonder Woman, Superman, Barbie, and Mickey Mouse" (p. xi).

Howard Butt is a business man, a seminary trained lay person, and the veteran of many hours in psychiatric help. Through his church contacts, his nationally known Laity Lodge Retreat Center, and his activity as a conference speaker and with the Layman's Leadership Institute, Mr. Butt personally knows and has interacted with many of the people that have helped to mold the Christian community in America. This book is an attempt at synthesizing theology, psychology, and a study of I Peter.

"Nothing in these pages requires technical knowledge in either theology or psychology. Nor will I give you unchecked theories, off-the-wall guesswork, or wild speculation. In both theology and psychiatry, my views represent core, classic, historic orthodoxy" (p. xiii).

Beginning with our personal "Bar-Jona", he leads us through the "circles" of our relationships to our national relationship in a democratic society. He is true to the task expressed in sub-title of this book: "A Spiritual Psychology for Home, Work, and Nation". This can be seen in the outline of the book: Part One deals with "Our core Relationships: The Good Relational Source, Family, and Work." Part Two looks at "Relationships Renewed: Re-parenting and Re-childrening. And, Part Three examines "Relationships and Democracy; Flex Thinking: The Citizen as Player - Coach".

Mr. Butt presents his concepts in a clear, dynamic manner that keeps them fresh and relevant. At times, I felt he reads too much psychological terminology into the writings of Peter, but I did find myself continually searching Scriptures to see for myself. His insights on American culture, submission, leadership, the democratic process, and the "battle" of the sexes are all worth examining. I did not always agree with his conclusions, but I did gain fresh perspectives. Personally, the book was a joy simply to experience a strong, contemporary, consistent, apologetic for Trinitarian faith.

Walter J. Kime

Book Reviews

Lawrence S. Cunningham and Keith J. Egan, *Christian Spirituality--Themes from the Tradition*, Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1996. 216 pp., \$14.95.

Everyone is touting the word "spirituality" today, wearing it boldly like a brand-new outfit. Manifest in a variety of shapes and colors, spirituality in our culture has become a way for people to make sense of and put order into their lives. In the midst of all these spiritualities floating about, though, what do we understand a spirituality that is distinctly Christian to be, and how do we live it out? In their book, *Christian Spirituality--Themes from the Tradition*, Lawrence S. Cunningham and Keith J. Egan work to answer these questions.

Cunningham is the chair of the Department of Theology at Notre Dame, while Egan is the chair of the Department of Religious Studies, and founder and director of the Center for Spirituality at Saint Mary's College. They approach Christian spirituality from a Catholic perspective; however, they do so in a way that is accessible to the Protestant reader. Within the first chapter the authors tell us that the core of Christian spirituality is universal: a belief in the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Accordingly, they go on to say that developing one's spirituality within the Christian tradition is a matter of learning how we can best walk in the way of Jesus in order that we might become His disciples. "This Christian way of life is a life of discipleship" (p. 10). Cunningham and Egan then take us on a survey of themes which our church fathers and mothers used to nurture their own spirituality. Each area is dealt with concisely, as the writers describe the tradition behind each theme. This leads to a discussion of how each can be a method for coming more into the presence of God, so that one might further their walk with and discipleship to Jesus Christ. For this, according to the authors, is what developing a Christian spirituality is all about.

Upon defining Christian spirituality for us, the authors take a chapter to discuss the centrality of the usage of the Bible as the best means by which to learn how to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Next, the concept of our being on a journey to the divine in terms of our Christian faith is discussed. In the fourth chapter, Cunningham and Egan talk about the vital topic of prayer, and how a Christian should pray. From here, the authors go into a chapter on meditation and contemplation, and then into a chapter on asceticism. They give us a proper definition of these three concepts as they have been handed down through the ages, and explain how we are called to practice them today.

In chapter seven the authors define the often-misunderstood concept of mysticism, and how it became a force in the early church. We are invited to look into what the mystics and the mystical tradition might have to say to us. Chapter eight explores solitude and its importance for our lives. "Moreover, the search for God and the discernment of important decisions in life require reflection and prayer that only solitude makes possible" (p. 160). The sacrament of friendship is discussed in chapter nine. Cunningham and Egan explain the spiritual tradition of friendship, and how this gift of God needs to be nurtured within the Christian church. The last chapter of their work concerns the Eucharist--its many names and what it should

mean for us as believers. The book ends with a lengthy bibliography and a thorough index.

This book, in its clarity and concise writing, would be very helpful in terms of coming to a beginning understanding of the topics, particularly since many of them are foreign to us in the Protestant tradition. Therefore, it seems to be the perfect tool for the beginner to get a good working definition of these particular themes that go into the concept and working out of a Christian spirituality. And in addition, with the exercises for each, one has the opportunity to practice and develop them for usage in one's own spiritual life. I also thought this book would be an excellent textbook for a class where Christian spirituality is being dealt with from a beginner's standpoint.

I would, though, recommend this book to anyone interested in Christian spirituality. I found its main attraction to lie in the fact that it doesn't read like a textbook at all. One could read this book devotionally at times, with its Biblical truths and easy-to-understand history of the themes. In an age where there are many spiritualities, I would commend this book to anyone seeking after a definite Christian spirituality.

Juliet R. Johnson

Philip Law and Tom Wright; *The Wisdom of Jesus*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996, 48 pp., \$8.00.

Philip Law and Terry Waite, *The Wisdom of the Psalms*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996, 48 pp., \$8.00.

Bookstores during this decade have seen a surge of small, beautifully made and illustrated volumes on "wisdom" from a variety of religious and philosophical traditions. Eastern thought has particularly been favored in these elegant publications, the size and beauty of which immediately suggest that they be used for "devotional" reading or meditation. Now Eerdmans, in cooperation with Lion Publishing in the United Kingdom, has made available a series of very attractive, slim volumes featuring the wisdom of the Christian tradition. All are composed of thirty selections, suitable for a month's meditations.

The Wisdom of the Psalms brings together passages from some of the best known hymns of ancient Israel (e.g., Pss. 1, 8, 42, 51, 63, 119, 139) as well as less familiar selections. Ordered under the headings of "Adoration," "Meditation," "Confession," "Suffering and Hope," and "Blessing and Joy," this volume introduces readers to the broad spectrum of the Psalter's voices and the many settings in which Psalms may be employed. Terry Waite, in his introduction, points the reader beyond this sample to the whole Psalter, indicating how the full canon of 150 psalms has been used in personal devotion in a number of different Christian traditions: after this first month's taste, the reader knows where to go for more.

In *The Wisdom of Jesus*, Tom Wright, a noted author on Christology, presents Jesus as a wisdom teacher of the highest order. Selected sayings of Jesus are

Book Reviews

organized under the headings of "True Wisdom," "True Happiness," "True Prayer," "True Love," and "True God." At times, the choice of including a particular text as a reflection of, for example, "true love" is itself profound; at other times headings may be a little strained. Similarly, the lack of narrative context (one of the most salient contributions of our gospel writers) can be a problem, as in the inclusion of John 17:1-5: this passage only says something profound about "the Glory of God" if one knows that Jesus is talking about his approaching passion. Without this knowledge, something important is missing from one's meditation on that prayer. Nevertheless, the collection brings together some of the best known teachings of Jesus, and, like the collection of Psalms, may hopefully awaken a renewed hunger in the reader to return to the Four Gospels in their entirety.

In a decade in which many "seek after wisdom," these books may be a useful tool for helping friends and family rediscover the richness of the church's heritage. They are ideal as gift books, being printed on patterned paper and generously illustrated from medieval illuminated manuscripts, religious paintings, and prints of stained glass windows -- not an inexpensive outreach tool, but one which should be considered for one's searching friends. Some may prefer to keep this gift for themselves, for use in their own daily devotions. David A. deSilva

Eugene H. Peterson, *Take and Read. Spiritual Reading: An Annotated List*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996, 122 pp., (paper).

Eugene Peterson is one of the best-known names in American devotional writing, especially among pastors and church leaders. The pen of "the pastor's pastor" has produced more than a score of volumes that challenge, provoke, and inspire. His writings make clear that he has widely and deeply.

Now comes a book that describes where he has grazed and what he recommends for others. His interest is *Spiritual Reading*: "leisurely, repetitive, reflecting reading. In this we are not reading primarily for information but for companionship" (p. x).

Take and Read is just what its subtitle says: *An Annotated List*. In twenty chapters Peterson sets out his favorite authors and titles in the following areas: the basics ("books I feel I cannot do without"), classics, the Psalms, prayer, prayer books and hymn books, worship/liturgy, spiritual formation, spiritual direction, North American spirituality, novelists, poets, pastors, Jesus, mysteries, commentaries, place, saints, sin and the devil, history, and his own writings.

Clearly, Peterson has foraged widely, and he recommends the same for any who would lead the North American church into the third Christian millennium. His favorite writers, listed most often in the index, are Karl Barth and C. S. Lewis. Behind them follows a ten-way tie between Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Frederick Buechner, G. K. Chesterton, P. T. Forsyth, Kenneth Leech, Martin Luther, Martin Thornton, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Fredrich (not Frederick) von Hügel, and Alexander Whyte. Food enough here for a lifetime!

Still, one can wish for an even more varied menu. For example, there are no categories for autobiography or missions (either history or biography). Everyone will have their own favorite authors who don't appear in Peterson's list; among mine would be the American Quaker Thomas R. Kelly and the British missionary Oswald Chambers. And I question including *The Book of Common Worship* (Presbyterian) while omitting *The Book of Common Prayer* (Anglican/Episcopalian). The latter is surely of more weight both historically and liturgically.

"But my list," replies Peterson, "does not pretend to be balanced or inclusive or authoritative in any way. It is personal" (p. xii). So, for those would learn from one of America's most-widely read, most-often read Christian writers, here is a place to begin. This is a lifetime reading plan for anyone who wishes to grow in mind and spirit. Perusing it is pleasure; pursuing it can only be fruitful. Jerry R. Flora

Tricia McCary Rhodes, *The Soul at Rest: A Journey into Contemplative Prayer*, Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1996. 224 pp.

Several years ago I could not answer a seminarian who asked, "Where are the Protestant contemplatives?" Now, at last, an evangelical has surfaced to write about the journey into contemplative prayer. Tricia McCary Rhodes, a veteran of a quarter-century of Christian ministry, has produced an excellent handbook for those willing to walk with patience beyond the ways of praying found in most Protestant churches.

The Soul at Rest moves toward its goal through eight chapters: (1) The Journey Begins; (2) Meditative Prayer; (3) Scripture Praying; (4) Listening Prayer; (5) Recollective Prayer; (6) The Prayer of Detachment; (7) Prayer Through the Dark Night; and (8) Contemplative Prayer. Each chapter contains explanation and exercises for five days, although the author suggests that readers set their own pace, lingering where they need to. Scattered through the book are insets treating some intriguing or puzzling matters (e.g., wandering thoughts; meditation--Christian vs. Eastern; visualization and new age practice; the marks of a dark night). The author's wide reading shows in names throughout the chapters, notes for documentation, and books for further reading at the end. Her chief resource, however, is Scripture, and she peppers the pages with biblical teaching and reference. She also draws upon her own experience, letting us into her brokenness in missionary service, the anguish of infertility, adoption after years of waiting, and other personal challenges.

We can illustrate Rhodes's approach through her chapter on listening prayer. Day One addresses how God speaks, asking that we put aside preconceptions and attend to impressions of the heart. Day Two takes up "God's part": God is present, reveals truth, opens our ears, and touches our deepest soul. Day Three follows with "my part": becoming still, preparing heart and mind, listening to God's voice, and responding. (The practice exercise is a meditation on Elijah's experience at Mt. Horeb.) Day Four offers help with hearing God, while Day Five discusses our difficulties in doing that. We need to pay the price, face painful issues, develop a

Book Reviews

trained ear, and obey when God speaks. Toward the chapter's end she writes a lyric paragraph: "Daily battles with obedience will be won only as we answer life's larger question: Whose life is this? It is His! To whom do I belong? I am His! He may have to remind me a thousand times a day, but I am His! The inner prayer journey establishes this over and over . When I am completely His, I am more concerned with submission than satisfaction, with abandonment than enjoyment, with obedience than success . These are the evidences of a hearing heart" (p.107).

The *Soul at Rest* reaches its goal with Rhodes's chapter on contemplative prayer. Here, as before, she rightly lifts the banner of obedience: "The most important prerequisite to Contemplative Prayer is your level of commitment to obedience" (p.198). She describes how to prepare for such praying, then once again shows wisdom in stating, "This kind of prayer is not easily dissected into steps and procedures. I feel completely at a loss trying to write about it, but I can share some things that will help lead you to the water's edge . Like teaching someone to swim--you will have to get in the water to really learn" (p.203). She addresses the question of intimacy with the Almighty, noting that Scripture uses many diverse images for God. She then devotes the last two "days" to the matters of silence and loving God . "Silence is perhaps the most difficult discipline for evangelical Christians... Yet the very holiness of God demands silence.. There is no Contemplative Prayer without silence and there is no silence without fervent discipline" (p.212). At the last she simply writes, "This is a private part of the journey--no one else can go along . But many have journeyed before us and their words are like road signs pointing the way" (p. 215). So the book concludes with nearly two dozen quotations on loving God drawn from her wide reading, and then her own coda: "The journey has truly just begun" (p.221).

Both author and publisher are to be commended for producing this fine manual. Visually and tactilely this small sewn hardback is a pleasure . It does contain errors, however, in style and substance, and could profit from more careful editing. For example, the subtitle--which appears on the dust jacket and the copyright page--should appear on the title page as well . The Jesus Prayer was not introduced by a 17th-century Russian peasant (p.54); it is much older, but a 19th-century Russian book popularized it in the West. Rhodes is not alone in taking Revelation 3:20 out of context and making it refer to a private relationship rather than congregational life (p.85). Francois Fenelon was not martyred for his faith (p.86), unless one speaks metaphorically from the controversy, misunderstanding, and isolation he suffered . Throughout the book David is assumed to be the author of all the Psalms, but in the traditional Hebrew titles less than half of them bear his name . It is also doubtful that Lamentations was written by "the teenage prophet Jeremiah" (p. 117f.). Lawrence of the Resurrection was a lay brother, not a priest (p.122); John of the Cross--although treated with savage cruelty by members of his own order--was not martyred in the usual sense of that term (p.166); and Jan van Ruysbroeck-whose dates are given in Chapter One--belongs to the 14th century, not the 13th (p.220). Finally, nineteen books are suggested at the end "for further reading," followed by seven titles of "Catholic perspective" (p. 223f.). But more than half of the first group

come from Catholic authors, so the basis of the categories is unclear .

A number of stylistic errors also mar the book; for example, born/borne, its/it's, lay/lie, and who/whom are all confused at least once. Antecedents of pronouns are occasionally unclear, as on p.90, where "God" should be used to avoid confusion with "a fool." And we should be encouraged to linger in Christ's presence, not languish (p.158).

All these errors are mentioned because this is a good book--a very good book--and it deserves correction in a second edition . I read it entirely through twice in preparing to write this review, and I will read it again . I know of nothing else quite like it from an evangelical author, and I commend Tricia McCary Rhodes for her heartfelt and heartening work . There are indeed Protestant contemplatives, and she is among them . May their tribe increase!

Jerry R . Flora

Arthur J. Magida, ed., *How To Be a Perfect Stranger: A Guide to Etiquette in Other People's Religious Ceremonies*, Woodstock: Jewish Lights, 1996, 417 pp., \$24.95.

This is a fascinating and useful book which could find a welcome place in church and seminary libraries. The editor contacted clergy and religious experts from 20 different groups (Assemblies of God, Baptist, Buddhist, Christian Science, Churches of Christ, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalian, Greek Orthodox, Hindu, Islam, Jehovah's Witnesses, Jewish, Lutheran, Methodist, Mormon, Presbyterian, Quaker, Roman Catholic, Seventh-Day Adventist and United Church of Christ) for information on their respective group. The selected data is presented under the headings: 1. History and Beliefs, 2. Basic Service, (looking at attire, behavior, guidelines, vocabulary, etc.), 3. Holy Days and Festivals, 4. Life Cycle Events (birth, initiation, marriage, funerals and mourning), and 5. Home Celebrations.

Each of us knows that our own tradition is treated somewhat simplistically in a book such as this, but that is the goal of the book--to be an introduction to outsiders in order to make them feel more comfortable in visiting worship centers of traditions not their own. May we make them feel welcome when they visit us.

David W. Baker

William Edgar, *Reasons of the Heart: Recovering Christian Persuasion* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1996). 127 pages. \$7.99

William Edgar's brief book provides an accessible and helpful reassessment for modern readers of the project of apologetics. "Christians have grown so used to their own language, terms, and culture that they have become isolated from those who surround them." (p.12) Calling his book "an apology for apologetics," Edgar seeks to look with new insight at some very old questions facing the Christian apologist. *Reasons of the Heart* is a call for Christians to take seriously the charge of I Peter 3:15 to "be prepared to offer a defense of the hope that is in you," but to make that

Book Reviews

defense with "gentleness and reverence."

Edgar argues that there never was "a golden age" of Christian dominance in America, nor is there a "golden present" in which advances in communication make apologetics and evangelism easier or more efficient than in the past. He notes, however, that post-modern critique has eroded confidence in the Enlightenment standard of rationality that has held sway in western thinking for nearly three hundred years. The void left by the loss of monolithic reason can be filled with the good news of the gospel.

Warning his readers to avoid the trap of "cheap impact," Edgar argues that integrity and credibility characterize all good apologetics. He pleads against "mere evangelism," preaching salvation from punishment for sin. Rather, our apologetic efforts should be directed to the whole person. As both a lover of art and a former member of the L'Abri fellowship, Edgar brings to apologetics a refreshing sensitivity to the aesthetic aspect of human existence. A decidedly rhetorical orientation marks Edgar's writing as well, as he urges readers to adapt apologetics to their particular audiences. In order to appreciate "the wonder of the way God actually works," we must recognize that he uses real people to bring the gospel to other real people. Though Edgar is clear that "apologetics is about *argument*," the life of the apologist is also an inherent aspect of witness. "None of us lives anywhere close to perfection," he writes, "but to an apologist a sound spiritual life is never a luxury." (p. 40)

Edgar provides a clear and thorough overview of "the larger biblical mandate" for doing apologetics. The biblical case for faith is rooted in God's own argument against sin. "Apologetics is possible because God has made a successful case against sin and guilt, which were born by his own Son." (p. 45) Because enthusiasm for the project of apologetics has faded, we need reminding that arguing for the faith is not a human but a divine idea. Moreover, persuasion in the service of evangelism is an act of love rather than of conquest. "Many Christians have the uneasy feeling that there is something indecent about strong words. But speaking the truth forcefully is not necessarily unkind; in fact, it can be the kindest behavior toward another human being who does not know the truth." (p.49)

Edgar stresses that one "point of contact" with non-believers is "the knowledge everyone possesses of God's reality." All people are "hiding from the God they really know." Thus, when we bring people the truth of the scriptures we are "appealing to what they know but deny." But, it requires discernment to understand the particular point of resistance of any particular individual. Stressing a step in apologetics he calls "homecoming," Edgar helps his readers to see that the apologist calls an alienated culture to come home to God. At the same time, "in doing apologetics we should strive to understand someone's position from within." That is, making the gospel plausible to a particular individual means a degree of sympathetic contact. The telling of the gospel to which an artist responds may be different from the telling to which an engineer responds. Themes to which Christians should be sensitive in evangelism range from the love of humor to the fear of death.

Toward the end of *Reasons of the Heart*, Edgar turns his attention from

developing a biblical, audience-centered theory of apologetics to answering specific questions commonly posed to the apologist. Though he does not spend many pages in answering objections to Christianity, Edgar does an admirably economical job of addressing a number of the most popular ones. In an accessible style that is nevertheless scholarly in tone, Edgar answers the "religion as illusion" argument of Freud and Marx, and provides a balanced and biblical overview of the problem of evil.

Edgar is almost obliged to deal with the age's biggest single objection to Christian belief—that Christianity is exclusive and narrow in its rejection of other possibilities for spiritual liberation. Though all people have an inherent "capacity for the divine," and though there are insights in all faiths, there also are deep and serious flaws in the world's religions. At the same time, the apologist must recognize that doubters raise objections to Christianity for a variety of personal motives that often have little or nothing to do with a search for religious truth. In the final analysis, "various non-Christian religions may have many virtues, but at the deepest level they cannot make atonement and thus cannot truly lead one to God." (p. 90) Christians need to "lead the charge in commending variety because we know from creation itself that God loves to paint with a many-colored palette." But, this does not mean that Jesus is incapable of representing a woman, an African or an Asian. A "philosophical abstraction" could not represent a human being, but Jesus as God's son can, regardless of the fact that he belonged to a particular race and bore particular gender.

In the apologetic project some questions are more central than are others. Though we may debate a variety of issues, Christian faith is "fundamentally a matter of rightly understanding who God is and how we should relate to him." (p. 112) Edgar returns ultimately to the basic commitment of all sound Christian apologists: that "knowing God through faith is the goal of apologetics," but that faith "is not an irrational leap." (p. 114) In the final analysis, some questions do not receive answers on this side of Heaven, but the call to do responsible apologetics stands as a biblical mandate. Edgar's book is a helpful addition to the dialogue about the place of apologetics in contemporary Christian evangelism. His aesthetically attuned and audience-centered treatment of apologetics is a welcome relief from the juridical and evidence-centered approach that has received so much attention in the past.

James A. Herrick, Hope College

Alister McGrath, *Explaining Your Faith*, 2nd ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995, 152 pp., \$9.99.

If Christianity is so great, why isn't everyone a Christian and why do Christians shy away from evangelism? Alister McGrath addresses such issues in this updated book on Christian apologetics. Who better to write an intelligible book on evangelical issues than *Alister McGrath*? McGrath is a tutor at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, a research lecturer in theology for Oxford University, a professor of

Book Reviews

systematic theology at Regent College, Vancouver, and an evangelical theologian. As a committed atheist during his early years in Northern Ireland, he knows the issues that lie at the heart of nonbelievers, such as, why believe in a religion whose followers know as little about the faith as the nonbeliever? In this book, the author attempts to help the reader better understand and explain the faith that he or she believes in so strongly.

McGrath finds purpose for this book based on I Peter 3:15 which instructs Christians to "always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope which you have." He, thus, arranges the book into three parts to deal with the various aspects of presenting and defending the gospel. The first section addresses the issues that relate to the human experience, such as, conveying the attraction of the gospel based on human need. For example, in a discussion on loneliness the author writes that "loneliness is an inevitable result of being cut off from God through sin (p. 28)." He uses the most common elements of the human struggle and identifies with them in light of the need for Jesus Christ. Secondly, the book addresses four aspects of the gospel which often pose difficult questions for the nonbeliever: Jesus, his divinity and personhood; the resurrection and its possibility; the salvation story, myth or truth; and God, three in one.

The last section addresses those difficulties posed by modern culture, one of those being the role of women in Christianity. This new addition to the book asks if women are really oppressed by religion? The author provides an effective argument against such notions. He concludes that when one understands the Gospel of Christ, she/he finds how liberating Christianity proves to be. "The New Testament makes it clear that there is a theoretical equality amongst Christians. (p. 148)."

McGrath's arguments were uniformly presented, allowing the author's main ideas to flow through the issues addressed. McGrath is eloquent in speech and theory, stressing the prevailing theme of an attractive gospel, which, though complex, is fairly simple and openly accessible to all. Aside from the frequent typographical errors, the book is another great accomplishment for McGrath. Perhaps his crowning achievement was to present the beauty of the gospel in light of the human experience.

Alister McGrath has provided readers with a powerful tool for witnessing. Since we are all called to evangelism, this book breaks down the barriers that often prevent believers from sharing the Gospel. It gives Christians who lack basic foundational knowledge an inside look at how one can effectively reach today's society. I highly recommend this book to believers at all levels of understanding.

Sunny Worthington

Kelly Monroe, ed., *Finding God at Harvard: Spiritual Journeys of Thinking Christians*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996.

The author, Kelly Monroe, served as chaplain to graduate students at Harvard University for seven years. She has compiled writings of forty-two faculty members,

former students and distinguished lecturers at Harvard. These essays provide evidence that the Christian faith can survive and even flourish in a rigorous academic community. The book includes refreshing and insightful essays that seek and discover Christian truth in the Harvard milieu.

The collection of essays spans a wide variety of topics including "Questions and Turnings," "A Crisis of Meaning, and the Need for Change," "The Recovery of Love, Family and Community." Contributors include Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Robert Coles, Nicholas Wolterstorff, Elizabeth Dole and Mother Teresa. Editor Monroe hopes the book expresses "large thoughts about life, both deep and wide." Enjoy meeting through these writings a variety of people including professors, alumni, scientists, philosophers, athletes, medical doctors and others. I would say that on the whole this book tackles a cynical stereotype of the "academic community" in reference to matters of faith.

A highlight of the essays was written by Robert Coles, the eminent Harvard social anthropologist and research psychiatrist who wrote of his life-changing encounter with a little girl named Ruby Bridges. Coles was observing the child psychiatrist of this young black elementary student who was the first black student to attend an all-white school in New Orleans. Coles' description of this young girl walking through angry crowds of protestors is unforgettable. Little Ruby's prayers for those who were persecuting her were life changing for Coles. What a wonderful reminder that the discovery of truth can be found through those who are lonely and hurt and vulnerable.

Philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff writes of his personal loss of a 25 year old son who died in a mountain climbing accident. Wolterstorff writes: "The modern Western practice is to disown one's grief; to get over it, to put it behind one, to get on with life, to put it out of mind, to insure that it not become part of one's identity. My struggle was to own it, to make it part of my identify: if you want to know who I am, you must know that I am one whose son died. But then to own it redemptively. It takes a long time to learn how to own one's suffering redemptively; one never finishes learning."

Monroe muses that the better title for the book might have been "Found by God at Harvard." It is a marvelous assortment of essays affirming the exploration of truth in the academic setting.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, Texas

Jan Heller, *Human Genome Research and the Challenge of Contingent Persons*, Omaha: Creighton University Press, 1996, 182 pp., hb, \$24.95.

Heller's work is timely. The Human Genome Project (HGP) is the federal mandate to map all the genes of the DNA molecule, which make up the chromosomes in each human cell. This project began in 1990 and is scheduled to be completed by the year 2005. It is indeed a rare bird. Due to the advent of supercomputers and their astounding ability to process huge amounts of information, this is one federal project that may not just come in on time, but might actually finish

Book Reviews

ahead of schedule.

The HGP offers the stuff that dreams are made of: future sufferers of genetic disease (which currently number 10% of the population) may be able to have their disease-causing gene removed for a healthy one. Thus, the HGP truly offers hope to the hopeless. It also poses grave risks. Any manipulation of a patient's own replicating genetic material results in its effects--good or bad--passed down to the succeeding generations. And that's where Heller comes in. His two pronged thesis is an investigation of *how* HGP is likely to affect future generations; second, how such effects should influence our own evaluation of the HGP here and now.

Heller deserves praise for being *pro active*. All too often, theologians and ethicists lead us in laments after the fact; such crocodile tears have no place in dealing with genetic technology, ethics, and Christian theology. It's nice to read a book ahead of the curve. One of Heller's (and my) concerns is regarding the future of the HGP, specifically how the various stages of the project will unfold. In short, phase two of the HGP is the *diagnostic* stage, the place where the pinpointing of genetic disease reaches the zenith. If, for whatever reason, the momentum of the HGP would then slow, trapping society between diagnosis and cure, then whole hosts of horrifying scenarios could play themselves out. Medicine would have the ability to scare people to death, informing them of an unstoppable disease bearing down on them, powerless to affect a cure. Or, companies would no doubt have access to personal files (the myth of confidentiality being what it is), pruning their work force to weed out the future unfit. This "therapeutic gap" is of course operative now, but hardly in the scale envisioned by Heller and others for the future.

Thus, contingent future persons have real claims upon us here and now. It will be these--the yet unborn--who will bear the brunt of the financial and personal costs; their desires and concerns need to be added to the ethical question. I recommend this work for reflective pastors and ministers, as a companion text for college bioethics, or as a much needed wake-up call for thoughtful lay people. This is the time for Christians, other people of faith, and thoughtful people of all persuasions to sit down and think this thing through. It may certainly be that what will happen with the GNP cannot be envisioned; but that should not come about because no one tried. Heller's text makes us truly without excuse. Michael McKenzie, Ph.D., Liberty University

Gilbert Meilaender, *Bioethics: A Primer for Christians*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996, 131 pp., \$10.00 (paper).

As one whose field is ethics, I know I'm biased, but Bioethics (the study of ethics applied to the issues of medicine) is surely one of the more difficult subjects to tackle from a faith-based perspective. Technology is advancing at a tremendous pace, and the believer obviously wants to remain faithful to her faith. It is never easy to connect changing, often volatile issues with an unchanging Christian perspective. Meilaender pulls no punches in stating his lofty aims: he is "speaking normatively on behalf of the church . . . I have tried to say what we Christians ought to say in

order to be faithful to the truth that has claimed us in Jesus" (xi). Thus, he is going far beyond descriptive ethics, even pushing the envelope of normative ethics in his tone. Such a volume can have no real place in addressing those in the secular academe--something Meilaender understands quite well. Here is no book that reaches across boundaries of faith, but rather one whose audience is intended to be deliberately Christian.

This book by a Christian for Christians reminds one very much of John Frame's *Medical Ethics*: it takes to task the trio of secular bioethical principles--autonomy, beneficence, and justice--critiquing them not only in terms of content, but as to their barrenness. As Meilaender reminds us, such principles neither arise nor are defined in a vacuum. They sprout in communities, and Meilaender points us in the direction of the Christian community. And, like Frame's treatment, Meilaender's is openly "deontological" in focus (actions are either right or wrong in themselves; we need not focus on *results* to evaluate moral actions).

The book is organized topically along much the same lines as other treatments: Procreation, Abortion, Genetics, Suicide, Refusing Treatment, are all covered to a greater or lesser degree, giving Christians the breadth if not depth in the 131 page book. The problem of painting with such a broad brush is that one risks missing the depth that at times is so often needed. In the question of procreation, or instance, Meilaender brings up the problematic issues when third parties are brought into the procreation process (e.g., in the case of a third party donating sperm). Meilaender points out the confusing signals that this may send to the child (i.e., confused lineage), then reminds us that adoption too may be vulnerable to such confusion. His solution? Not to let adoption's principal aim become the "providing of children for those who want them but are unable to conceive them" (18). To do that, according to Meilaender, puts adoption on the same slippery slope as artificial reproduction.

Meilaender is not convincing here. As one who is adopted, by those who "could not have children," I wonder what possible motives Meilaender wants for those childless couples? Surely it is naïve and rather far-removed to assume that such couples ought to be carried away by altruism, adopting babies for the babies' sakes. And, it is unclear at best how the *practice* of adoption can have any motives or aims at all. I suspect that those engaged in the supply side of the adoption process are engaged in it for a whole host of motives--bad and good--and as far as the prospective parents go, Meilaender's treatment simply lacks the depth and coverage that the complex subject demands.

The use of "primer" in the title indicates that Meilaender understands full well that his work is merely the "jump-off place" for further forays into bioethics. For such a mission it is well-suited. And, if one keeps in mind its other limitation--that this work is not intended to reach across the secular ocean--this text might be a decent choice for Christian adult education.

Michael McKenzie, Ph.D., Liberty University

Book Reviews

Gilbert Meilaender, *Letters to Ellen*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996, pp. ix + 93 (paper).

Letters to Ellen by Gilbert Meilaender contains a compilation of caring, imaginative, letters of a mother to a daughter as she begins life at a college away from home. There is something about reading letters that allows one to imagine the situation and the response. Good parental advice given in a way that is attractive to both students and parents entering this stage of life. One finds the truth of these letters to be cleverly thought provoking...and gentle. Perhaps a special teacher friend might enjoy a copy of this book too? Curious footnote: all of Meilaender's references to pastors are negative. He has a wholesome view of the church, but does a bit of carping on clergy. The author is a professor of religion at Oberlin College.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, Texas

R. Randall Rainey, S.J., and Gerald Magill, eds., *Abortion and Public Policy*, Omaha: Creighton University Press, 1996, 254 pp., hb, \$24.95.

It is saying little or nothing new to make the point that Catholics have long been the ones most involved in the abortion debate. It is more arguable--although I do hold to it--that the Catholic contribution has maintained its hegemony in the discussion (at least in terms of depth and scope of discussion). *Abortion and Public Policy* is a collection of essays given at a conference in St. Louis, and retains the depth of scholarship and *flavor* of moral thinking that has characterized Roman Catholic social thought.

In addition to depth, the book gets high marks for its breadth. Governor Bob Casey, who gave the keynote speech at the conference, takes the listener/reader on a historical and political journey, made well worth it for his frankness and honesty. Other notable essays include Lisa Sowle Cahill on her analysis of public policy *vis-à-vis* Catholic commitment. In an irenic tone she notes well the complexity of the issues involved, and that "abortion is a broad-based social problem demanding a multi-pronged, complex . . . solution" (159). Thus, Christians know (or ought to) that being pro-life entails more than simple sign-waving, yelling, or even praying. A good Catholic (a good Christian for that matter) understands that alleviating the social and financial pressures which bear down upon the poor will not only make abortion more rare, but serve to show our own understanding of our Lord's command regarding the "least of these."

Abortion and Public Policy is a good read. More importantly, it is an essential read to gauge what's going on amongst Catholic moral thinkers. It would make an interesting choice as a supplemental text for an applied ethics course, or one dealing with religion and public policy. In any event, it is a book worth reading. Abortion truly is the issue that won't go away; *Abortion and Public Policy* reminds us of the demands that won't go away.

Michael McKenzie, Ph.D., Liberty University

Terry Schlossberg and Elizabeth Achtemeier, *Not My Own: Abortion and the Marks of the Church*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing House, 1995. 137 pp., \$8.99, pb.

Terry Schlossberg is director of a Presbyterian Pro-Life agency, and Elizabeth Achtemeier teaches Bible and homiletics at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. They call on Christians to display the distinctive "marks of the church." These are not specific beliefs, but how the church consistently lives out what it believes. The marks are the Word rightly preached, the sacraments rightly administered, discipline lovingly practiced, and practical ministry to others.

They begin with an insightful examination of cultural values (like individualism and relativism) influencing the acceptability of abortion. Throughout history the church has unanimously and consistently opposed abortion, yet today some churches condone it, and many decline to address it. Yet for these authors, abortion raises issues that are central to the church's mission and values.

The first mark of the church is its dependence on Scripture. Schlossberg and Achtemeier defend Scripture's authority, and reject feminist and postmodern hermeneutics. "The principal reason the church has lost its Scriptures is because it does not read them and think about them, systematically, day after day" (p. 23). Refreshingly, they do not focus on passages which debatably address fetal personhood. Rather, they show how abortion is incompatible with undeniably biblical principles: God as the Creator, Owner, and Lord of all life; the giftedness of life; and the purpose of life. Abortion "denies that a child in the womb has a purpose planned for him or her by God; that God wants that child to join his earthly family and enjoy his company; that God wills for that child to serve his lordly will and so honor his name; that God desires to hear that child's voice raised to him in loving praise" (p. 33).

The authors' treatment of the second mark of the church will find less consensus among evangelicals. They claim that in water baptism God forgives the baptized, restores his relationship, and bestows his Holy Spirit. Baptism gives the child a future. "But for the aborted child, there is no future. There are only a few brief weeks in the haven of the womb and then extinction" (p. 41). This view of abortion causing annihilation is not supported scripturally. Neither do they address the implication that children dying in miscarriages meet a similar fate. However, their view of baptism as a commitment to welcoming strangers, including the unborn, will find more widespread agreement. Similarly, many would agree with viewing the Lord's Supper as a time to remember our creation in God's image, his sovereignty over us, and our hope in a future without suffering and death.

The treatment of the third mark is excellent. Schlossberg and Achtemeier demonstrate the importance of church discipline for preserving belief in the truth of the Word, the importance of growth in God, of intimate fellowship, and of protecting people from sin. This includes a rejection of legalism. Instead, Christians should commit to obeying God's moral standards in gratitude for all he has already done, and in response to his love. This section is written sensitively, with a realistic view

Book Reviews

of church discipline's difficulty. The healing people need from abortion (and any sin) requires confession and admission of guilt, along with forgiveness, which requires openness about abortion's wrongness.

The fourth mark, service of others, is where the book gets very practical. Women in crisis pregnancies need practical help. "By unstinting care for women and their unborn children the church can testify to the world that there are no unwanted children" (p. 109). Crisis pregnancy services meet these needs, but thousands of unwanted children also await adoption and foster care. They also call on the church to repent of its callousness to rape victims, which leads to some of the "hard cases" regarding abortion.

The book concludes with an appendix concisely describing the medical details needed for an informed discussion of the biology of the unborn. This book provides a thoroughly theological treatment of abortion and how the church should respond. It should be read by all Christians, especially those who don't find themselves particularly concerned about abortion.

Donal P. O'Mathuna, Mount Carmel College of Nursing

J. Philip Wogaman and Douglas M. Strong, eds., *Readings in Christian Ethics: A Historical Sourcebook*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1996, xi + 382 pp.

Philip Wogaman and Douglas Strong have done all of us a wonderful service as editors of these selected readings in Christian moral reflection. The reason for this book is made clear by the editors in the Introduction--"The lack of a historical base for contemporary moral discussions has been fostered by the misperception common among theological students that the academic disciplines of Christian ethics and church history belong in different spheres--the one concerned with normative questions derived from the challenges of today and the other concerned with descriptive information derived from the issues of yesterday. The representation of these fields as academic polar opposites is a caricature, of course, and has not always been the case. Until the twentieth century, both history and ethics were understood generally as parts of the larger field of theology...the rise of the social sciences in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries encouraged church history and Christian ethics to develop self-consciously as separate disciplines, each eager to protect its own academic territory" (p. ix).

This book is a wonderful attempt to hold together moral reflection with historical study. The editors stress the significance of primary documents as reminders that we are part of a great conversation through the centuries with those who sought, as we seek, to live the Gospel faithfully (pp. x-xi). With that in mind the book then presents to us many different essays in moral reflection on a variety of subjects from the last two millennia. Each essay is prefaced by a helpful introduction to the author and/or the particular work.

After the introduction the book is divided into five parts, each part highlighting a certain period of Christian history. Part one "Early Christianity," highlights

documents from Clement's First Letter to Augustine's *Against the Manichaeans*. Also present in this section is the quite significant *Didache*, Tertullian's *Apology*, and Origen's *Against Celsus*.

In part two "Medieval Christianity," one can read excerpts from Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*, and Julian of Norwich's *Showings*. In addition the editors included *The Church* by Jan Hus, and Bernard of Clairvaux's work *On Loving God*.

Part three concentrates on the Reformation era. There are, of course the standard writings from Luther and Calvin, but there are certainly other essays worth reading--*The Schleithem Confession*, and William Penn's *Fruits of Solitude*.

In part four, "Christian Ethics in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries" Wogaman and Strong have included essays by several philosophers who have had a formative effect of modern moral and philosophical reflection--John Locke, Friedrich Schleiermacher and Leo Tolstoy. In addition there is an essay by Charles Finney, *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*, and Frederick Douglass, *Life and Writings*. It is in this section that the author's Methodism comes to the foreground as they include four essays by John Wesley (one of them naturally is *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*).

In the final section, part five, Wogaman and Strong include essays on "Christian Ethics in the Twentieth Century." Walter Rauschenbusch begins this section with three essays, and there are essays by some of the theological giants of this century-- Barth, Bonhoeffer, Tillich and Reinhold Niebuhr. The diversity of these essays really stands out in this chapter as the editors include works from four different Popes, Rosemary Ruether, Carl Henry, James Cone, and John Howard Yoder, to name a few. One should not miss the wonderful essay by Georgia Harkness in this section entitled *Women Ministers*.

Readings in Christian Ethics is a welcome addition to the many shelves of moral reflection. There is not enough emphasis in theology on primary sources, and here in this book some of the more significant ones on moral reflection are close at hand.

My hope is that it won't be too long before W/JKP publishes *Readings in Christian Ethics, Volume Two*.
Allan Bevere

James M. Barnett, *The Diaconate: A Full and Equal Order*, rev. ed., Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1995, xviii + 253 pp.

This book argues for a restoration of the diaconate as 'a full and equal order' of ministry within the Episcopalian churches. The first part claims to trace the origin, development and decline of the diaconate from the first to the fourth century. The second part pleads for the recognition of the diaconate as a life-long vocation rather than as a stepping-stone to the priesthood. As an office with distinct liturgical, pastoral and charitable functions it is claimed that the diaconate will effectively symbolize the church's servant role.

It is not often that one's disagreement with a book begins with the first

Book Reviews

paragraph, where we read, 'The first principle of that [sc. pre-Nicene] church was that it was *laos*... There was no word to distinguish, in the sense of today, between clergy and laity, because no word was needed or appropriate.' (p. 1) This seems to me nonsense for several reasons. First, the fact that 'laity' is derived from *laos* tells us nothing about what that word means or 'should' mean at any later time. Second, being the people of God never prevented Old Testament Israel from having a separated priesthood. Third, if the New Testament writers do not speak about clergy and laity this reflects of rudimentary nature of their churches' or organization rather than a principled objection to office. Distinctions are already visible within the New Testament which led inevitably and apparently without protest to a separated and ranked ministry, which is clearly present as early as Clement and Ignatius. Fourth, in his treatment of the New Testament evidence Barnett wrongly supposes that the churches' development was the product of ideas alone, rather than contemporary social realities. This way of thinking was typical of biblical theology in the middle years of this century (when this book was first written) but now looks sadly out of date.

Barnett claims that his understanding of ministry derives from 'the New Testament idea of the church as 'organic' and therefore not hierarchical, though he stops short of saying that the idea of office is incompatible with that of a charismatic church. However, if by 'organic' he means to refer to the idea of the church as a body, it is far from clear that this excludes hierarchy. Ancient writers like Philo definitely saw the body as a hierarchy, the limbs and organs dependent on the head for direction and supply, and that is the way in which the metaphor develops between Romans and Ephesians. Paul sees the gifts as ranked (I Cor 12:28), 'some' being for the equipment of the rest, and all under the Head (Eph 4:11-16). The language of gift is a theological interpretation of the social reality that we see emerging from those in Thessalonica 'who are over you in the Lord' (I Thess 5:12), through the overseers and deacons of Philippi (Phil 1:1), to the presiding overseer and (his) deacons in the Pastorals (I Tim 3:1 ff.). Barnett would have done well to take more notice of John Collins' book *Diakonia* (Oxford U.P., 1990), which shows conclusively that the essential connotation of the word '*diakonos*' was that of agent, representative or assistant of someone else - in this case of the overseer. The principle that some need to take care of administration and charitable work so that others can preach and pray is clearly spelt out in Acts 6:1-7, which whatever its original reference is clearly used by Luke to legitimate a distinction of function and order.

If Barnett's handling of the New Testament evidence is flawed, there is a more fundamental problem with his case as a whole. On the one hand he wants to argue that all Christians are ministers by reason of their baptism, and that all ministers are equal, and on the other he wants to maintain a threefold order of ministers, who are apparently to be 'ordained' as others are not (p. 206) and as Protestant deacons are said not to be (p. 156), and to restore an order of deacons who are clearly subordinate to the priests and bishops. In the restored order deacons will have the privilege of reading the Gospel, leading the prayers and administering the cup (which are by no

means to be done by priests or layman), but will not be allowed to preach, preside or pronounce absolution, because these belong to the priesthood. Deacons are also to wear distinctive liturgical vestments (but not clerical dress!). Whatever dubious pre-Nicene precedents are advanced for this the practical effect will be plain: deacons are privileged above non-ordained Christians but enjoy lower status than (full) priests. Barnett's proposed diaconate may be a full order, but only by Orwellian double-speak can it be described as 'equal'. The confusion which is everywhere evident in this book is due to a desire to hold onto a charismatic egalitarianism attributed (wrongly, in my view) to the New Testament with a Catholic view derived from the Church of the early centuries. It cannot be done.

R. Alastair Campbell, Spurgeon's College, London

Harold G. Koenig and Andrew J. Weaver, *Counseling Troubled Older Adults: A Handbook for Pastors and Religious Caregivers*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997, 256 pp., \$32.95.

The author François, Duc de La Rochefoucauld (1678), wrote "Few people know how to be old," and Drs. Koenig and Weaver might add, "And few within the church know how to help them." Koenig, an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Internal Medicine at Duke University, and Weaver, an ordained United Methodist minister and Clinical Psychologist, have written a comprehensive psychological work to aid pastors in their diagnosis, intervention, and referral of older adults with "mental and emotional disorders." This book seeks to address a burgeoning issue of irrefutable importance to the church, that is, the "graying" of America. Unfortunately, I fear it is directed to the wrong audience.

This book is founded upon the premises that 1. America is graying and the church is even more so, 2. older adults are more involved in religious activities and appear to benefit greatly from such involvement, 3. older adults struggling with psychological disorders are unlikely to receive needed mental health assistance but they *are* apt to speak to their pastors about their concerns, and 4. unfortunately, pastors are poorly prepared to aid older adults in dealing with their psychological issues. The authors' conclusion is that pastors need assistance in diagnosing, intervening, and especially referring these older adults for mental health treatment for "As in the past the church has reached out to vulnerable groups in society, so again the church must respond to the brewing mental health crisis ahead." (p. 22).

This conclusion is developed in the book's three major sections. Part I introduces the reader to the demography of older adults and their religious beliefs and behavior. Part II, which comprises 75 percent of the book, presents 29 case studies and case discussions of older adults suffering from various psychiatric disorders such as "Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders" and "Delirium." Part III is titled "Resources" but, more accurately, it presents the authors' plan for pastors and their churches to meet the needs of older congregants.

The book's importance lies in the authors' expertise in, and exposition of, the

Book Reviews

mental and emotional disorders of older adults; in their recognition that religious beliefs and practices are conducive to sound mental health, rather than antithetical to it; and in their attempt to equip pastors and the church for aiding ailing seniors. The case studies are succinct, often poignant, and contain a generous dose of Biblical and spiritual concepts, explanations, and "interventions." The "Treatment within the Faith Community" and "Resources" sections associated with each vignette should be especially helpful to pastors and others within the church who are called upon to assist troubled seniors.

However, in reading the book, I was left with the impression that the authors' emphasis upon "enhancing diagnostic and referral skills for clergy working with older persons" (p. 20) is tantamount to a transformation of pastors into quasi-psychologists and psychiatrists and that such an endeavor constitutes an unwarranted metamorphosis, i.e., "a marked change in appearance, character, condition, or function" (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition, 1997). Throughout the "Pastoral Care Assessment," "Relevant History," "Diagnostic Criteria," and other sections accompanying each vignette, psychological terms and concepts dominate which the pastor is called upon to become familiar with. In addition, he or she is called upon to employ principles of clinical interviewing, collect clinical observations, apply differential diagnostics, perform treatment planning, exercise differential therapeutics, and engage in a myriad of other mental health activities (that these activities are extremely challenging for most mental health professionals working with older adults does not seem to deter the authors from their counsel).

Perhaps the greater concern is definition of the primary roles and responsibilities of the pastor, especially in his or her ministry to hurting congregants. While the authors briefly discuss their view of the pastor as the "people's 'representative' before God" who is to "teach" and "show them the way to live," (p. 233), such functions are given little attention, in contrast to the aforementioned clinical activities. While there is little doubt in this reviewer's mind that pastor's *could* conduct clinical activities such as interviewing, observing, diagnosing, and the like, and do so quite ably, the nagging question is whether they should. Given the importance of other pastoral responsibilities, the many demands upon a his or her time and energies, and the existence of sufficient mental health professionals, a greater emphasis upon general principles of "diagnosis" and referral, building upon what pastors already know and what mental health professionals can do, might be more reasonable and effective. That pastors are not, and need not become, "junior" psychiatrists, that their gifts and ministrations are best employed in other areas, is my major objection to an otherwise sound work. Rather than directing this book toward pastors, a better audience might be Christian mental health professionals who could work with pastors to promote greater cooperation and a more effective ministry in conjunction with the church. Then a modified work directed toward pastors in terms of general principles of recognition and referral, perhaps building off principles of sound spiritual "health" might be better received and implemented.

The authors are correct in their assertion that the aged population is flourishing,

especially within the church, and that faith can be a powerful "remedy" for the ills of the elderly. However, to increase the number of seniors in the church who "know how to be old," it is this reviewer's opinion that Biblical, pastoral, and other spiritual "tonics" need as great a, or greater prescription than psychiatric ones.

Michael F. Reuschling, Ashland Theological Seminary

Thomas E. Levy, ed., *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*, New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1995, 624 pp.

In January, 1993, an international symposium entitled "The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land - New Perspectives on the Past" was held at the University of California, San Diego. This volume represents a form of the proceedings of that event. Included are thirty-two chapters by thirty contributors from Britain, Canada, France, Israel and the US, who include some of the key figures in contemporary Syro-Palestinian archaeology.

The book is divided into six main sections. The first, "Approaches to the Past," is methodological discussing the physical and geographical characteristics of Israel, a brief history of its inhabitants through time, a history of its archaeological exploration, and an introduction to the study of society and social change which might be analyzed archaeologically. The remaining sections are arranged chronologically, including studies of the area from its earliest prehistoric periods (to 8000 BC), developing society (to 3500 BC), Israelite settlement (to 1050 BC), Israelite kingdom to Roman empire (to AD 324), and Christianity and Islam (to AD 1914).

Lavishly illustrated with charts, timelines, line drawings, site ground plans, and photographs (almost exclusively in black-and-white), the volume fulfills the promise of its title admirably. The aim is not in the end strictly archaeological, but sociological, illuminating the life and settings of people with discussion of such matters as settlement patterns, tools used, crops and livestock managed, religion, burial practices, etc. Its goal is to present the scope of the history of the area, so those whose sole interest is the biblical period from the time of the patriarchs to the fall of the Second Temple will find only a quarter of the book dedicated to this period, but even those need to be reminded that the land had a past and future beyond this relatively narrow scope.

The usefulness of the volume is greatly enhanced by a voluminous (55 page) bibliography and an index of subjects. The chief interest in: archaeology rather than Bible is shown by a lack of Scripture index (or of any ancient sources), as well as the scarcity of biblical references within the text itself. The work should be in every library where biblical content and background is studied at any depth. It would be a good textbook, though most seminaries would probably need to supplement it with a more biblically based study.

David W. Baker

Book Reviews

Bill Hybels and Mark Mittelberg, *Becoming a Contagious Christian*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996, 223 pp. Hardback, \$12.99.

The central thesis of *Becoming a Contagious Christian* is identified clearly in the first chapter: "God wants us to become contagious Christians, people who will first catch His love and then urgently and infectiously offer it to all who are willing to consider it" (23). Hybels believes that most Christians are deeply aware that we are on this planet for something more than just fulfilling the chores of everyday living. That "something more" is wholehearted involvement in "God's plan to spread His grace and truth person to person until there's an epidemic of changed lives around the world" (23).

Section One of the book is devoted to the challenge of helping Christians move from thinking about evangelism to actually doing it. Hybels believes that believers long to be contagious Christians in their heart of hearts, but may not be sure how to go about it, or of the risks and costs involved. Motivation to learn and work diligently at this, claims Hybels, will come when we truly understand how much people matter to God, and that they should matter to us as well. After detailing both the rewards and costs of being a contagious Christian, Hybels concludes that the rewards are high and the costs relatively low, especially when the costs are considered to be investments that pay permanent dividends.

Sections Two through Five are devoted to the "how to" question and explain in detail the author's formula for being a contagious Christian: High Potency (the attractiveness of a life characterized by authenticity, compassion and sacrifice), plus Close Proximity (actually getting close enough to irreligious people to have relationships with them), plus Clear Communication (knowing and being willing to speak forth the gospel message), equals Maximum Impact (winning people to faith in Christ). There is an abundance of practical help and suggestions for growth in each of these areas.

Hybels grounds his appeal for contagious Christianity solidly in the Bible. Through numerous examples from the life and teachings of Jesus and the book of Acts, he argues convincingly that being a contagious Christian is not just a nice thing to think about, but is a divine mandate for those who are serious about following Jesus.

Bill Hybels and Mark Mittelberg are well qualified to write a book such as *Becoming a Contagious Christian*. In addition to being contagious Christians themselves, which is evidenced through the numerous personal illustrations and stories throughout the book, they pastor a church which has adopted the challenge of reaching irreligious people for Christ as its central, unifying vision. Bill is the senior pastor of Willow Creek Community Church, South Barrington, Illinois, and Mark serves Willow Creek as the director of evangelism. Both are deeply involved in stimulating and training other believers to become contagious Christians. This book enables their expertise and passion to influence a larger Christian audience.

In the chapter entitled, "Contagious Christians and Contagious Churches," Hybels makes some statements which illuminate the desperate need for a book of this

type, but which also undermine his basic conviction that most Christians "long in their heart of hearts to be contagious Christians" (13). He points out that, although there are a few shining exceptions, most churches are not contagious churches. "They just go on week after week, trying to retain their numbers, meet their budgets, and maintain the status quo. They have no real vision for reaching lost people and showing them the way to God because they're too busy debating internal policies and dealing with all kinds of in-house strife" (200).

Hybels seems to forget for a moment that churches are collections of individuals, and that the values of a church will reflect the values of its individual members. I would argue that most churches are not contagious churches because most Christians do not place a high value on being contagious and winning others to faith in Jesus Christ. They have bought into the individualistic, materialistic mind set of secular America and are too busy doing their own thing to bother with irreligious people. Perhaps Hybels should have been a little less optimistic and a little more forceful about the obligation Christians have to order their lives around the values articulated by the words and example of the One who came to seek and to save the lost.

However, for those whose hearts truly do burn with the same love burning in God's heart for irreligious people, this book is essential reading. It outlines a contemporary, relational approach to sharing faith and winning people to Christ that produces results and can be adapted to any personality type or communication style. I share the author's hope that more and more Christians will catch the vision and give themselves wholeheartedly to God's purposes for those who follow Jesus.

Marlin Birkey

Craig A. Loscalzo, *Evangelistic Preaching that Connects*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995, 177 pp., \$11.99.

Evangelistic preaching is often a misunderstood and misused mode of communication. Most of us get the picture in our minds of a fire and brimstone moral tirade being shouted by the evangelist of the hour. That, however, is rarely evangelistic in nature nor does it connect very well with the ones it is intended to persuade. The human initiative is not what establishes evangelism. Craig Loscalzo contends that a proper understanding of the role we play in evangelism must be acquired through the Incarnation. Only when God interacts with the preacher does real preaching take place. It becomes evangelistic in nature when the good news of God is brought into contact with the life of the hearer who likely has little or no understanding of biblical or theological concepts.

Being a preacher himself, an associate professor of Christian preaching and international instructor on preaching, Loscalzo is well-suited for the challenge of this book. He also reveals himself a student of preaching as he deals with the preaching of others throughout this book and includes the evangelistic sermons of two others for the readers edification. The reader, who is laboring alongside the author, learns

Book Reviews

from the experience, continuing education and depth of knowledge of one engaged in a like task. Though written to an obviously narrow audience, this is a needed book in the life of the church for the dedicated evangelistic preacher. While much has been said about evangelism in general, evangelistic preaching has been taken for granted.

Loscalzo uses a systematic process from defining evangelism and preaching to the final product of the evangelistic sermon. It is not a dogmatic process, however, but a natural flow for the preacher to come in contact with who they are as a communicator of the gospel and how the listener needs to hear to be effectively reached. The reader is reminded of key aspects of preaching such as the difference between propositional and transformational preaching and what effective persuasion really consists of.

The gospel is at the heart of what the evangelistic preacher communicates. It is a mistake, though, to understand the gospel as relating only to the events surrounding the life of Jesus. Perhaps some confusion and even avoidance of evangelistic preaching has resulted from perceptions of what evangelistic sermons are supposed to look and sound like. Loscalzo maintains that there is no one style or form of evangelistic sermon, but the preacher must realize that the form of the sermon does play a part in the shape and function of that sermon. He goes on to help the reader understand those forms and the function they play with the listener as the sermon is delivered.

Before dealing with how to look at both the Old and New Testaments in terms of evangelistic preaching, the author provides a brief overview of his preferred process for sermon development. While containing nothing unusual or novel, it is brief and helpful for the student of preaching to review the elements of sermon preparation. From this basis of development Loscalzo moves into promoting the Old Testament as well as the New Testament as profitable for evangelistic preaching. Several helpful insights on particular passages are included as examples to help in understanding exactly how one can approach the Scriptures with a mind toward evangelism.

After including four entire sermons for the reader the author closed with some thoughts on the art of ending the sermon, a part of the sermon many stumble over. Taking into consideration denominational and congregational standards of practice, the challenge is given to use various and appropriate approaches at the conclusion of the sermon in keeping with the thrust of the sermon itself. Various modes of invitation and response opportunities can be used by the skillful preacher.

I found Craig Loscalzo's work to be both beneficial and refreshing. This is not another dogmatic approach to sermon development. Nor is it a part of the confrontational evangelism school of thought. It is a way of viewing Scripture and sermon preparation in such a way as to apply it directly to the life of the listener in order to compel them to come in direct contact with God. I found it particularly interesting that the author is deeply committed to traditional aspects of worship and church life. Usually the contemporary and evangelistically minded associate that position with mostly anemic, dull and un-evangelistic preaching. Clearly that is not

Loscalzo's heart for preaching. He sees the possibility of incorporating the contemporary with the traditional in order to educate the seeker about the elements of the faith.

Jim Cuckler

Lesslie Newbigin, *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission*, Revised edition, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, 192 pp.

How does one critique Lesslie Newbigin? With his decades of experience as a missionary in India, years of service with organizations like the International Missionary Council, and countless contributions as an evangelical thinker and writer on missions, who wants to challenge this updated call to lift up the missionary nature of the church?

Beginning with the question of the authority of Jesus and ending with the concern of the Gospel among the religions, the writer proceeds unfalteringly through issues such as the mission of the triune God, mission as faith in action (proclaiming the kingdom), mission as love in action (sharing the life of the Son), mission as hope in action (bearing the witness of the Spirit), the Gospel and world history, mission as action for God's justice, and church growth, conversion, and culture.

Newbigin states in the outset that this volume is not meant to be exhaustive or to satisfy the scholar who deals with the whole range of missiological studies. It has been prepared as the outgrowth of lectures presented to men and women with limited study time preparing for missionary service. The book, then, is highly practical. Its development is exceptionally clear and coherent. Points are often numbered to help the reader follow the process of thought, yet the subject matter is not dry and tedious, but relevant and invigorating. The writer's faith, fervor, and concern come through in each chapter.

The book's greatest strength lies in its unashamed presentation of the Lordship of Christ in approaches that are compassionate, gracious, and open to learning. In a field where some scholars seem to be on an ever more accommodating surrender of the unique message of the Gospel, this is encouraging. Time is also given to the need for bearing the witness of the Spirit and the hope for the future which this witness engenders.

The strong emphasis of this study on contemporary issues may also be its weakness. In focusing on the questions which missionary candidates could have arising out of differing views of some mission theologies today, less time had to be spent on broader issues such as the Scripture's emphasis on reaching *all* the nations and the condition of those without Christ.

Grace Holland

Book Reviews

Lee Patrick Strobel, *Inside the Mind of Unchurched Harry & Mary: How to Reach Friends and Family Who Avoid God and the Church*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993. 236 pp., paper.

Lee Strobel graduated from the University of Missouri in Columbia with a degree in Journalism. He worked as a reporter for *The Chicago Tribune* and some smaller newspapers. During his newspaper career, he earned a law degree. As of the latest printing of this book, Strobel was a teaching pastor at Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois.

Strobel is uniquely qualified to write a book that illustrates the myriad of thoughts, reasons, and rationalizations that go through the minds of individuals who are unchurched. Strobel makes it plain through his illustrations that he was the stereotypical "Unchurched Harry." For the early part of his adult life, Strobel was an unbeliever. When informed by his wife that she had become a "follower of Jesus Christ" he was resistant, if not outright hostile to the idea. He made every excuse to himself and others why he should not invest himself in it. Finally, with a reporter's zeal and a lawyer's analysis, he decided to investigate the truth and viability of Christianity. In his investigation, Strobel asked the hardest questions and would not be satisfied with incomplete answers. This book is about what a skeptic thinks of Christianity and the church, written by a former skeptic.

Unchurched Harry and Mary was not written specifically for pastors but for anyone who is a committed Christian and desires to evangelize friends and family. It is, however, a valuable resource for pastors and churches. While many books have been written about the attitudes of Americans toward church and God (Strobel's book cites many of them), this one has condensed the actual usable facts of the situation and provided usable solutions to the problems. It does speak to the intended audience and successfully.

Strobel begins by establishing his credibility and suitability to write such a book by detailing his own journey to God. He provides an apologetic for the most frequent arguments against the case for Christianity. With that established, he then proceeds through many of the most prevalent attitudes of non-believers toward church and the reasons behind them. Finally, he provides valuable strategies and examples for reaching out to the unbeliever and drawing them to a church where they will hear the Gospel. He cites the activities and experiences of such churches as Willow Creek and Saddleback which have been successful at ministering to the unchurched by anyone's standards.

The strength of this book lies in the blend of secular and Christian research, sociology, psychology, demography, and personal experience. Strobel would probably be considered biased by the world simply because he is a Christian. He has managed to illustrate the problems of and strategies for reaching the lost without being *overly* critical of established churches. He recognizes that our hearts are in the right place but our efforts are, many times, just spinning our wheels and may possibly be doing more damage than good. Strobel conveys the message that the unsaved do not always stay that way because they are perpetually hardhearted. In

many cases, we as the church have lost our voice, and the unchurched do not hear a cogent, coherent, viable message coming from our camp.

I have found *Unchurched Harry and Mary* to be insightful and useful. It is easily understandable by Joe Average and provides useful details and solutions for reaching the unchurched. This book has rung true with me because of the numerous times I have heard exactly the same arguments as Strobel relates from unchurched friends and family. I believe my efforts as an outreach pastor can be enhanced by the recommendations found here. I will not say that Strobel's book "would make a fine addition to any pastoral bookshelf." I think we have too many fine books on our bookshelves. Let us stick this one in our pocket or briefcase or handbag and use it to take the Gospel to *Unchurched Harry and Mary* and show them how relevant and necessary God is to them.

Scott Daniel

Vinoth Ramachandra, *The Recovery of Mission: Beyond the Pluralist Paradigm*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996, 293 pp., \$25.00.

From the viewpoint of a practitioner who nevertheless appreciates the philosophical approach to mission, there could not be a more encouraging work on missions on the scene today. Vinoth Ramachandra has approached such popular themes as mystery, pluralism, liberation, gnosis, and religious experience first through the eyes of one east/west and two eastern religionists who write about Christ and Christianity.

As a south Asian himself, Ramachandra is able to summarize and interpret the writings of these theologians in terms understandable to minds less accustomed to dealing with eastern thought, giving us a good grasp of their philosophies. He does so with appreciation for the strengths and weaknesses of each approach and then compares these with one another and with some of the leading developments in Western theological thought. With appreciation for the efforts of Leslie Newbigin to bring balance in the ecumenical movement, he suggests areas that need even further development.

Ramachandra then turns to the person of Jesus as shown in the synoptic gospels, utilizing recent New Testament scholarship and noting that pluralist theologians give little serious attention to him. This leads to the conclusion that there is unavoidable "scandal" at the heart of all Christian theology that takes Jesus seriously. Ramachandra further "delves into the biblical and early patristic tradition to articulate an understanding of the Gospel as a message whose universality is inextricably bound up with its uniqueness."

In view of this, the final chapter deals with missionary practice--the question of how the gospel should be passed on in a world caught up in pluralism. Affirming that "if the biblical story is true in the sense that it claims to be true, then it is true for all," Ramachandra makes an appeal for recognition of such issues as equality before God, cultural pluralism, gospel integrity, the pain of genuine tolerance, humility and self-sacrifice, suffering, and gospel radicalness.

In the opinion of this reader, the power and beauty of expression of *The*

Book Reviews

Recovery of Mission, to say nothing of its clarity of discussion of absolutely critical issues in mission, make this an invaluable addition to missiological thought today.

Grace Holland

Harold W. Burgess, *Models of Religious Education: Theory and Practice in Historical and Contemporary Perspective*, Wheaton, IL: A BridgePoint Book, Victor Books, 1996, 300 pp., \$17.99.

In 1975 Burgess published an important, though slim, volume with Religious Education Press that grew out of his doctoral work at Notre Dame University. It presented four perspectives on religious education using the aspects of aim, content, teacher's role, student, environment, and evaluation as categories of analysis. The current work is based on the same categories. With these the author describes the perspectives he calls the classical liberal model, the mid-century mainline model, the evangelical/kerygmatic model, and the social science model. For the first three theological considerations are normative and for the fourth social-science, teaching-learning psychology is normative. In the previous book the classical liberal model was called the social-cultural approach. The mid-century mainline model was called the contemporary theological approach. The evangelical/ kerygmatic model was called the traditional theological approach. The chapters have been largely rewritten and reflect thinking characteristic of the intervening twenty years. However, persons who have read *An Invitation to Religious Education*, the 1975 book, will recognize much in the current book.

Excellent new material in *Models of Religious Education* include a chapter on theory and practice, a chapter on the historical background for the twentieth-century models, and one that concludes the book with brief introductions of current writers who are making diverse contributions to the field.

Burgess describes the liberal model as rooted in the liberal theology common at the beginning of the twentieth century. He feels it was joined and strengthened by the progressive education movement. It is identified with John Dewey, George Coe and William Clayton Bower. He sees the object of faith becoming scientific rather than metaphysical. Salvation is directed toward society rather than the individual. Teaching is oriented toward life through social action. The mid-century mainline model, according to Burgess, grew from neo-orthodox theology and the religious education movement. Reinhold Niebuhr, H. Shelton Smith, and Randolph Crump Miller are associated with this model. Emphasis in this model is given to the Christian community and relational group activities.

The evangelical/kerygmatic model is seen by the author as a renewal of certain parts of the historical prototype that he identifies with the first seventeen or eighteen centuries of the Christian era. It gets its energy from a vision of a revealed message that must be faithfully communicated. Lecture or preaching are the ideal teaching methods.

Burgess says that the social-science model is rooted in the teaching-learning

process. While theology is seen as important to the model, as content, it is not normative. How learners learn and how best to teach are more important to the process of religious education. Teachers using this model accurately will try to achieve learning goals while putting together biblical, social, cultural, and environmental factors within the learning process. James Michael Lee is the lone theorist identified with this model. His writings form the reference. Lee's approach is largely behavioristic. He was chair of the department within which Burgess did his doctoral work.

This is an important book for Christian educators and for the church. It helps to give structure to a field that often is not well understood. It seems that most people who went to Sunday School as children believe they are experts on education in the church. Burgess' book will help inform those individuals about the breadth of the field and allow them to see philosophical and theological foundations upon which much church education activity is based. The new material, not found in the 1975 volume, should be especially useful for professionals.

Even though Burgess says in the earlier book that there are other approaches to religious education that draw heavily upon the social sciences, the only manifestation of this is Lee's behavioristic system. Books such as *Nurture That is Christian* by Wilhoit and Dettoni, *Teaching for Spiritual Growth* by Downs, *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian* by Fowler, *Pilgrims in Progress* by Plueddemann and Plueddemann, *On the Way* by Steele, and *Teaching for Reconciliation* by Habermas and Issler, to mention a few, present perspectives on Christian education that are based very much on social science, even though they tend to see theology as equally important.

Eugene S. Gibbs

David Lyle Jeffrey. *People of the Book--Christian Identity and Literary Culture*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996, 381 pp. \$37.00.

Truth might rest in anything from a better job for some to a good meal for others, but whatever mantra you choose, the heart still yearns for God. Today, as we live in an era where many writers struggle to pre-empt God from their work, David Lyle Jeffrey gives a few good reasons why they shouldn't even try. In his *People of the Book--Christian Identity and Literary Culture*, Jeffrey winds us from the beginnings of our literary history in the Western world to the present, by way of a path that is steep, but worth the hike. At the end of the trail he has accomplished his purpose, giving his readers a sense of how important a role the Book, our Bible, has played in the formation of our literary tradition in the West.

As Jeffrey throws out the names of such greats as St. Jerome and Chaucer within the first three pages of his preface, he states that "the Bible was preeminently 'the Book,' . . . the foundational text which gives rise to a whole world of books." (p. xiii) The author then goes on throughout the course of his work to give examples of those who have based their writings upon the Bible. Hence, these writers are known

Book Reviews

to Jeffrey and to us as People of the Book--authors who fed their souls upon the God of the Scriptures.

David Lyle Jeffrey, a professor of English literature at the University of Ottawa, has authored many books and is the general editor of the reference work, *A Dictionary of Biblical Tradition in English Literature*. The author begins this present work by taking us on a complex tour of literary theory, where Jeffrey comes to the point upon which the rest of the book is based--the Text reads us, not vice versa. God, the ultimate Author of the Bible, is the Divine Translator of our lives, and the Bible should be read as such. As a variety of writers throughout the ages have grounded their works upon the reading of the Bible, it seems Jeffrey asks that we allow ourselves to be read by these too, as these "People of the Book" have handed them down to us. To illustrate this point, within the span of his book, Jeffrey pencils out moderate sketches of authors and their works that we might be "read by," covering the prophets and Paul to St. Jerome and St. Augustine; Dante and Wyclif to Chaucer and Goethe; Bunyan and the Puritans to the likes of Coleridge and Matthew Arnold; and Melville and Hawthorne to Howard Nemerov, Margaret Atwood, and Flannery O'Connor of our generation.

Jeffrey also provides a memorable chapter on how the Bible and some of its first advocates led to the literacy and evangelization of the Germanic peoples. It was these first missionaries who allowed the tribes to combine the culture they knew with the Biblical mandates so that the Gospel might be understood through their own experience. One story the author elaborates on is that of Caedmon. An illiterate peasant, Caedmon is given the gift from God to expound on Biblical narrative through the use of the oral poetry that was typically recited during the feasts of the people. It was through such means, as Jeffrey discusses, that an illiterate people group came to hear the truths of Christ and the Bible, and literacy was spread.

Jeffrey delves also into the discussion of a literary consciousness that has been uniquely Christian until recently. He does this through the example of several writers. The author has a chapter on symbolism as well, complete with pictures to show how reading the Bible was illustrated in artwork as a sign of virtue. Also, Jeffrey discusses authentic narrative and how spiritual autobiography became a force in literary culture; and he takes a chapter to discuss the centrality of the Bible upon American literature. From here, the author writes of the American myth versus the Biblical tradition, and how well we have stood up in light of the Truth of the Book.

Jeffrey ends his work by stating that one can tell how much our literary culture has been influenced by the Bible by applying the theory of the broken-hearted reader--one who reads with the idea of repentance in-mind. We should open ourselves to the text and the authority of god within it. Even today as writers persist on leaving God out of their works, there is often still an examination of conscience within the text, which leads back to an accountability to God. We are to act upon this accountability and embody the Word as the People of the Book do, so that God's Word might become a source of healing to all.

I found this book spoke to me in its witness to the Bible's impact upon the literary identity of our culture. It is a thought-provoking, knowledgeable survey, and

a resource tool for anyone whose interests and/or study lies in the field of literature and the Bible. However, its one challenge lies in its usage of language--it is rather academic and a bit too advanced for the most part. For example, "As a credal manifestation of post-Romantic hermeneutics, complete with due acknowledgments of Nietzsche, Bloom's paradigmatic 'either/or' is designed to establish a tactical symmetry: an authorial antagonist is more or less custom-constructed to focus the critic-protagonist's deconstructive creativity." And this is only page two! Such technical language and immense usage of vocabulary throughout sometimes distracts the reader from finding the gems within the book's pages. However, I would encourage the pilgrimage through its mountainous regions to find such treasures of truth if one is all interested in the subject matter. David Lyle Jeffrey gives us some reasons why we, as People of the Book ourselves, should try. Juliet R. Johnson

Jon R. Stone, *Latin for the Illiterati: Exorcizing the Ghosts of a Dead Language*, London: Routledge Press, 1996, xv + 201 pp. \$15.95.

While it is increasingly rare for one to hear a dash of Latin spice up a conversation, one can still find the occasional italicized words in a scholarly book which suggest that fossilized tidbits of Latin still thrive in academia. Indeed, with the proliferation of movies revolving around law courts (*vivat Johannes Grishamus!*), we find that even Harrison Ford may drop a few words in Latin here or there (in *Regarding Henry* he warns his sullen daughter that *qui tacit consentire videtur*). So perhaps Stone's volume will not be entirely without use.

Latin for the Illiterati contains an alphabetically organized dictionary of over 3,500 Latin words and brief phrases, over 1,500 longer phrases and sayings, over 300 abbreviations, a list of Latin place names, and finally an English-Latin dictionary. The lists of Latin words and sayings covers a broad spectrum. It covers slogans or terms important for theology and Church history (e.g., *sola fide*, *filioque*, the *pax Dei*), but the bulk of the list will be of greater use to those involved in classics, law, theatre, medicine. Many of the phrases recorded here are the catchy ethical admonitions for which Greco-Roman moralists were famous.

If you are regularly engaged in reading philosophy, theology, or Umberto Eco (whose *Name of the Rose* was liberally seasoned with Latin), this volume will be a welcome *vade mecum*. Its use does not have to be limited to one's deciphering of obscure abbreviations or terms in Christian Theology or Church History assignments -- it will provide you incidentally with Latin phrases for many occasions. Enjoying the fellowship of good friends? Look around at them and say, *Ubi amici, ibi opes* ("where there are friends, there is wealth"). Is a parishioner holding up the line at the communion rail? Pronounce a stern *Aut bibat aut abeat* ("either drink or depart"). Kirby salesperson refusing to leave? Dismiss him with a terse *Natura abhorret a vacuo* ("Nature abhors a vacuum"). *Mea culpa*. David A. deSilva