

REVIEWS

NIV Study Bible Library on CD-ROM (32-bit edition, version 2.6). Published by Zondervan Interactive (www.zondervan.com). Includes 1 CD-ROM and a Reference Software User's Guide over several hundred pages. \$129.97.

This piece of silicon magic contains a virtual treasure trove of reference material that would take up far too much shelf space in my study were I to buy each volume separately. On the CD, you get the complete text of the New International Version (including footnotes), an authorized Greek New Testament, the King James Version, the New American Standard Bible, the NIV Study Bible notes, the NIV Bible Dictionary, Captions of Maps and Cities, Nave's Concise Bible, the Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties, the Expository Dictionary, the NIV Bible Commentary, the New Revised Standard Version (including footnotes), some "Inspirational Readings" (Bible passages for particular feelings and occasions), and a section of verse notes for the user to create. It will link to your word processor if you ask it nicely. On top of all this, there is an Atlas with exceptional browse features (though toggling back and forth between them is a bit challenging). As if that were not enough, also included with this CD is the STEP reader, which is a tremendous search tool, and is used quite commonly among different kinds of Bible study software.

The program begins with four windows for the NIV, NIV Bible Commentary, Nave's Concise Bible, and the NIV Bible Dictionary, though it can be set up to open any of the supplied programs. Within these windows are numerous text links, and each window knows what the user is doing – e.g., when you are scrolling through the NIV Bible Commentary, the NIV text window changes verses as you scroll through the commentary. I loaded it onto both my home computer (an ancient Pentium I33) and my office computer (a still-rather-long-in-the-tooth Pentium II 433). Loading time only varied by a minute, as even the slower computer took only a few minutes to do a "typical installation", which included all books, the Atlas and the STEP reader. This allows one to use most of the programs without needing to put the CD-ROM into the drive every time. The exception, I found, was the STEP reader, which requires the CD to be inserted with each use.

I happen to own the Expositors' Bible Commentary on CD-ROM, also produced by Zondervan Interactive, which uses exactly the same interface. What I found puzzling was that I did not make the two programs talk to each other. It had been installed well before the NIV Study Bible Library, with typical installation; I would have thought that the new program would

Reviews

have recognized the previously-installed one, and set things up so that the two could interact. alas, I must open yet another program to do that!

This program comes with a sixty-day money-back guarantee, and claims to run on Windows 3.1 or Windows 95. I run it at home with Windows 95 and at the office with Windows 98, with no differences. It requires a Windows-supported video card and printer, and a minimum of 4 MB of hard disk space. A complete installation will require 45 MB.

The User's Guide is set up in different sections in a user-friendly manner. As with most computer programs, however, I found I caught on more quickly to the various features of the program just by fiddling around and using it. I would recommend this software investment for students, pastors, scholars, and perhaps especially those who are leading small groups in Bible study.

Jeffrey F. Lo

Scholar's Library, Logos Bible Software Series X. Libronix Digital Library System 1.0d. Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1313 Commercial Street, Bellingham, WA 98225-4372. 6 disks, 2001, \$599.95.

The Logos products have been reviewed here previously (*ATJ* 28 [1996] 116-120). This completely new technology deserves a new review. It is now called the Libronix Digital Library System and can act as an upgrade for Logos Library System users. To run the product is necessary to have the following: Pentium 133 MHz or faster processor, CD-ROM drive, Windows 98 or higher (it will run on Windows 98/Me/NT 4.0 [SP3]/2000/XP), 64 MB memory, a minimum of 60MB of hard drive space, and an 800x600 or higher screen.

Installation is straightforward, with a self-loading system on the installation disk. It is possible through the 'Location Manager' to make the file resident on the computer hard-drive, not needing to run off the CD's. There are 232 titles available in the package, according to Logos company, including over a dozen English Bibles, several Bible dictionaries (e.g. *NBD*, *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, commentaries (including the *New Bible Commentary*, *Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, and the *IVP Bible Background Commentary*), several foreign language texts (Greek, Hebrew, Latin) and too many other resources for pastors and students to be able to list here. A complete description can be found at <http://www.logos.com/scholars>. A difficulty, which I, and others I am aware of, had in loading the package was in the fonts for foreign languages, which did not install correctly. Technical support was able to show how the correct settings could be made, but it was an annoying circumstance when first trying the new system out.

The new look of the package includes opening up what looks like a web home page. This can be modified for each person's individual preferences. One section is for Bible study where you can enter a passage and choose how to look at the text, as a Bible verse alone, in 'passage guide' mode, which brings up all available commentaries, cross-references and topics; the 'exegetical guide' mode, where each Hebrew or Greek term behind the text is morphologically described and active links are provided to each of the available lexicons and grammars where the term is discussed; the 'word study guide' mode in which each word is translated, the Strong's number is given, and active links to word study tools such as

Brishman's concordance, Strong's itself, and theological word books are provided; or the 'Bible and commentary' mode, in which the verse in a selected translation and a selected commentary on that verse are shown in separate windows. All this makes the product very useful from the first time it is accessed.

Other useful features have also been added. For example, under the pull-down 'Tools' menu, 'Bible tools' one can choose to open the verse under consideration in any or all available translations so as to make a comparison between them. Using the same steps one can open up the 'Word study guide' noted above from whatever verse is on the screen, or pull up the verse in several versions with a color coded comparison between the selected base text and other versions of the verse. The 'Exegetical guide' is accessible in the same way.

If you need a bibliography for the research being done, pulling down the 'Systems' menu enables one to be generated following several different style options, including MLA, Turabian, Chicago Manual of Style, and SBL. Numerous other features are available, and can be explored by using the pull-down 'Help' menu.

There are several ways in which the material available through the Libronix system can be purchased. One may buy an individual work for downloading through the company website. There are also several packages with software thought to be appropriate for different purposes bundled together. This is considerably cheaper than buying each item as a separate unit. For example, the Scholars' Library is said to be 'worth over \$5,000.00 in equivalent print editions.' There are also numerous other publishers who are using the Libronix platform to produce their own electronic material. That means that one can seamlessly access all the material available on your machine with this one system. There are numerous other platforms that are not compatible, however.

Two matters of concern need to be raised, one minor and one major. The former is that the company's conservative theological viewpoint is clear from much of the material which they make available. For example, much of the material is from a dispensational background, and Dallas Seminary is very well represented among the titles made available in the various packages. There are works from many other viewpoints also, so one just needs to be aware of what one uses as a resource, and use it critically.

A second, much more serious concern is over the numerous bugs in the version which I used. I was using the tools to work on a commentary on Joel and Malachi, so needed it for fairly sophisticated word studies and word searches in English and in the original languages. Here it is very frustrating, and would not be recommended until some of the problems can be ironed out. One of the most frustrating aspects was doing word searches from the Hebrew text. The program has a very useful search mechanism using the right mouse button. When the cursor is placed on a word and the right button is clicked, one can do a number of things, including displaying morphological information concerning the chosen word (i.e. the Hebrew word chosen, its description as, for example, verb, qal, infinitive construct, Hebrew root, and dictionary form). One can left click on the Hebrew root and be taken immediately to the BDB entry for the root, which is very helpful.

Another option from the right button is to work with the selected text, either in the form in which it is found in the verse being studied, or in its root form. Each of these can be studied by doing a word search in the Bible version being used or in all available versions, or it can be looked up

Reviews

automatically in any of the available lexical. All this is very helpful, but it is not trustworthy. For example, if one is studying Isa 35:1 and wants to look up all the uses of the Hebrew term *midbar*, the procedure is followed as outlined above, and the program says that the term occurs 337 times in the Old Testament. All well and good, until one checks other resources and finds out the fact the word only occurs 271 times. What the program does is search for all words with consonants *m d b r*, which also are these for the participle *medaber*, 'one who speaks'. This something occurs where there are important differences in other diacritical marks, e.g. the difference between '*shin*' and '*sin*' is not discerned, meaning that when one searches for 'fields', one also finds 'breasts'. In other words, a sophisticated tool has not had its sophistication carried through to the deeper levels where it can be most critical.

When doing a word search, a separate window lists all the verses in which the word occurs, or at least the first verse in each chapter in which it is found, with a number in parentheses apparently indicating how many times total the word is found in the chapter. Each occurrence of the word searched in the text is highlighted blue, so they can be easily found when one scrolls through the text. If searching for *midbar* in Exodus, for example, the first occurrence in the Bible (3:1) is neither recorded in the generated list nor is it highlighted. Also Exodus 19 is said to have 5 occurrences of the word, when in reality there are only 3.

There is also an annoying lack of precision in the links provided. For example, when I tried to look up the verb *zā'aq* used in Joel 1:14 in BDB, the link was to the Aramaic section of the dictionary rather than the Hebrew. Even more frustrating when working on Joel commentary was to have the links which are helpfully provided from the dictionaries like BDB to the biblical texts cited in the dictionary entry take me to the wrong place. Joel 1:1 takes one to John, not Joel. While John is much more frequently referred to by that abbreviation than is Joel, the link to John in a Hebrew dictionary is patently wrong.

Another helpful feature, if it worked accurately, is the ability to perform morphological searches. For example it is possible to request a search for every second person feminine singular Hebrew verb that occurs in the Minor Prophets. This is quickly accomplished, showing the search verb that meets the criteria as being the first verb in Joel 2:21 (a second feminine singular preterite form), missing the fact that the second and third verbs in that verse also meet these criteria (both second feminine singular imperatives).

Sometimes there are problems caused by lack of proofing the material. The Hebrew term 'oracle' (*u'm*) has as one of its references in Libronix's BDB as Ob 4:8 (which does not exist), rather than to Ob 4, 8 (since Obadiah has only one chapter). Also the entry for *nāw* (BDB 627) is misspelled *nāreh*, and the entry for the very important Hebrew verb *yshb* 'to sit' has its first meaning numbered '3' rather than '1', and it continues the erroneous numbering throughout the article. Finally, though there are undoubtedly numerous other examples, in the Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains, Hebrew, the words for 'desert land' and 'Zion' respectively (numbers 7481 and 7482) are written as beginning with the final form of the letter *tsade* rather than the non-final form.

One final point concerns those passages where the Hebrew and English verse and chapter numbers do not correspond. This is usually caught by the Libronix system, so going to Joel 4:19 in the Hebrew text will take you to the corresponding 3:19 in the NIV. The problem comes when you want to look at all the versions of the verse. When starting from the NIV

all the various versions are duly listed. When the Hebrew text is the base text, however, no other versions are called up for 4:19, since English versions have the chapter number reversed. It appears that an additional line or two of code would be able to fix this.

All told, it is difficult to know how to review the product. It is well conceived, asking end-users might most benefit from what computers can do with the least amount of work on their part. While the conception is excellent, the execution is not. It seems that the earlier Logos versions worked with fewer bugs, though I must admit I gave this version a harder workout than I did with earlier versions. Until the kinks are worked out, I would urge those who have earlier versions to keep using them, and new buyers to hold their purchases until a new release fixes the problems that there are with the product. The company is constantly updating and improving its products, with a new version most probably out before this review is printed. Fortunately, every theological library as well as pastors and students of scripture will want to have at least one of the Libronix library packages, but the time does not appear to be yet.

David W. Baker

John H. Manser, Alister E. McGrath, J.I. Packer, Donald J. Wiseman, J. Gordon McConville, Stephen H. Travis, eds., *Zondervan Dictionary of Bible Themes*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001. 1232 pp., hardcover, US\$39.99; CDN\$57.99.

The subtitle of this volume is "An Accessible and Comprehensive Tool For Topical Studies" – and that it is! As I have engaged my congregation in topical studies and preaching, this reference book has proven a helpful tool. Many key themes of Scripture are found in this book. It is arranged somewhat like the *Thompson Chain Reference Bible*, with numerical references, headings and sub-headings, the various Scripture passages that relate to the topic, and lists of other themes that relate to the one being examined.

The themes are organized along the lines of a systematic theology, ranging from God to the last things. Sub-categories delineate the various qualities or themes, e.g. "Jesus, the Christ" and "Jesus Christ, mind of". An alphabetical list of themes, with reference numbers, is found at the beginning of the book. About half of the book is taken up with the numerically-indexed Bible themes, while the other half is a Scripture index, providing a most helpful list of verses by book, chapter and verse of Scripture. So, for example, if you were going to lead a study on Kings 18.16ff, about Elijah and the prophets of Baal, you could look up that passage in the Scripture index and find all kinds of themes that relate to that text. If you wanted to study verse 18.17, you could check the theme of "criticism, against believers", which could then be cross-referenced back to the themes index. Many Old and New Testament examples are cited of persons who were criticized. Along with more than twenty biblical references, this category is cross-referenced to three additional categories: "Christ, opposition to", "persecution", and "Judgment, God's". This book provides a great treasure of helpful tools for study and sermon preparation.

Were I to dare to complain about the book at all, it would be about the size of the print. The liberal use of boldface type, italics, and a variation between serif and sans serif fonts aid in the legibility of the text, the print is still quite small. However, were it to be made any larger, the

Reviews

book may be so unmanageably heavy as to cut down sales, if not cause personal injury to those seeking to handle it.

The editors are thoroughly committed to the value of Scripture for the growth of Christian faith. They remind us in the introduction that it is important "that readers of Scripture are given every means of help so that they may get as much benefit and enjoyment as possible out of reading the Bible." This reference book goes a long way toward helping Christian readers at every stage of maturity to benefit from and enjoy the reading and study of the Bible.

Jeffrey Loach, Windsor, Ontario

Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, Tremper Longman III, eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998. 1058 pp., hardcover, \$45.00.

The *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery (DBI)* is a one volume reference work with a very different approach. Rather than focus on concrete who, what or where type issues as most Bible references do, this guide focuses more on defining, and explaining images, archetypes and metaphors. It is a valuable complement to the traditional Bible dictionary, but not a replacement for it. Perhaps the best way to describe this dictionary is to compare it with a more traditional Bible dictionary and how they each deal with some sample subject entries.

The subject of 'Bread' is a good one for comparison. The entry in *DBI* is as follows: a short paragraph of bread as a staple, followed by subheadings on the following topics: "Bread as Gift", "Eschatological Bread", "Lord's Prayer", "Bread as Metaphor", "Summary" and a list of references to related items covered in the dictionary: "Abundance, Eating, Food, Hospitality, Manna, Supper, Table, Wheat" for the reader to pursue related subjects of interest. The *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE)* takes a very different approach to an entry on the subject of bread. The *ISBE* entry is naturally longer as would be expected in a multi-volume work. The subsections are: "Antiquity of Bread making", "Prominence in Diet", "Ingredients", "Bread-Making", and "Eating Bread". In the "Eating Bread" subsection, the significance are only briefly dealt with. Notice the *ISBE* details 'what and 'how type issues: what is bread, what is made from, what are its origins, how is made, how is it consumed, why it is an important staple. The *DBI* directs the reader more to questions of meaning and significance, and in this regard *DBI* really shines. The topic of idols and idolatry is another one where *DBI* is particularly helpful. The typical Bible dictionary will define and describe idols and idolatry, but not give much insight to their significance. The *DBI* has a very nice and helpful entry on the subject ranging from "Idols as Deceit" and "Idolatry as Actions" to "Idols as Spirit Habitations" giving the reader much more rounded perspective on the subject of idols and their significance in the minds of various biblical authors in both Testaments.

A conventional Bible dictionary will provide a nice summary of essential facts on a topic, while *DBI* will provide added insight into usage that is of particular help in understanding the depth of thought of some biblical imagery. *DBI* entries are particularly helpful in giving the reader more "preachable" insight, but the insight doesn't stop there. It can give the diligent reader of scripture more appreciation for some of the multifaceted aspects of scripture.

from traditional Bible dictionaries even in biographical entries. The entry on David focuses on his character and how biblical authors portray him and his legacy. The typical Bible dictionary entry will summarize his genealogy, early career, reign and administration ending with a few brief comments about his character. If a student is simply looking for information on "Hebron" and only wants to know where it is, how big it was, when it was destroyed and so on, the standard Bible dictionary remains the proper choice. If a student wants some help in understanding the role of a character in biblical literature, the significance of idolatry, the meaning of metaphorical uses of the word 'bread' then *DBI* is the place to go.

In summary a review of several other entries on other subjects demonstrates the value of this fine work to the serious student. If there is any weakness it is that the author of each article is not credited and precious few entries have any bibliography as do most entries in the other Bible dictionaries. It is a very helpful, usable and worthwhile addition to any library. The editors are to be commended for their efforts and the strength of their approach.

Christopher Coles

Richard N. Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*. 2nd Edition. Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1985, 1981. 239 pp.

Even though it represents a face of scholarship that is now a full twenty years old, this dictionary on technical terms, major figures, bodies of ancient literature, and methodologies that one encounters as one enters the critical study of the Bible remains a useful companion for the beginning student. An updated edition would be even more welcome.

David A. deSilva

Stephen S. Chapman, *The Law and the Prophets: A Study in Old Testament Canon Formation*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000. xvii + 356 pp., hardcover, 178 DM.

Canon is an interesting problem since by definition it is outside of the text or corpus being discussed; it is a metatextual problem. There are elements of evidence within the corpus itself, but other evidence from outside must also be brought into the equation. In this revised Yale dissertation done under Christopher Seitz, Chapman looks specifically at the relationship between the two canonical sections, the law and the prophets within the process of canonization. He analyzes the traditional understanding that the law was primary, and that prophecy is in fact 'commentary' on it.

Chapman starts by surveying the discussions on canon since H. E. Ryle formulated the 'Standard Theory' that there is a tripartite division of law, prophets, and writings which evidenced a three-stage history of development. This nineteenth century view saw the stages taking place under Ezra for the law (5th century BC), the law in the 3rd century BC, and the writings in the late first century AD. Other proponents of this approach included Wellhausen and Margolis, who dated the material much earlier, with the law being Mosaic.

Reviews

A development in the mid-20th century was the rise of 'canon criticism,' which Chapman sees beginning with a passing comment in O. Eissfeldt's *Introduction*, but only picked up and developed by English speakers, starting with Peter Ackroyd in 1961. Other developers of this approach, in which utterances were seen as authoritative and thus incipiently canonical even in their preliterate stage, include David Freedman, Ronald Clements, and the two major proponents, each from his own perspective- James Sanders and Brevard Childs. Subsequent discussions by such scholars as James Barr, Roger Beckwith and Norman Gottwald are analyzed.

Chapman's own view is that there is a collateral relationship between the law and the prophets, both holding equal authority, and each impacting the other in the process of canon formation. He at some length compares his view with that of Philip Davies, though not espousing his dating scheme.

Turning to the actual text, the first mine which Chapman explores are the canonical conclusions of the law (Deut 34:10-12, which theologically ties Moses with the prophets who follow) and the prophets (Mal 3:22-24 [4:4-6]), both of which show consciousness of canonical context, and on those who propose the unity of the Twelve. He then looks at early deuteronomistic writings (Deut 31-34; Joshua), showing that there was a canonical consciousness there as well. The impact of the jointly authoritative law and prophets is also shown in portions of the OT (DH, Jeremiah, Zech 1-7; Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Daniel) have been edited. In order to support his view of the equality of law and prophets in authority and canon, Chapman critiques the arguments for the priority of the law.

This is an important, and readable work. It shows that both the law and the prophets are authoritative Scripture which are aware of and play off of each other. It is not a case of the priority of the prophets being before and the source of the law, as some critics hold. This book should be in all academic theological libraries.

David W. Baker

Donald L. Griggs, *The Bible From Scratch: The Old Testament for Beginners*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002. 135 pp., paper, \$9.95.

This is the companion study to the previously published, *The New Testament for Beginners*, also written by Donald Griggs. The preface cites adult members of congregations who were polled for topics of interest in church school classes. Seventy seven percent of those polled ranked with high interest study of 'the Bible.'

Designed for use in a classroom setting the study includes two parts. Part one is the participant's guide. Part two is the leader's guide. Griggs has long been a pioneer in Christian Education for all ages. He uses practical ideas for how this study can be taught in a seven week series using a one hour per week class along with homework. This reviewer sees how an evening class or two could be added to help with overflow discussion as well as side topics which are relevant to a particular study group.

The series is properly labeled for 'beginners.' It helps the participant learn what to do when you open the Bible. The guide asks participants to cite: 'Things I notice' as well as 'Questions I have' in reference to passages that are studied for a lesson. 'The Bible Skills and Inventory' is helpful for the teacher. It is completed in the initial session and therefore gives the teacher an idea of what material needs to be covered in this Old Testament survey course.

Griggs, a Presbyterian, does not write for one denomination only. Many traditions could find this study applicable and helpful, particularly with those who are totally unfamiliar with the Old Testament.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, TX

J. Gary Millar, *Now Choose Life. Theology and Ethics in Deuteronomy*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999. 216 pp., paper, \$24.00.

Now Choose Life is a volume out of the *New Studies in Biblical Theology* series edited by D. A. Carson. The goal of this series is stated as "Scholarly yet entirely accessible to students, pastors, and general readers... and [providing] clear and creative insights that help thinking Christians better understand the bible and its application to contemporary life."

J. Gary Millar has accomplished that goal in this excellent look at the theology and ethics of Deuteronomy. Aside from one or two criticisms which will be noted below, Millar has achieved a cohesiveness to the book of Deuteronomy rarely found in most works.

Starting with a discussion of scholarly debates in the field of Old Testament ethics and theology, the author examines five main relationships between ethics and the text of Deuteronomy: 1) Ethics and Covenant, 2) Ethics and Journey, 3) Ethics and Law, 4) Ethics and Nations, 5) Ethics and Human Nature.

Millar argues there is no way to separate the ethics of Deuteronomy from the theology of Deuteronomy, and all of this is bound up in the Covenant relationship of God with His people. That Covenant relationship involves not only the laws but the land they are to inherit. Israel is on the verge of entering the land, and God has used both the journey and the rebellion of the people to underscore his commitment to establishing a people for himself.

The author contends that the focus on source criticism and redaction criticism in recent years has obscured the literary and theological coherence of the book. Millar focuses on the consistent theme of choice found throughout the book of Deuteronomy, seeing within the text an emphasis on Israel's past, present and future dealings with God. Horeb (and the Decalogue) and Moab (the preaching and retelling of the law by Moses) become the points of decision along the journey. Whereas an earlier generation rejected God resulting in forty years of wandering, the new generation represented at Moab is again presented with a choice to accept or reject Yahweh. Millar emphatically urges them to "Choose Life!"

One of the more interesting chapters in the book involves the question of the relationship between the theologian and human nature. The author discusses this from the perspective of the expected future of the part of Israel to "choose life." The "blessings" promised for obedience to God are overshadowed by the "curses" and the subsequent "Song of Moses" which the people are required

Reviews

to learn. In the end, even strict observance of the Law will not be enough to keep Israel from returning to "Egypt" in another, future captivity, only to be restored once again to the promised land. Millar argues the final chapters of Deuteronomy look beyond the fulfillment of both blessings and the curses, to a time when God will establish a new covenant with His people which they will be able to obey His precepts.

Millar has presented his ideas in a systematic way with copious footnotes and text references, evidence of his wide reading and scholarly approach to the subject. Scholars indeed find much to appreciate, as will pastors and students. One criticism regarding presentation of the material involves the *Introduction* and the author's extensive discussion of previous scholarly works related to the topic. While the material is an excellent summation of current debate on Old Testament theology, it would seem more appropriately placed as appendix to the book rather than an introduction. The technical nature of the discussion departs from the overall tenor of the book as highly readable and accessible. Having noted this criticism, this should in no way detract from the value of the book and its contribution to the discussion of Deuteronomy. In treating the text as a whole Millar has brought back a much needed level of vitality to the study of Deuteronomy, and he has served to build a bridge between the ancient text and contemporary society and the Church. Under Millar's exposition of the Deuteronomy becomes much more than a "second giving of the Law."

Robert Gulley, Cincinnati Bible College and Seminary

John Barton, ed., *The Biblical World*. 2 vol. London/ New York: Routledge, 2002. I: xxiii + 497 pp., II: viii + 539 pp., hardcover, \$190.00.

This work describes itself as "a comprehensive guide to the contents, historical setting and social context of the Bible" (I:1). Edited by the Oriel and Lang Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture at Oxford (one of the few permanent chairs covering the Bible as a whole rather than just one of the testaments), it includes contributions by 48 scholars, some evangelists but most eschewing that identification. The volumes provide brief, introductory essays on a wide spectrum of biblical topics, each with a short bibliography. The second volume concludes with comprehensive indexes of biblical references (44 pages), modern authors (12 pages), and subjects (33 pages). The latter is especially necessary due to the wide-ranging coverage of the articles.

The book is laid out in 8 parts, which are here indicated with their constituent chapters: I. The Bible- The Old Testament, Apocrypha and New Testament; II. Genres- Near Eastern myths and legends, historiography of the OT, prophecy, wisdom, apocalypticism, the Jewish novel, gospels, letters in the NT and Greco-Roman world; III. Documents- texts and versions (OT and NT), Dead Sea scrolls, Hebrew inscriptions, Cairo Genizah, Gnostic gospels, early Jewish and Christian biblical interpretation; IV. History- Biblical archaeology, Palestine during the Bronze and Iron ages, the exile, under Persia and Greece and Rome, and Israel's neighbors; V. Institutions- Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek language, warfare, the arts, law and administration in the NT period, pre-exilic through post-exilic Israelite religion, Judaism at the turn of the era, and the social and religious life of the first churches; VI. Biblical figures- patriarchs and matriarchs, Moses, David and Solomon, Jesus, and Paul; VII. Religious ideas- Jewish and Christian concepts.

vation, interpretations of Jesus' identity and role, death and afterlife, and purity; VIII. The today- Jewish and Christian Bible translation and modern biblical interpretation.

As can be seen from this list, there is a wide coverage of important biblically related material. The articles are fairly general however, and reflect the broad spectrum of theological presuppositional viewpoints. It is unclear to me who the intended audience of the book is. The material would be good for an introductory Bible course, but there is more reading than could be appropriate for most one-term courses. Also the cost would prohibit its use in that context. As a reference tool, since libraries would be the major purchasers at the price, it is too elementary for most academic institutions, though public libraries might be a clientele well served by it.

David W. Baker

en Rhea Nemet-Nejat, *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002. [originally Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998. hardcover, \$49.95]. xxii + 346, paper, \$29.95.

The title of this volume well reflects its contents, something that cannot be said for any other work. Dr Nemet-Nejat, a research affiliate at Yale, also hits her target audience of 'students and educated lay people'. Adding to its accessibility, the volume contains numerous black-and-white photographs, a map and a historical timeline of the ancient Near East, and a glossary of terms used.

In her introduction, Nemet-Nejat describes the rediscovery of ancient Mesopotamian civilization and the decipherment of its languages. She also describes how one attempts to date events in history (relative and absolute chronology), and also sets Mesopotamia in its geographical, linguistic, and historical context (from the Neolithic period to the death of Cyrus in 539 BC).

A list of chapter headings and subheadings will illustrate the breadth of information available. These include: writing, education, and literature (writing origins, education and role of scribes, archives and libraries, texts— literary and non-literary); sciences (medicine, mathematics, astronomy, technology, natural sciences, cartography and geography [a special interest of the author]); society (city life, countryside, nomads and semi-nomads, class, private houses, family structure, property and succession, role of women, fashion, food and drink); recreation; religion (mythology development and composition, divine representations and service, places of worship, temples, religious personnel, festivals, prophets); government (king, justice, warfare, international relations); economy (farming, canals and irrigation, land management, domestic economy, foreign trade, crafts and labor). She concludes with a brief look at the legacy of the ancient world.

While not directly related to the Bible, the volume does show the environment from which Abraham came, the life of nations who subjugated Israel for generations (Assyria and Babylon), and in which Israel spent many years in exile. The volume should be in all theo-

Reviews

logical libraries, and it contains material of interest to interested lay readers, so would be appropriate in church and public libraries as well.

David W. L.

A New English Translation of the Septuagint and Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title. The Psalms. Translated by Albert Pietersma. Oxford and New York: Oxford University, 2000: xxvii + 149 pp., paper, \$12.99.

Oxford "teases" a hungry audience with this first instalment of an eagerly awaited English translation of the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible (including Apocrypha) that was widely used by Greek-speaking Jews across the Mediterranean, and then the early church as well. The *NETS* project, the fruits of many years of labor on the part of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, provides the first English translation of this important ancient version since Lancelot Brenton's 1851 edition, which was based on two codices (the fourth-century Codex Vaticanus, with reference to the fifth-century Alexandrinus where Vaticanus is defective).

Students of the Bible studying the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament are often surprised to find that the wording of the quotation may differ significantly from the wording found in the Old Testament. This is because our English versions of the Old Testament are translations from the Hebrew text, whereas New Testament authors frequently rely on a reading from the Septuagint version of the Old Testament. With the publication of the *NETS*, students will have easy and reliable access to the Greek Old Testament, which will be of great value to them as they study the complexities of how the Old Testament was read and interpreted in the first Christian centuries.

Although a fresh translation from the critical edition of the Septuagint edited by Albert Rahlfs, the *NETS* intentionally makes the NRSV its starting point to facilitate comparison between the Hebrew and Greek text traditions of the Old Testament. Since the Psalms were the most frequently used resource among New Testament authors, the *NETS* version of this significant book is worthy of separate publication and an excellent choice to introduce the larger project. Pietersma has provided a very fine translation, giving English readers easy access to the Psalms of the early church. I would merely have wished for a little more information on important variants in the Septuagint tradition, for example a note in Psalm 39:7 [Heb text: 40:6] that "e" is replaced by "body" in the three major uncials of the Septuagint, a reading that has direct relevance for Hebrews 10:4-10. When the complete *NETS* is available, it should be considered a necessary purchase by all who search the Scriptures.

David A. deS

J. Richardson, *Hammurabi's Laws: Text, Translation and Glossary*. The Biblical Seminar Semitic Texts and Studies 2. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000. 423 pp., cover/paper, \$90.00/\$35.00.

The geographical area of Mesopotamia is where Abraham set out with his family to go toward the land he was promised. He left a flourishing civilization, which impacted not only him, but the wider Near Eastern environment as well through its religion, language, literature and laws, as well as its armies. It is one of its earlier law collections that is the object of this volume. The laws are significant not only in their own right, but because of the light they can throw on Hebrew laws found in the Pentateuch, a light of further understanding, but also a light of contrast.

Richardson has published an exemplary analysis which provides much grist for studying the biblical laws. He does not undertake this study himself. He does not approach it as a biblical scholar, though he has competence in that field, but rather as an Assyriologist. After a brief introduction to the text itself, and also to the layout of his book, he provides an outline of the contents of the laws, and then a transcription of them, along with the text's prolog and epilog, in Roman characters and a translation into English. These are supplemented by limited comment on text critical, linguistic and grammatical matters. Students then are well-served by a 12-page glossary of Akkadian terms, another of proper names, numerals, and units of measurement, a list of roots and stems, of verbal forms, and alphabetical English-Akkadian and Akkadian-English indexes.

While most Bible readers will find the simple translations of *ANET* or *COS* sufficient for their regular needs, this volume will be valuable for readers who need to go deeper into the meaning of the laws. The volume should be in all serious biblical studies libraries.

David W. Baker

Frank M. Sasson, ed., *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. 4 volumes in 2. Peabody: Hendrickson, 2000. xxxii + 2966 pp., hardcover, \$169.95.

This mammoth undertaking is an unaltered reprint of the original publication with the same title by Scribner's in 1995, so those who already have the earlier set should not purchase this one. Those who do not, should.

The project is well-conceived and is, to my knowledge, unique in its form and content. It was originally published as a companion set to *Civilization of the Ancient Mediterranean: Greece and Rome* by Michael Grant and Rachel Kritzinger (Scribner's, 1988). It well meets the expectations set out by its title, looking at the spectrum of culture divided into 11 parts: the ancient Near East in western thought; the environment; population; social institutions; history and culture; economy and trade; technology and artistic production; religion and science; language, writing and literature; visual and performing arts; and retrospective essays. These are comprised of 189 essays by as many authors, who include experts from around the world and across the religious and theological spectrum. This is appropriate for this is a reference work in history, sociology and culture rather than in focusing on theology, though that of various societies is

Reviews

studied. It is gratifying to see several evangelical contributors included among this august group. Numerous articles are translated, from Dutch, French, German, Italian, and Russian.

The definition of the geographical area covered is generous for such a work, and includes "the core areas of Egypt, Syro-Palestine, Mesopotamia and Anatolia...the Arabian Peninsula and...Northeast Africa....Crete, Cyprus, Rhodes, Troy, Gordion, Lycia, Lydia, and Caria" (xxvii). It commences its explorations at the advent of writing in the early 3rd millennium BC, and continues through the conquest of Alexander the Great over Persia in 330 BC.

Each article is self-contained, so the volumes can be consulted topically and randomly or by the various civilizations. In order to find your way around, the first volume begins with a "Cultural Table of Contents" in which the various cultures (ancient Near East generally; and West Asia; Egypt; Mesopotamia; Anatolia, Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Arabia; Elam, Persia, and Central Asia) are placed along one axis and the 11 parts mentioned above are placed along the other. The various topics discussed under each of the intersections is indicated in the grid providing a map to the work.

To supplement the main text, line drawings, black and white photographs, maps, plates, and even excerpts from relevant texts are included, as are extensive bibliographies for each article. To help access the massive amount of material, an extensive, 148-page index of subjects, places and names is included. Thus one can explore items from abortion through marriage, witchcraft. The contributors have differing views regarding the value of various historical sources, including the Bible, some which will be quite different from those of many of the readers of this review. It is still an interesting and valuable work which should be in all academic libraries. It is also the kind of work which lay folk would like to delve into, so would be appropriate in many church and personal libraries, though the cost, which is very reasonable for such an undertaking as this, is likely to preclude the latter.

David W. Baker

Mark S. Smith, *Untold Stories: The Bible and Ugaritic Studies in the Twentieth Century*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001. xix + 252 pp., hardcover, \$29.95.

Ugaritic studies have had major impact on OT studies, even though they only commenced in 1928. In that year a site was unearthed at Minet el-Baida which, through its archaeological artifacts and epigraphic remains, has revolutionized our understanding of Canaanite, and thus Israelite, culture and also of the Hebrew language as well as the Semitic family more broadly. In this volume, Mark S. Smith, Skirball Professor of Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Studies at New York University, presents an interesting and useful study of the development of the field.

Smith lays out his material in 4 chapters, each looking at a chronological period between 1928 and 1999. Chapter One ("Beginnings: 1928 to 1945) describes the first discoveries and the textual decipherment, mentioning all of the key players and showing the parts they played. The subsequent chapters are: Two- "Synthesis and Comparisons: 1945-1970"; Three- "New Texts and Crises in Comparative Method: 1970-1985"; Four- "Resurgence in Tools and Methods: 1985-1999."

Each chapter begins with a bibliographic section entitled "Texts and Tools." An example of its contents, taken from the third chapter, includes: archaeology, new texts, translations, studies and commentaries, and synthetic studies. The bibliographies alone will make the volume valuable for students of the field. The volume also provides a useful picture of the development of the field, showing paths explored and some needing further work. There are also fascinating glimpses of the personalities involved, their cooperation and animosity, showing that scholarship is not impartial and passionless. There is also some evaluation of the usefulness of contributions made, an evaluative endeavor rare among scholars (at least in print) but useful for those who need to work their way through the abundance of material. Especially useful for most readers of this review will be the sections on the influences, whether for good or for ill, of patristic studies on biblical studies. A discussion of the contributions of Mitchell Dahood, author of the 3 volume commentary on Psalms for the influential Anchor Bible series is one example of

The volume could be usefully used in several ways. It is entertaining reading in its own right, even though some of the sections of names might not be too edifying for the uninitiated. It is exactly those names that become important for the student reading more seriously in an area. Now, in a day of instantaneous access to information through a computer, it is becoming increasingly clear that many do not have any critical ability to analyze the usefulness and validity of sources. After all, if it's published, it must be true! This tool could be well used when reading material by scholar in the field to see how he is evaluated by at least one of his peers, who has received assistance from numerous others in the discipline. The book should be in all seminary and Bible college libraries, and it is the kind of thing that would find a readership among interested laypeople.

David W. Baker

Anton L. Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel: Prolegomena to the Study of Ethnic Sentiments and Their Expression in the Hebrew Bible*. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1998.

In this careful and well-informed book, Sparks takes up a topic that is gaining prominence in the contemporary study of the Old Testament, namely the expression of ethnic sentiments in biblical literature. He is particularly interested in the processes through which ethnic sentiments developed in ancient Israel and to that end scrutinizes a select number of biblical texts. After introducing various issues and models related to ethnicity studies, the book moves to a survey of Assyrian, Egyptian and Greek texts. Sparks discovers that Assyrian and Egyptian texts reveal scant ethnographical concerns, in contrast to classical Greek literature (presented by Herodotus), which routinely characterizes peripheral "others" with various degraded practices. Merneptah's Stele and the Song of Deborah, two early sources about Israel, are then set apart for particular analysis and suggest, among other things, a common cultural and religious identity on the part of Israel, as well as an experience of conflict in the land.

The bulk of the work focuses on selected texts from the prophets (Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Second Isaiah) and Deuteronomy, which by virtue of scholarly consensus on their dating, Sparks regards as reliable sources for charting the development of ethnic

Reviews

sentiments. In Hosea, the author detects evidence of intensified ethnic sentiments linked to Israel's ethnic traditions, which he attributes to the influence of Assyrian imperialism. These sentiments, however, are largely lacking in Amos and Isaiah, suggesting that ethnic sentiments were strong in the Northern Kingdom but not in Judah.

Sparks' exploration of Deuteronomy is, to my mind, the most intriguing and fruitful section of the book. Deuteronomy is fundamentally concerned with the construction of identity. While Sparks rightly notes that the book orients identity primarily along religious lines, he offers cogent discussions of the way that Deuteronomy shapes a sense of ethnicity through the construction of rhetorical others (here the peoples of the land) and the codification of religious practices. (Related to the latter, see also L. Stuhlman, "Encroachment in Deuteronomy: An Analysis of the Social World of the D Code," *JBL* 109 (1990), 613-632).

The author treats texts from Jeremiah in the same chapter, and with particular attention to those that deal with the identity issues provoked by the first exile (597 B.C.). The exilic period proper constitutes the final period of study (via Ezekiel and Second Isaiah) and results, Sparks argues, in a new set of ethnic indicia and a well-integrated history of the nation's ancestors to incorporate a life. The final chapter offers a readable summary of the overall program of the study.

This book makes its strongest contribution in the descriptions of ethnic sentiments through the close reading of biblical texts. Peripheral arguments, such as Greek influence on the composition of Deuteronomy or Hosea's central role in promulgating a mono-Yahwist theology, are provocative but tenuous. I would also question whether the development of ethnic sentiments in the Northern Kingdom can be fully attributed to its experience as a peripheral community under the core domination of Assyria. Do we really know that much about the nature of Assyria's direct involvement in 8th Century Palestine? Could not the encroachment of Damascus, as well as the harassment that Israel endured from surrounding peoples in the latter half of the 8th Century, be the primary fodder for the intensification of ethnic sentiments?

A "prolegomena" is sure to spark these and many more questions. Despite these quibbles, I applaud the author for tackling this neglected and timely topic and for significantly advancing our understanding of it.

L. Daniel Ha

Joseph T. Lienhard, ed., *Old Testament III: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001.

Commentary writing isn't what it used to be. Scholarly commentaries typically offer an analysis of the grammatical, lexical, and formal attributes of the text while giving attention to issues of composition, rhetoric, and historical and social context. Popular and devotional commentaries build on the foundation laid by scholarship and focus on the biblical text's relevance to the modern church or scripture's role in deepening personal spirituality. Recent engagement with various strains of postmodern thought has crept into the enterprise and, in some quarters, has challenged the genre altogether. The interested reader who turns to a contemporary biblical commentary may therefore find exposition based on the latest information on historical context and current discussions on method or exegesis. Where a history of interpretation

vided, the review will generally entail a rehearsal of scholarship since the rise of the historical-critical method, with only sparse reference (if at all) to “pre-critical” interpretation. “pre-critical” interpretation, it would seem, is what matters to the contemporary commentary writer. In spite of their wisdom and utility, modern commentaries thus often reinforce the disconnection between the contemporary and historical experience of the church.

The work under review here is part of a series that revives a more ancient way of commenting on scripture, a way that valued the insights of the earliest interpreters of scripture. The *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* takes its cue from the medieval practice of compiling a chain of interpretation on a given passage of scripture (called a *catena*), drawn from the writings of the patristic period. Following this format, each volume in the series quotes a passage of scripture and then offers a sampling of patristic commentary on it. The reader is helped by an overview that introduces the chain of quotations and by topical headings that organize the comments in light of key aspects of the verse or passage. Precise references identify the source of each quotation, and footnotes provide information on biblical cross references and standard editions of the works quoted.

The commentary on the biblical text is rich and diverse. Fully half of the quotations focus on Exodus, reflecting the early church’s interest in the particulars of the exodus, covenant, and tabernacle. As one might expect, some of the quotations adopt an allegorical or typological approach. What struck this reviewer, however, is the depth of exegetical and theological engagement with the biblical text. There is little evidence here of the naïveté that modern biblical scholars sometimes attribute to patristic commentators. Rather, the comments demonstrate that the Church Fathers were people of profound intellect as well as profound faith. There are many insights here that will bring new understanding for any interested student of the Bible.

The volume begins with a concise but informative overview of related issues: the appropriation of the Old Testament as scripture, the early church’s use of the Septuagint, the seven commentaries on the Pentateuch extant from the period, and the development of an exegetical method built from classical models of interpretation. An appendix contains a table of contents of all documents cited (arranged by author), a timeline of patristic authors, biographical sketches and summaries of anonymous works, an extensive bibliography, and subject and scripture indexes. This material provides ample background and reference materials, so that even a reader unacquainted with the patristic period can use the volume with profit.

The editor is to be commended for a work that is notable both for the breadth of sources from which it draws and for the wealth of wisdom it offers. The modern exegete will find stimulating insights and “new” exegetical possibilities, while those who seek guidance in preaching or spiritual formation will find many treasures. This book should be on the shelf of every serious student of the Pentateuch.

L. Daniel Hawk

Ammi J. Schneider, *Judges*. Berit Olam. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 2000.

Although literary study of *Judges* has generated a significant body of scholarship, Schneider’s is the first significant reading of the book as a whole in more than a decade.

Reviews

Working primarily from the Masoretic Text, the author undertakes a close reading that is particularly sensitive to issues of leadership and the role of women in the book. Judges begins with a quest for leadership and ends with a comment on the lack of a king in Israel. Schneider demonstrates how much of the intervening material is taken up with different forms of leadership and with evaluations (good and bad) of the monarchy (which the narrator foreshadows at various points). Revealing in this respect is her attention to the presence of women in the narrative, whose primary role, in her view, is to test the mettle of the male leadership and serve as a barometer of how the Israelites get along in the land. The commentary on the relevant texts is often insightful and stays close to the text, although I find myself wishing for more treatment of the use of metaphor in these texts – an aspect of the narrative that has attracted many feminist writers (e.g. the bizarre conjunctions of birth and death imagery in the Jael/Deborah texts, the aura of out-of-bounds sexuality in the Samson narrative, and the power of women's speech throughout the book). Taken as a whole, Schneider's careful reading complements conventional historical-critical treatments of Judges and makes a solid contribution toward the interpretation of the book.

L. Daniel H.

Mordechai Cogan *1 Kings. The Anchor Bible 10*. New York: Doubleday, 2001. xvii + 556 hardcover, \$50.00.

This volume completes the work begun on Kings that the author published on 2 Kings in the same series in collaboration with Hayim Tadmor in 1988. It follows the familiar pattern of this prestigious series. Since it is the first of the two volumes on the books of Kings, included here are the extensive introductory materials on both books. These begin with the author's translation, which is based on the Hebrew text reconstructed during the course of the commentary rather than upon the regular Masoretic text.

Included in the introduction are discussions of the name of 'Kings' and its location in the canon, the texts and versions witnessing to it, Cogan's translation approach (which he seeks to make as consistent and literal as possible, though lapses from this can cause one to catch linguistic gems such as that in 1 Kings 1 where the elderly and failing King David not only failed to 'know' Abishag in a sexual sense [v. 4], he failed even to 'know' that his son Adonijah was trying to usurp the throne [v. 18]), language and philology (justifying the significant use of Semitic cognates in interpretation), the composition of Kings including its sources (including 'The History of the Kings of Israel,' 'The History of the Kings of Judah,' 'The Book of the deeds of Solomon,' undesignated tales, prophetic tales and narratives, and Temple records) and authors (the anonymous Deuteronomist or Deuteronomistic Historian), chronology, 'history: biblical text, archaeology, and extrabiblical documentation' (with relevant extrabiblical documents, i.e. the selection of a city list of Shoshenq I/Shishak, part of one of Shalmaneser III's annals, and part of the inscription by the Syrian king Hazael known, as the Tel Dan Inscription, translated in appendix), and an outline of historical events between 970 and 850. There then follows a 49-page bibliography covering works ranging between 1660 and 2000.

The body of the commentary proper begins each section with the author's translation, which is followed by notes and comments. The author explains these as follows: "The detailed notes...clarify textual and linguistic matters, in a sense, justifying the translation. In addition, persons and places are identified, and attention is called to the world of the ancient Near East. In the third subdivision, the Comment, contains a discussion of the structure of the individual units and their themes, paying specific attention to literary and form-critical issues" (p. 83). The volume concludes with the appendix mentioned plus ones on the chronology of Israel and Judah, on the ancient Near East (kings of Assyria from 1012-609, of Babylonia from 625-539, and Egypt from 1033-525 BC, and indexes of subjects, references cited, and words cited from Akkadian, Arabic, Aramaic, Egyptian, Greek, Hebrew, Hittite, Latin, Phoenician, Sumerian, Syriac, Tamil and Ugaritic.

While not agreeing with all of Cogan's interpretations (as if one could find a commentary with which one could completely agree!), this work provides many excellent insights and will need to be consulted by all students of Kings. In light of this, it needs to be in every serious collection.

David W. Baker

John J. Mulder, *I Kings*, vol 1: *I Kings 1-11*. Historical Commentary on the Old Testament. Leuven: Peeters, 1998. xxix + 604 pp., paper, \$66.00.

This volume continues an excellent commentary series, some volumes of which have already been reviewed in this *Journal*. Unfortunately, the author passed away in 1994, before he could see his work, originally published in Dutch, appear in English. Possibly due to this loss, the introduction, while adequate, is less extensive than some in the series have been. It covers various divisions of the Kings text, parallels between it and Chronicles and Josephus, authorship and dating (between 560-400 BC by redactor[s] using numerous pre-existing sources, with a discussion of the 'Deuteronomistic History'), the sections' character and content (focusing on the Davidic dynasty's consolidation of power), linguistic aspects (claiming associations with Deuteronomy and Jeremiah), the Temple of Solomon, and a very brief, and usually general, bibliography. It is in this last element that the reader will need supplementation.

The commentary itself consists of the author's own translation, a brief introduction to the pericope, and a detailed exegesis which particularly focuses on linguistic and historical material. There is little or no summary interpretation or theological reflection. Hebrew and other sign languages are generally left untransliterated and untranslated, so some degree of biblical knowledge is assumed. This will probably limit the volume to more serious, academic libraries. Thank the publishers for presenting this useful work, and regret the premature passing of the author, whose continued reflection would no doubt have made a useful volume excellent.

David W. Baker

Reviews

Iain Provan, *The NIV Application Commentary: Ecclesiastes-Song of Songs*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001. 399 pp., hardcover, \$24.99.

Provan, a minister in the Church of Scotland who teaches at Regent College Vancouver, British Columbia, has written one of the most recent additions to a fine series of commentaries, useful for all who take their study and exegesis of the Bible seriously. I have collected volumes in this series a few years ago on the recommendation of a colleague, and have been grateful for the insights provided by each author.

Provan's volume on Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs (or Song of Solomon) follows the same format as the others in the series. It begins with an introduction to each book, an outline, and a selected bibliography. What follows is a transcription of the text in the New International Version, pericope by pericope. This is followed by an exegetical study under the title "Original Meaning". "Bridging Contexts" makes up the next section, which seeks to move the reader from the original context to today's. Finally, the "Contemporary Significance" section applies the text to contemporary times.

For the sake of this review, I chose to study the section on the familiar text Ecclesiastes 3.1-22. The author's exegetical section is very well done, and is accessible to both pastors and lay students of the text. As is common throughout the series, words in an original biblical language are printed in a transliterated format. Provan does not assume that every reader understands Hebrew, and so translates the words in question as part of the context of his writing. Further, he will often give an alternate translation to that offered by the New International Version. If a grammatical issue arises, which might seem somewhat ancillary to the point of statement he is making, he places it in a footnote. I found even the footnotes helpful, though skipping over them does not damage the integrity of the scholarship.

The "Bridging Contexts" section does exactly that: it bridges the text in question with the rest of the Old Testament (and Old Testament history), and with the New Testament in its thematic context. Provan writes of a common theme throughout the section (in this case, "The Lord God is in control of time", p. 96). Not unlike Qohelet himself, the author plays something of a prophetic role when he says, "We forget that the Bible has not been given to us primarily to satisfy our curiosity, but to engage our lives. We forget that the resurrection itself does not appear primarily in the New Testament as an idea about the future, but as a ground for present faith and holiness" (p. 97). This is a word from the Lord for us all, and something that pastors and teachers of Scripture can apply to our own lives, as well as to the lives of our hearers.

Provan is very careful in his section on "Contemporary Significance" to avoid the pitfall that can happen so easily in such a pericope on application: staleness. The possibility always exists, when writing a commentary and seeking to make it apply to the day at hand, that the application will become 'not applicable'. While it may have been relevant to the time it was written, it runs the risk of becoming irrelevant to the times should the book sit on the shelf for five, ten, or twenty years. Provan's application of the text, while offering contemporary illustrations, is not so contemporary that it may cease to be useful to the preacher in another generation. He cites the concept of life after death as a commonality between the text and our society, which is true in virtually any age. He mentions the "proliferation of 'spiritualities'" (98), which is common today – though since future generations may note this era for being

'spiritual' (but not necessarily in the right ways), it will still serve as a good illustration in years to come. The author also cites the common phrase *carpe diem*, and relates it to the text, with a logical critique of its use in the film *Dead Poets Society* in light of the biblical understanding of the value of seizing the day. He is not afraid to critique the church, reminding us that the Christian faith is not so much about oppressive rules as it is about loving and enjoying God.

I highly recommend *The NIV Application Commentary* series as a valuable tool for anyone who wants to make the Bible come alive in their lives and in the lives of those they influence.

Jeffrey Loach

Marva J. Dawn, *To Walk and Not Faint: A Month of Meditations on Isaiah 40*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997. xiii + 189 pp., paper, \$15.00.

Marva Dawn is a gifted writer and speaker on areas where biblical studies and theology intersect with everyday life. Herself suffering from a number of physical infirmities, she is able to write, and show, God through the darkness. Those who appreciate her many writings will find benefit here as well.

After a brief introduction to how she wants people still to hear God in their daily experiences, Dawn places Isaiah 40 in its literary and historical context. She then has brief, 4-6 page meditations on each of the 31 verses of the chapter, making a handy monthly devotional guide. While not a commentary per se, the book looks seriously but readably at words, structure, and theology, particularly practical or applicational theology. It explores how centuries of religious literature can connect with our hectic, all too unreligious lives. Each section ends with a series of questions for further meditation, seeking personal, missional, and ecclesiological application of each verse of this key theological text.

The book will be useful for personal and corporate Bible study and prayer. Small groups should find it helpful as part of their spiritual formation, and students and preachers can use it as a model of making study of scripture relevant so it will touch peoples' lives.

David W. Baker

W. Dobbs-Allsopp, *Lamentations*. Interpretation. Louisville: John Knox Press, 2002. Hardcover, \$21.95.

This commentary is part of the Interpretation series of Bible commentaries designed for teaching and preaching. Dobbs-Allsopp writes with the desire that the discussions in this commentary be overheard by a Jewish audience as well. The text of the commentary was written before the September 11th attack, but is understood by the readers in a different manner after the tragedy. Is *Lamentations* a book more contemporary than we would like for life in this new century? *Lamentations*, notes the author, is perhaps known best from its use in services commemorating Jewish national calamities, particularly the destruction of the temple (first and second) and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Noted in the preface are the lines from

Reviews

the opening of Lamentations that were the first words from one New Jersey pulpit on the day after the terrible events of September 11, 2001: '*How lonely sits the city that once was full of people!*'

One will find that this commentary fits within the scope of the Interpretation series under the umbrella of commentaries published by John Knox Press. The series attempts to bridge the gap between more scholarly commentaries and the practicalities of the pulpit.

Dobbs-Allsopp's honest analysis of Lamentations as a whole underscores the text's harshness and its fumbling for answers that never come. The author refuses to back away from the harsh truth of the text, allowing the reader to see the hope that rises out of the ashes and ruins of Jerusalem. The commentary is helpful in seeing the poetic structure of Lamentations and 'gives permission to grieve and provides a vocabulary for grief.' Hope hangs on by the thinning of threads and this is one of the underlying messages of Lamentations.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, Texas

I. H. Marshall, ed., *Moulton and Geden Concordance to the Greek New Testament*. Sixth Edition, Fully Revised. London and New York: T. & T. Clark, 2002. xxi + 1121 pp., hardcover \$100.00.

The Concordance compiled by W. F. Moulton and A. S. Geden, revised and supplemented by H. K. Moulton in 1978, has been the standard Greek-text concordance and scholarly study of the New Testament for over a century. I. H. Marshall, with a team of dedicated laborers, has made this tool even more accurate, user-friendly, and visually appealing. This latest revision provides a concordance not only to the Greek texts of Wescott and Hort and Tischendorf, but also the fourth edition of the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament, the now-standard eclectic text. Every word except for the most common (the definite article, *de*, and *kai*) is represented. H. K. Moulton's supplement of prepositions has been fully incorporated into the main text, rather than standing at the back. Each occurrence of a word is given a separate entry, even when found within the same verse. Strong's numbering system has been discarded, which is appropriate since that English-Greek resource has long-since become outmoded by the lexical advances made by several generations. The whole has been typeset in a much more visually appealing font.

Dr. Marshall has retained the best features of the original concordance, most notably the listing of common words according to particular forms or usages rather than all together under one entry. For example, the entry for *eimi*, the verb "to be," does not merely give a undifferentiated string of occurrences of the word, but rather groups these by grammatical form (present-tense indicative forms, then subjunctives, optatives, imperatives, and participles; the imperfect and future forms). The entries for *ei*, the word "if," are subgrouped according to the common uses of the word: *ei*; *ei mē*; *ei tis*, etc. This makes for a much more helpful concordance as the student can both examine the occurrences of a particular form or usage in the New Testament, as well as have access to the complete array of uses of a word.

David A. deSilva

Donald Armstrong, ed., *The Truth About Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. 160 pp., paper.

The fourth Anglican Institute Conference Birmingham Alabama 1997 provided the forum for the nine papers published in this volume. Papers were given by Fleming Rutledge, Walter W. L. Eversley, Edward L. Salmon, John Koenig, Diogenes Allen and Gareth Jones. In view of their contribution to current debates about *Christology* I will focus on those offered by N. T. Wright and Alister Mc Grath.

Wright's short essay 'Jesus and the Quest' usefully sets the 'quest' for the historical Jesus (which has been rumbling along now for a quarter of a century) against the background of the Enlightenment. The Jesus Seminar follows the trajectory of William Wrede, Ed Sanders is in the line of Albert Schweitzer and Luke Timothy Johnson is a kind of Martin Kähler *redivivus*. Equally valuable is his summary of some elements of the lengthy *Jesus and the Victory of God*. What we have come to expect from Tom Wright all this is done with enviable lucidity and erudition and with even-handedness to those from whom he differs.

Underlying this essay is Wright's passion for Jesus and the Gospel as *history*. Commitment to the historical Jesus is a matter of genuine discipleship. We must abandon Jesus in the NT ('the Superman myth') as a mere vehicle for timeless truths for this is not true to history and it gets close to the old heresy of Docetism.

He concludes with three 'reconstructions' of the historical Jesus as relating to (a) the Kingdom of God and Eschatology; (b) The Meaning of the Cross, and (c) Jesus and the God of Israel. Jesus' context was Israel suffering for her sins under Gentile occupation where any promise of the 'kingdom of God' meant political liberation. His 'kingdom' message had nothing to do with heaven post mortem but the post-exilic prophets' hope of the restoration of Israel, her temple and her people. As 'Messiah' Jesus was the Lord's Anointed agent for this moment; 'Messiah' did not then imply deity as the Second Person of the Trinity. Jesus' death was the concentration in the sufferings of one man (the Servant of the Lord) of the so-called 'messianic woes' in which he took on himself the judgment of God for Israel's sins. By this act Jesus redeemed Israel and provided for the redemption of the world. Jesus saw himself as Yahweh's dynamic presence with his people. God was 'with him,' showed his face in Jesus' suffering.

But what is Wright's *Christology* in this short essay? On one hand he brackets himself with Ed Sanders and Ben Meyer in following Albert Schweitzer's identification of Jesus as an apocalyptic prophet. On the other, however, he states that 'Jesus believed he was Israel's Messiah'. It's unclear here whether Wright's Jesus is equally *both* 'Prophet' and 'Messiah', or whether he was at heart the one and only metaphorically the other, that is, whether he was a 'messianic' prophet or a 'prophetic' Messiah? This is unfortunate since his position is ambiguous in *Victory* where Jesus' understanding of himself as the Messiah is strongly argued.

In short, while this brief essay eases us into Tom Wright's innovative Christology, I do not think the author has altogether done justice to his own exposition of Jesus as the Christ articulated in *Victory* (see pp. 477-539). Furthermore, Wright's attitude to questions of ontology remain unclear to me. It is one thing to observe that in Jesus God was dynamically present and active. But was that divine presence and activity *unique* to Jesus in ways that the Nicene fathers struggled to express in ontological terms notably in the association that the Son was *homoousios* with the Father?

Reviews

In his 'Jesus: The Only Way?' Alister McGrath addresses the pressing problem of uniqueness of Christ for Christians in pluralistic western societies. This problem is sharpened by the distinction noted by Lesslie Newbigin between pluralism 'as a fact of life and... an ideology'. It is the latter that imposes such pressure on Christians as to both their own beliefs and their proclamation of the gospel which, if they hold to, brings the odium of political correctness.

McGrath urges dialogue between Christians and others, though not with the prospect of homogenizing the various viewpoints. On the contrary, McGrath sees dialogue as an opportunity to understand what others believe and in a context of mutual respect to press the claims of Christ. Such dialogue effectively forces Christians to re-assess their own foundations for faith and occasionally to re-open or re-align aspects of the faith under the pressure of doubt. McGrath laments that dialogue frequently skirts the critical differences, e.g., between Christians and Jews regarding the Incarnation of the Son of God.

In an exploration of semantic issues McGrath clarifies who 'God' is according to Christians and what they mean by 'salvation'. It is as if you only need to exegese these to get that Jesus is, indeed, the 'only way' whether to 'God' or to 'salvation'. 'God' is 'Christ-like' and 'salvation' is a redemptive relationship between God and his people achieved in and by Christ.

McGrath declares this salvation to be open to all people to which end he encourages evangelism. But it is not made clear whether those who do not specifically confess Christianity actually enjoy that salvation. Put bluntly, are those outside Christ *lost*?

Paul Barnett, Bishop of North Sydney

Ronald Brownrigg, *Who's Who in the New Testament*. London/ New York: Routledge, 2002. pp., paper, \$14.95.

Lavinia Cohn-Sherbok, *Who's Who in Christianity*. London/ New York: Routledge, 2002. pp., paper, \$14.95.

These two volumes are part of the Routledge Who's Who series which are meant to provide accessible biographical guides to the average reader. Other volumes in the series include Who's Who in Shakespeare; Who's Who in Jewish History; Who's Who in Twentieth-Century World Poetry. The series is not meant for scholarly research but in the instance of both of the volumes reviewed provide brief summaries of an individual's biography without commentary of significance assessed. Attention is given to relevant environment and archaeological evidence. The editors assume little knowledge of places and persons, therefore the reader is reminded of chronology of events plus other names and dates which might be helpful.

Who's Who in the New Testament is comprehensive including all those individuals mentioned by name in the New Testament along with those who are mentioned but are unnamed (the centurion, political groups, etc.) Of value is the English translation of many names cited. For example, Eutychus who unfortunately fell asleep during a long sermon of Paul, fell from a second story window. Fortunately, Paul ran to his rescue and pronounced him not dead but alive (Acts 20:9) The Greek translation of Eutychus is "fortunate."

Who's Who in Christianity cannot be as comprehensive as the former volume on individuals in the New Testament. Some individuals such as Jesus, Paul, Martin Luther, Pope XXIII could not be overlooked. Other entries were selected as representatives of certain historical eras or schools of thought. Each individual selected had a continuing effect on the Christian church. Helpful are the short bibliographical references cited after an individual's entry.

This reviewer finds these volumes to be readable and concise. Of course, for any serious study these descriptions would be of little use. They are designed as the preface says for the ordinary reader.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, TX

Greg Carey and L. G. Bloomquist, eds., *Vision and Persuasion: Rhetorical Dimensions of Apocalyptic Discourse*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1999. xii + 203 pp., paper, \$22.99.

This collection of essays seeks to bring the insights of rhetorical and socio-rhetorical criticism to bear on a body of literature that is least receptive to "traditional" rhetorical analysis, namely apocalypses. The essays are held together by a common interest in unpacking the strategies and techniques by which authors of apocalypses try to persuade their hearers to adopt a particular view of the world and set of attitudes and responses to the world. The collection includes the following contributions:

- Greg Carey, "Introduction: Apocalyptic Discourse, Apocalyptic Rhetoric"
- D. C. Polaski, "Deconstruction, Construction, Argumentation: A Rhetorical Reading of Isaiah 24-27"
- J. Kaltner, "Is Daniel Also among the Prophets? The Rhetoric of Daniel 10-12"
- D. F. Watson, "Paul's Appropriation of Apocalyptic Discourse: The Rhetorical Strategy of 1 Thessalonians"
- G. C. Steele, "Discipline and Disclosure: Paul's Apocalyptic Asceticism in 1 Corinthians"
- V. K. Robbins, "Rhetorical Ritual: Apocalyptic Discourse in Mark 13"
- D. A. deSilva, "Fourth Ezra: Reaffirming Jewish Cultural Values through Apocalyptic Rhetoric"
- E. M. Humphrey, "In Search of a Voice: Rhetoric through Sight and Sound in Revelation 11:15 -- 12:17"
- Greg Carey, "The Ascension of Isaiah: Characterization and Conflict"
- L. G. Bloomquist, "Methodological Criteria for Apocalyptic Rhetoric: A Suggestion for the Expanded Use of Sociorhetorical Analysis"

Vision and Persuasion is a groundbreaking work, since only a few articles had been published prior to this volume on the subject of the rhetoric of apocalypses. This volume anticipates, moreover, many more studies to come in this growing arena of scholarship.

David A. deSilva

Reviews

N. Clayton Croy, *Endurance in Suffering: Hebrews 12:1-13 in its Rhetorical, Religious, Philosophical Context*. SNTSMS 98. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. x + pp., \$59.95.

Clayton Croy's published dissertation provides a careful and sound analysis of Heb 12:1-13, particularly its theology of suffering in light of Greco-Roman and Jewish conversations about the meaning and purpose of suffering. Croy's examination of the athletic metaphors woven in throughout this passage sheds significant light on Heb 12:1-4, particularly regarding the meaning of "witnesses" in 12:1 and the proper translation of the preposition ἄντι (12:2) as "witness to" rather than "instead of." He also advances a compelling argument for understanding God's discipline in 12:5-11 as educative discipline rather than corrective punishment, exposing along the way the ideological commitments that tend to drive commentators to read this passage as punitive chastisement.

This work is a model dissertation in its formulation of the question, its critical interaction with the history of interpretation, its detailed examination of both the Greco-Roman and Jewish backgrounds informing a New Testament text, its methodological rigor, and its commitment to bring the fruits of exegetical work to bear on theological and pastoral applications of the text. It will become necessary reading for all future interpretation of Heb 12:1-13.

David A. deSilva

Holman Christian Standard Bible: Reader's Text New Testament. Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2001. 372 pp., \$6.99.

This new translation seeks to provide an accurate representation of the original Greek in current, idiomatic, readable English. It moves between "formal equivalence" (the attempt to represent to syntax of the original, represented in the extreme by the NASB) and "dynamic equivalence" (the attempt to capture the meaning of the original, represented in the extreme by the Living Bible and the Message). In general, the result is an accurate, contemporary translation. In some places, such as 1 Peter 2:7 and 3:7, it has overcome generations of faulty translation, showing that the team of translators indeed took pains to "rediscover" the meaning of the Greek rather than be influenced unduly by English predecessors like the KJV and RSV. Unlike the NRSV and the NIV "inclusive version," the HCSB does not seek "political correctness." The desire for a completely inclusive translation led the NRSV translation committee to replace many instances of "brothers," for example, with "believers" or "friends" or "beloved," diluting the impression of "kinship" that the New Testament author is intentionally trying to create. However, I would have found it preferable for both the NRSV and HCSB to use "brothers and sisters" consistently, achieving both the preservation of the meaning of the original and the benefits of non-gender specific language.

Of course, no translation is perfect, and all are ideologically motivated. The ideological bias of the HCSB may be apparent in its decision to place a subject heading between Eph 5:21

h 5:22, thus causing a reader to pause between the injunction to mutual submission and the instructions given to husband and wife. Placement of a subject heading here is a well-known device for muting the mutual submission that is to mark all Christian relationships so that the hierarchical model of the nuclear family (especially of marriage) may be retained and legitimated on the basis of Eph 5:22 and following (a position that could not be maintained if one began at Eph 5:21). Of course, the fact that Eph 5:22 has no verb and depends completely on Eph 5:21 for its to be supplied should lead any Bible translator to keep these verses together in a single section (indeed, even a single sentence).

But even more objectionable than such infelicities in the translation are the introductions to each book of the New Testament. These consist of brief notes touching on the following: the title; the key text (canon within the canon?); key term; one-sentence summary; and purpose. The one-sentence summaries are invariably reductions of the book to a piece of propositional theology. The summary of Hebrews, for example, reads as follows: "Jesus Christ, who is better than the angels, Moses, Joshua, and the Hebrew high priests, offered a better sacrifice and instituted a better covenant, making the old covenant obsolete and underscoring faith as the basis for God's approval." The "summary" represents only the propositional or propositional sections of Hebrews, and leaves the equally prominent -- and rhetorically dominant -- hortatory sections completely unrepresented. Is this an accident? a choice? Whichever, it strikes this reviewer as unwise. The New Testament authors seek to transform people's hearts and lives, not merely present propositional truths, and any presumption to "summarize" a New Testament book should reflect this larger purpose. Perhaps, then, the summary of Hebrews would better read, "Since Jesus Christ has outdone all previous mediators of divine favor in bringing us access to God, Christians are challenged to keep faith with Jesus no matter what pressures are brought to bear on them." At any rate, some summary that preserved both the propositional/propositional and the life-shaping emphases of Hebrews would have been more appropriate.

In some instances, the single-sentence summary is clearly enforcing the ideology of the translators/editors. For example, the message of Galatians is alleged to be that "sinners are justified and live out a godly life by trusting in Jesus Christ alone, rather than by keeping the law and doing good works." First, this summary statement assumes that Paul has to polemicize against good works as a basis for justification. In fact, he does not. He must only polemicize against those regulations of Torah and other Jewish customs that reinforce the distinction between Jew and Gentile. Paul, in fact, believes that doing good works leads to eternal reward (Romans 2:6-11). Second, "living out a godly life" must include the doing of good works for Paul, who expects to find "faith working through love" among his converts (Gal 5:6). So this summary statement tries to make the reader filter Galatians through a "good works versus faith" debate that never happened in Paul's career, and that represents a shallow understanding of the Reformation issues that gave rise to such slogans as "faith alone" in the first place. The summary sentence in Romans, which clarifies that justification means "imputed" righteousness, betrays a similar ideology, according to which Paul is not really concerned with transforming lives and hearts so that people actually do what is righteous before God as a result of following the Spirit given to

Reviews

them. The effect of these introductions is to provide a safe, conservative, proposition-oriented lens for the reading of the whole.

As with all translations, one needs to be wary in the use of this one. It is but a representation of the Word of God, and not the thing in itself. In any case, its editorial introductions should be ignored completely in favor of a more judicious introduction to the Testament.

David A. deS

Morna Hooker, *The Signs of a Prophet: The Prophetic Actions of Jesus*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 1997. 114 pp., paper, \$14.00.

Signs began as the Schaffer lectures delivered at Yale University (1995).

The core argument of *Signs* is that historically Jesus was seen (by many) in his day as prophet.

This affirmation is set against a sketch of prophetic activity in the OT. Here three kinds of such activity are identified. First, there are prophetic actions which manifest divine power (e.g., Moses dividing the Red Sea to allow the Hebrews to escape). Second, there are remarkable miraculous symbols which point to an act of God in the future (e.g., Jeremiah breaking a pot to point to the coming destruction of Jerusalem). Third, Professor Hooker points to miraculous signs that authenticate the genuineness of the prophet (e.g., Moses' staff that turns into a snake).

Morna Hooker notes that our usual identification of 'prophets' with the 'writing prophets' blurs the reality that Moses, Samuel, Elijah and Elisha were also prophets. This is especially significant in that these non-writing prophets were often associated with the various kinds of 'signs' noted above.

But was there a 'cessation of prophecy' with the completion of the Canon? To be sure, there were no more *writing* prophets. Yet Qumran texts and NT references make it abundantly clear that an expectation existed for the coming of 'a prophet like Moses' who is also called 'prophet' (as prophesied in Deut 18:18ff). Furthermore, a related hope was held for an Elijah-type prophet. Thus the rise of a John the Baptist, of various 'sign prophets' c. A.D. 40-70 (John the Theudas and the Egyptian) and the rise of Jesus himself as a prophet agreeably fits in with the beliefs of the post-Malachi era.

It is against this analysis and reconstruction that Professor Hooker points to Jesus as 'prophet mighty in word and deed'. The 'signs' that Jesus was, indeed, such a prophet were in particular. *First*, Jesus' miracles of exorcism and healing (whose historicity she accepts in broad terms; the 'nature' miracles she leaves out of account), which coincide with the category of OT miracle actions, point to the eschatological inbreaking of the Kingdom of God. But, *second*, there were also, as in the second OT species, non-miraculous symbols associated with Jesus. Among these were the choice of the Twelve, eating with outcasts and sinners and the final acts in Jerusalem – riding up to the City, the cursing of the fig tree, the clearing of the Temple and the institution of the Fellowship Meal. A critical part of Hooker's argument is that Jesus performed no sign authenticating his own ministry *per se* (the third OT category, noted above).

Morna Hooker allows that each evangelist, in his own way, 'interprets' Jesus to be more than a Prophet' the title of her final chapter. Mark and Matthew see Jesus as the Christ. Luke he is, above all, the 'prophet like Moses' and in John the one in whose miracle 'works' see God at work.

This raises some very large issues.

First, I ask whether Hooker's threefold format of OT 'signs' in her opening chapter did set up a too rigid template by which Jesus as a prophet must be measured and assessed?

Second, it seems likely that Professor Hooker has downplayed Jesus' deliberate choice of Twelve to 'follow' and 'be with' him. In light of the historic scattering of the twelve tribes Jesus' calling of Twelve must be considered both astonishing and potent in its times. Here is a gathered and a re-constituted Israel attached to Jesus. But this in turn must be connected with Jesus' 'new temple' Jesus said would be raised after three days.

Third, if *historically* Jesus was 'a prophet mighty in word and deed' how is it that the Gospels are not titled and focused on 'Jesus the prophet'? In fact, in their own ways each of the Gospel writers identifies his book and focuses its contents on Jesus as the Christ/the Messiah. To my mind, I do not believe Hooker has explained the process by which Jesus has come to be presented as the Christ and why Jesus as (the) prophet took a diminished role.

Here I offer two observations.

One is (as Vermes observed in *Jesus the Jew*, 1973) that the rise of the 'sign prophets' beginning with Theudas in the forties served to diminish the apostles' emphasis on Jesus as 'the prophet' which was true of Jesus historically and which was declared kerygmatically (in some of his speeches in Acts).

The other is that the disciples' recognition of Jesus as the Christ, and Jesus' acceptance of that title at Caesarea Philippi is, indeed, *historical*. To be sure, Jesus' initial 'Kingdom' proclamation in words and its 'sign', the expulsion of unclean spirits, was a 'prophetic' activity, one that dominated the earlier part of the Public Ministry. But over time it dawned on the disciples and came to be articulated by Peter for the Twelve that Jesus was the 'king of God's Kingdom', thus 'more than a prophet', the very Messiah and Son of David himself. From that confession given and received every subsequent action of Jesus was first and foremost *messianic*. The march by the Son of David towards David's City, the kingly Entry to Jerusalem, the cursing of the unresponding Fig tree, the 'sign' of the replacement of the Temple with a genuinely Davidic 'house'. Agreed, these 'signs' were *prophetic* in idiom, but only in a subsidiary sense. Primarily they were *messianic* signs. In David's City and to David's 'house' came the heir of David, his 'seed' to assume his kingly rule from which to build a new 'house'.

If, as I believe, these events are historical they must reflect Jesus' own mind so as to his identity and mission. In turn, these formed and shaped the thinking of the first Christians and established that the thought of the early church and its kerygma were messianic so that its people from the middle thirties were dubbed *Christianoil* 'adherents of the Christ'. Thus the thought of the NT is dominated by *Christology* that derived from Jesus himself. Hooker's preoccupation with Jesus as prophet obscures this.

Paul Barnett, Bishop of North Sydney

Reviews

John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus, vol. 3. Companions and Competitors*. Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York: Doubleday, 2001. xiv + 669 hardcover, \$42.50.

The third volume of Meier's projected four volume work, *A Marginal Jew*, focuses on the subtitle states, on those who surrounded Jesus, both companions and competitors. As in the previous two volumes, Meier's scholarship is outstanding, his documentation massive, and his conclusions well reasoned. While the reader may not agree with all Meier has to say, one will be greatly enriched by the experience.

The book is divided into two major sections, "Jesus the Jew and His Jewish Followers" (pp. 1-285) and "Jesus the Jew and His Jewish Competitors" (pp. 287-613). The book concludes (pp. 614-647) with a section entitled "Integrating Jesus' Jewish Relationships into the Whole Picture." In the first section, the followers of Jesus are divided into three groups, the crowds, the disciples and the twelve. The crowds are defined as those who show some peripheral interest in Jesus, but do not follow him closely. The disciples include those, such as Levi the tax collector and Mark and the Beloved Disciple of John, who follow Jesus, but who may not have been members of the Twelve.

The Twelve, Jesus' most well known disciples, represent Jesus' eschatological vision, looking forward to the reconstitution of Israel (see pp. 136-137). While there are small variations in the lists, the most significant being the replacement of Mark's Thaddeus with "Jude of James" in Luke 6, the lists demonstrate remarkable stability. Meier finds this fact all the more remarkable since the lists are found in various strata of gospel tradition (see pp. 128-141). Thus, Meier accepts the historicity of the twelve as deriving from the ministry of Jesus, a position that places him in opposition to the findings of Crossan and the Jesus Seminar.

The second section of Meier's book discusses Jesus' opponents. Here the reader finds one of the most readable and up to date examinations of the Pharisees (pp. 289-388), Sadducees (pp. 389-487) and Essenes and other groups (pp. 488-613) available in English. While the discussion is masterful, there may be some anxiety on the part of non-specialists as they find out how little is known about the first two groups. While laity and pastors alike may be confident in Josephus' descriptions of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes, Meier points out how unreliable these descriptions are. Furthermore, descriptions of the Sadducees come almost exclusively from their opponents, with earliest mention of their beliefs being found in Mk 12:18. Meier's treatment of the Sadducees, on the other hand, is sympathetic, viewing their conclusions as the product of a plain reading of the OT text, much as required by later historical criticism.

Meier's analysis of the Essenes may cause some discomfort for those hoping that the finds from Qumran would illuminate our understanding of Jesus and his message. In fact, the Essenes and Jesus are worlds apart, especially in regard to issues of purity. While there are superficial agreements in their eschatology, the understanding of who constitutes Israel is very different. Comparing Jesus' inclusive view with the Essenes' extremely exclusive vision, is very different. While we may be able to understand more about the diversity of Palestinian Judaism as a result of the discoveries of the Dead Sea community, Meier is somewhat skeptical about how much the finds help us in our recovery of the message of the historical Jesus.

In conclusion, Meier's analysis is one of the most even-handed available. His scholarship may be daunting for those not used to reading chapters where the notes are of equal length to the text, but the effort is rewarding. Since this work is volume 3 in a 4 volume work, it needs to be read in context of the other volumes, and, in fact, the reader is often referred back to findings of volumes 1-2. Meier is certainly not an evangelical, but his work gives evangelicals useful insights and tools for confronting some of the more extreme and media popular interpretations of the life and message of Jesus, such as the pronouncements issuing forth from the Biblical Seminar, or being given a hearing on the *Discovery Channel*. Meier's scholarship is solid, and will stand the test of time.

Russell Morton

Alan Millard, *Reading and Writing in the Time of Jesus*. The Biblical Seminar 69; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000. 228 pp., paper, \$31.95.

Alan Millard is the Rankin Professor of Hebrew and Ancient Semitic Languages at the School of Archaeology, Classics and Oriental Studies, University of Liverpool. His special interest in writing and literacy on the ancient Near East has led him to look at the same topic during the NT period. Two sentences from Millard's preface show what he is about in this volume: "not only the questions of who wrote and why need to be answered, but also of which languages were used for which purposes and whether there were differences between the religious, the literary and the legal and between the written and the spoken.... The recent documentary discoveries demand a new survey of the uses of writing [in Palestine] and a reassessment of the possibility that some people who heard Jesus speaking may have recorded his words." The later point is especially important since some claim a large time gap between Jesus' any documentation of it and of his teachings. This is then allied with an understanding of the existing material being unreliable and tendentious.

The book is divided into 8 chapters. The first explores 'ancient books and their survival.' Writing materials and surviving texts of various genres are discussed. Chapter two looks at 'early Christian manuscripts,' including complete Bibles and parchment copies, the writing of books, pre-Constantinian works, and even possible first century Christian fragments found among the material found in the vicinity of the Dead Sea (the actual existence of which is debated by Millard). Chapter three covers 'the form of the book: page versus roll', distinguishing between the scroll and the codex forms of manuscripts. Chapter four looks at 'writing in Hellenistic Palestine,' especially focusing on the various languages used in the region (Latin, Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew) and the types of material recorded in each. Quotations and black-and-white photographs illustrate the material under discussion. Chapter four ('a polyglot society') looks at bi- (or even poly-)lingualism in this period. Millard determines that Jesus would have spoken Aramaic, read Hebrew, and probably read and used Greek, and, from the evidence of the papyri, Latin probably was used by speakers of the period as well. While not stating that Jesus knew Latin, Millard's predecessor at Liverpool, W.J. Martin suggested that Peter might well have spoken it in order to sell his fish with the Latin aristocracy living near the Sea of Galilee (oral communication).

Reviews

Chapter six asks 'who read and who wrote?' There he makes the useful distinction between the two activities, a distinction all too apparent by those who have to grade student papers. Millard suggests that in all but the smallest towns people would have had access at least to ones who could read, and, while there were professional writers/scribes, the skill was widespread, though not universally pervasive, beyond them. In chapter 7 we are asked where we need to depend for information upon 'oral traditions or written reports,' and important distinction since many understand the former to mean less accuracy. An influential group of adherents to approaches of form criticism espouse this position, and analysis of Jewish (particularly rabbinic) pedagogy as well as that among the early Greeks suggests that orality is important. Millard, while accepting aspects of form criticism, critiques it, especially as regards the strict dichotomy between oral and written. He argues that writing would have been used alongside oral transmission 'at all levels of society'. The final chapter explores 'writing and the Gospels,' especially looking at the Dead Sea document MMT, which records the practices of the Dead Sea community, which was divergent from mainstream Judaism. Their records were parallel to those of the Gospel writers who also were departing from some of the main tenets of the Jewish brethren. Millard concludes that "the case being made is for notes of individual sayings or a collection of some, and reports of remarkable events. This is not the way the Evangelists began to compose the Gospels in Jesus' lifetime, but that some, possibly much, of our source material was preserved in writing from that period, especially accounts of the distinctive teachings and actions of Jesus." This is a significant conclusion, and directly at odds with much contemporary scholarship, not least of which that claiming to that designation by the Jesus Seminar.

The book is illustrated by 42 black-and-white photographs of textual evidence on a number of different media. It concludes with a 24-page bibliography that includes some material up to 2000 and indexes of references, subjects, foreign words, and authors cited. The book is a model of careful scholarship looking for objective evidence on an important topic. It must be in any serious academic library, and laypeople will also find it interesting and useful.

David W. Ball

Timothy B. Savage, *Power through Weakness: Paul's Understanding of Christian Ministry in 1 Corinthians*. SNTSMS 86; Cambridge/New York/Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1997. xvi + 251 pp., hardcover, \$54.95.

This study is a revised Cambridge doctoral thesis completed under Professor Morna Hooker in 1987. The subject is the central paradox stated by Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:10, "When I am weak then I am strong". The key questions addressed are why should Paul relish weakness? In what way could he ever be regarded as being strong? Against whom is he defending the ministry? And, what are his opponents advocating? Savage argues that Paul's interaction can be understood *only* in light of social realities in the Corinthian community, understood on the basis of what we know about Corinthian society as a whole. The use of written sources is fairly routine but he makes good use of unwritten sources. The resulting picture of ordinary people in the first century Graeco-Roman world is however unconvincingly uniform.

Part I, comprising the first two chapters, provides a rather rapid overview of the background to the paradox, covering the social setting of first century Corinth, then what Savage takes to be the four ministerial issues facing Paul in Corinth – his failure to boast, unimpressive physical presence, inferior public speech and refusal to accept financial support. According to Savage, late Hellenism promoted the ability of the individual to determine his own worth. This is very general and the study advances at this stage in little more than a series of notes. Roman emphasis on social stratification offered a framework for measuring such worth and the incentive to be ambitious through wealth or some other means – all to be acknowledged by others as people sought applause from others to bolster their self-esteem. Religion itself offered contact with the benefits such as health, wealth, protection and sustenance rather than moral transformation. And it served them “on their own terms – not to change them, but to exalt them” (page 34). They understand Paul’s refusal to boast as a lack of self-confidence and personal pre-eminence (page 34). His physical presence is weak because he lacks boldness when dealing with opposition. His speaking style lacks arrogance and forcefulness and the fact that he refused financial support robs them of the opportunity to boast of their own generosity, forcing them also to identify with his poverty (page 93).

Scholarship has tended to account for Corinthian dissatisfaction with Paul’s ministry by assuming that it originated with missionary intruders who opposed Paul, that their criticisms were religious in nature, and that all of this can be inferred from Paul’s apology. By contrast Savage argues that those who have been primarily disturbed by Paul’s ministry are Christian converts of the “freedmen class” who are influenced by Graeco-Roman attitudes towards both people and religion.

Part II, chapters 3 to 6, concentrates upon the meaning of “power through weakness”. Chapter 3 examines the *nature* of Christian ministry from the perspective of the glory of Christ, and chapter 4 from the perspective of the shame of the cross. Chapter 5 looks at the *pattern* of Christian ministry from the perspective of glory through shame and chapter 6 from the perspective of power through weakness. Paul asserts a paradoxical glory – an eschatological light and glory missed by many owing to their inability to see, blinded as they were by their own self-exaltation. This light appeared in Christ and was also missed since it was manifested in the cross. It can only be seen with eyes of the heart. It is not manifested through self-exaltation, grandiose speech and self-glorification but through humble service and self-emptying. So that the real power of the gospel was manifested through weakness. A brief conclusion is followed by an appendix dealing with the literary unity of chapters 10-13.

This is a satisfying study providing a reasonably convincing presentation of the situation at Corinth. It demonstrates just how radical Paul’s concept of ministry was in comparison to secularised Corinth. Savage demonstrates the relevance of popular culture in shaping the religious attitudes and social needs of first-century Christians in the Graeco-Roman world though he makes it appear rather monolithic. Moreover it is debatable that this social analysis can account for everything in Corinth. There were also specifically *religious* movements which had identifiable convictions which occasioned conflict and this cultural dimension must be examined to supplement Savage’s study. Sometimes categories foreign to the original are introduced as when we are told that the law encouraged “self-absorption” (page 136). And

Reviews

strangely enough 2 Cor 12:9 receives little direct attention, though there is much important exposition.

Robert Willoughby, London Bible Coll

John Stott, *The Story of the New Testament: Men with a Message*. Revised by Stephen Motyer. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001. 157 pp., hardcover, \$16.99.

Originally published in 1954 with the title *Men with a Message*, this New Testament introduction highlights the important contributions of each biblical author. Stott's main purpose is to prove that the message of each man is the outgrowth of his life and experience with Christ. Therefore, each chapter revolves around one New Testament author and draws the reader into the life of that person. Stott then draws the author's unique biblical themes from an understanding of his personal background. For example, the chapter on Mark is equally divided between "Mark the Man," "Mark the Writer," and "Mark's Message." Stott's secondary purpose is to show that the New Testament message is in fact unified in spite of the fact that it comes from such a diverse group of men.

The average, evangelical lay person who has had little exposure to scholarly works would be attracted to this volume for several reasons. First of all, such an audience tends to be more familiar with the characters (and thus the authors) of the Bible than it would be with the biblical audience or the historical background. In addition, the book is simply but clearly written with the language updated by Motyer, making it more accessible to a general audience. Basic terms, such as "grace" and "sanctification," are explained thoughtfully and thoroughly. In addition, Stott includes a number of colorful, visually attractive photographs, maps, charts, and boxed features. In order to accommodate a lay audience, he also divides the "Further reading" section at the end of each chapter into "Less demanding" and "More demanding, scholarly works."

With that said, there are some important things Stott could have included, but did not. Because he is so singularly focused on the biblical authors, he says very little about the cultural setting of the New Testament. Any historical or cultural information that is given is somewhat related to an author. For example, Roman tax collection is explained in conjunction with Matthew, the tax collector. However, there is no general historical overview of the intertestamental period, which is extremely important in understanding the events of the New Testament and their significance.

Stott also avoids mentioning a number of significant academic theories in his work. For example, he simply says that most scholars believe Mark was written first with little explanation or evidence. Another example is the fact that only a passing reference is made to the longer ending of Mark. Considering the intended audience, limiting the presentation of obscure academic arguments is justifiable, but not to the exclusion of such significant contributions.

Overall, Stott has given us a good introductory text. Any lay person wanting to study the New Testament for the first time would do well to start here. Stott's book could also be used in a high school New Testament class, but it may not be challenging enough to be used as

college or university text. While not intentionally designed for small group study, it could also be used in an adult discipleship class.

Jennifer Quast

Marianne Meye Thompson, *The God of the Gospel of John*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001. 279 pp., paper, \$22.00.

In this study, Thompson endeavors to examine “the neglected factor in New Testament christology” (pp. 1-15), how the person and work of God is understood by the author of John. She provides a readable, interesting and important contribution by highlighting how John’s understanding of theology affected Johannine christology. In short, Thompson understands christology as a function of theology, rather than vice-versa.

The book is divided as follows. The first chapter discusses the meaning of “God” in John (pp. 17-55). Chapter two analyzes what is meant when the Johannine Jesus addresses God as “Father” (pp. 57-100). The third chapter analyzes the “Knowledge of God” (pp. 101-143). The fourth chapter discusses the “Spirit of God” (pp. 145-188). Finally, Thompson addresses the issue of the worship of God in the Johannine community (pp. 189-226). The conclusion (pp. 227-240) summarizes her findings.

Chapter one indicates that for first century Jewish writers “God” is not an abstract intellectual construct. Rather, God is understood in terms of the divine relationship with Israel. In that context, God establishes specific agents, such as Moses (Josephus and Philo), the “Logos” (Philo), or Melchizedek (11QMelchizedek), who share in God’s nature and work (see pp. 32-38). Likewise, in the christology of the NT in general and John in particular, Jesus enjoys a special status. “It is precisely the exercise of unique divine prerogatives that, when predicated of Jesus in John, lead to the harshest charges against him: in claiming to bestow life and to judge – two unique prerogatives of God – Jesus “makes himself equal to God” (p. 47). Yet, John’s portrayal of Jesus does not jeopardize monotheism. Rather, monotheism is affirmed, since God’s most basic attribute is to bestow life. This role is given to the Son (Jesus), who, upon of the resurrection, acts as God’s agent to bestow life (p. 55).

Chapter two examines the role of God as “Living Father” in both the Old Testament and Second Temple Judaism. A remarkable agreement is found in the conceptions of God as Father in these sources. In both, God is the source of life. John is unique in that “God’s activity in relationship to the Son is all-encompassing and comes to expression in statements regarding God’s life-giving powers and activity in past, present and future” (p. 69).

Because of God’s unique relationship with the Son, knowledge of God is mediated solely through the person of Jesus (see ch. 3, pp. 101-143). Jesus alone knows God, and alone transmits this knowledge of God. No one is said to “know God” in John except Jesus, and those to whom Jesus imparts such knowledge. Again, Thompson relates this understanding of knowledge of God to concepts within the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Judaism rather than any supposed gnostic redeemer myth.

The Father is also made known is through the Spirit or Paraclete. Thompson gives a thorough analysis of the problem of the relation of the Spirit and the Paraclete in John,

Reviews

concluding that they are identical. Unlike other Johannine scholars (i.e. R.E. Brown), Thompson asserts that the Spirit-Paraclete is not a replacement for Jesus. Rather, the Spirit-Paraclete performs functions both of Jesus and the Father (see pp. 183-186). In short, Thompson adopts a theological rather than christological reading of the Spirit-Paraclete passages in John.

Finally, Thompson analyzes worship in the Gospel of John. Worship is to be in spirit and truth, both of which are revealed in and through Jesus. Jesus is not a replacement for the temple (contra N.T. Wright), as much as a replacement for Moses. The polemic against the "Jews" in John is that they do not know Jesus, who reveals the true worship of God, in "spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:23). This worship is what, in the view of the gospel writer, differentiates the Johannine community from the wider Jewish world which rejects Jesus.

Thompson makes an important contribution in emphasizing both the thoroughgoing theological nature of the Gospel of John, as well as its connections with Second Temple Jewish monotheism. Jesus is not a "second god" in John. Rather, he is in intimate relationship with the Father, the unique revealer of the Father. Her work needs to be taken seriously by any student of John concerned with the role of God in that Gospel.

Russell Mor...

Claus Westermann, *The Gospel of John in Light of the Old Testament*. Siegfried S. Schatzman trans., Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998, 106pp.

Westermann's book is both intriguing and frustrating. It is intriguing to have such a high caliber Old Testament scholar bring his insights to such a multifaceted New Testament text. It is frustrating for the lack of footnotes and references. The serious student or scholar interested in pursuing his suggestions and lines of thought is left without help due to a lack of a bibliography, appendix or footnotes. The more general reader will be frustrated by the lack of explanation of his points.

The Introduction opens with some promise in which he suggests a reciprocal relationship between the testaments. He outlines in broad terms some points of contact regarding compositional style themes, and prophetic echoes from the Old Testament. Unfortunately his Introduction is exceptionally brief and doesn't really develop many of these ideas in succeeding sections of the book. On page 17 he tells us that "In the Gospel of John the conversation bears the same significance as in the Old Testament." He then moves on to his next point without explaining this statement. He assumes the reader already knows understands the significance of the conversation in the Old Testament. He assumes a consensus point of view on the subject that is already fully appreciated by the reader. He does not unpack his assertion for the edification of the reader. He does not seem to be aware that the reader may not have the prior knowledge to be able to really appreciate his point.

On page 19 he asserts in passing that the story of the vine and the branches is a "general critique of the understanding of community as found in the Acts of the Apostles, where everything depends upon human activity." This is hardly plausible. Even a cursory reading of the Acts gives the reader a strong impression of the significance of the Holy Spirit. The day

ecost is centered on the activity of the Holy Spirit. Ananias and Sapphira are struck down by the Holy Spirit, in acts 11 Agabus prophesies by the Spirit.

Chapter 3 which is the longest chapter is devoted to a review of the "controversy dialogues" (5:17-47, 6:25-65, 7:14-30 & 36, 8:12-59, an 10:22-39) Westermann spends the bulk of the chapter discussing the gnostic character of the controversy dialogues, rather than bringing the Old Testament relationship into focus. He states that the controversy dialogues "belong more to early church history than to the Gospel of John." (p.24) He makes this assertion with no reference to prior scholarship on John. Leaving the reader with no real information on which to evaluate the basis of his claim. In discussing the father / son motif he tells us that "the roots of the language lie in the Old Testament." He then fails to direct the reader where in the Old Testament these roots are and begin to suggest what the significance might be. This highlights a major weakness of the book that runs throughout. Just when he directs the reader to a core of intertextuality he fails to take the reader down the road and examine where and how the Old Testament impacts the New.

Chapter 4 is a very short discussion of the significance of the Old Testament for the Gospel of John. Unfortunately he gives just the most cursory review an affinity between Jeremiah and John. He also mentions in passing some parallels between Jesus and the prophets. It would have been helpful to have him expand on these themes and the significance of the recording of conversations between individuals in both John and the Old Testament, instead just to whet the reader's appetite he moves on.

Relative to the rest of the book the Epilogue is rather long. It is a survey and critique of the perspectives of six major German New Testament scholars on their work on the Gospel of John (Bultmann, Kasemann, Bornkamm, Schotroff, Wengst and Thyen). The critiques are interesting, however they really add little to the book, as they seem somewhat out of place in a book that is supposed to be a discussion of the relationship between the Gospel of John and the Old Testament.

Overall the book is somewhat disappointing. As a short survey devoid of references, it is really not too helpful to either the general reader or scholar. The book presumes too much prior knowledge to help most general readers, and is too short on detail to really help the scholarly serious student.

C. Desmond Coles, Columbus, OH

W. L. White, *The Apostle of God: Paul and the Promise of Abraham*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999. xxxv + 277 pp., hardcover, \$24.95.

Professor White sets out to answer a perennial question: what happened that transformed Saul, the Pharisee and persecutor of Christians, into the radical follower of Jesus whom he believed to be the Messiah for the entire world? The answer put simply: White, a professor at Loyola University in Chicago, believes that Saul's personal vision (what he terms a "mystical experience") of the resurrected Jesus radically changed his idea of God. Rather than seeing him, God had vindicated Jesus in raising him from the dead. Consequently, Paul no longer viewed God primarily as lawgiver and judge but as the one who creates spiritual offspring

Reviews

(including "lawless" non-Jews) and brings them into the family of God.

White divides his treatise into three parts. In part one he surveys the major images and metaphors in each of Paul's letters. He concludes that Paul's metaphors point in one direct character of God as *creator*—which White believes is Paul's root metaphor for God. White's study of Paul's rhetorical processes in the letters confirms for him this underlying view of God as spiritual parent or Father. In part two White assesses how Greco-Roman ideas and political developments influenced Paul's view of God and his image of Christ. He surveys the concepts of divinity, cosmology, community, economics, universalism—given the Greco-Roman ruler and empire.

Part three consists of synthesizing chapters that draw conclusions for three crucial elements of Paul's theology: God as Father, Christ as Lord, and the church as God's family and people. This is a very fertile section that yields many illuminating insights. For example, White finds that Paul views God as the universal creator who displays his sovereignty as the founder (Father) of communal life, the providential sustainer of the social order, and the source of nature's order. White makes his case rather well, but I question that it is as open and shut as he makes it—that is, that the creator/Father motif dominates to the point of almost excluding other images. While demonstrating the crucial place in Paul's thinking for the image of God as creator and eager adopter of people into his family, White has not convinced me that this should displace other images or portrayals of God. The biblical writers strain to picture God in ways their readers could understand. So, for example, God is *both* judge *and* creator; for Paul, God's position as creator does not supplant his role as judge.

In discussing Christ as Lord (chapter 7) and the church as community (chapter 8) White provides many useful insights that help us understand Paul's words in light of the Greco-Roman cultural backdrop in which he wrote. Even apart from the rest of the book these prove to be useful summaries of Paul's understanding of these topics. Christ is Lord of God's Empire, head of the church and its priestly Lord. The church is the household of faith, consists of Abraham's offspring, and constitutes a heavenly city and divine empire.

A short epilogue concludes the book. It seeks to move interpreters of Paul away from limiting his emphasis to the doctrine of justification by faith. It is wrong, White contends, because Paul's language is more graphic and metaphorical than the abstraction of justification and because it overlooks Paul's new view of God as creator (rather than judge). White succeeded in showing crucial ways in which the Paul after his conversion differed from the typical Pharisee (and of the pre-conversion Saul). The book takes its place alongside others who rightfully question the centrality of "justification by faith" in Paul's theological system. While Paul may never have repudiated his phariseism, White shows that the abstract "justification" is not to capture the Christian Paul's theological heartbeat. But whether Paul completely abandoned the idea that God is judge as White seems to allege, I am not convinced.

William W. Klein, Denver Seminary, Denver, Colorado

David J. Williams, *Paul's Metaphors. Their Context and Character*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999. 432 pp., hardcover, \$24.95.

David Williams was, until his retirement, the Vice Principal of Ridley College, University of Melbourne, Australia. His book on Paul's metaphors is the culmination of research that flowed out of a series of lectures he had given twenty years earlier. There is every evidence of detailed research that adds to the value of the work. Williams draws from all of the relevant sources to illuminate the metaphors that Paul has used in his writings. He covers such topics as life in the city, life in the country, family life, and warfare and soldiering. In all, 12 topics are investigated. Each topic is subdivided, so for example, life in the army is divided over subheadings of the army, tactics, warfare, laying siege, taking prisoners, signals and drums, watch, the soldier's armour, the soldier discipline and commitment and finally the soldier's pay. Each of the main themes receives similar treatment.

The insights that Williams brings through this study are fascinating as he seeks to relate biblical customs and practices to the teaching of Paul and so brings out meanings that would be hidden from the mind of the non specialist. The book is an invaluable source for students and teachers. It is well bound and has an excellent index system.

There is only one thing that concerns me. Williams follows the methods that have so long gone unchallenged until recent years. He turns too readily to Greek sources for explanations when there are not only viable explanations found from OT text, but in this reviewer's thinking, much more convincing ones. If the Hellenisation of the Gospel is taken for granted and there is the attempt to read the NT in the light of the Old, it not only distorts Biblical theology, but reinforces the liberal assumptions that Paul was the creator of a new religion that had only tenuous connections with the teaching of Jesus and the Old Testament.

Tom Holland, The Evangelical Theological College of Wales

David H. Young, *The Parables: Jewish Tradition and Christian Interpretation*, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998, 332 pp.

Young's investigation and analysis is both interesting and challenging. The introduction gives a solid overview of parables in general as teaching tools. Young also surveys the relationship between Jesus's parables and the broader context of Rabbinic Judaism. He makes extensive use of Jewish materials related to Second Temple Judaism including the Mishnah, Talmud, Dead Sea Scrolls, as well as the work of modern Jewish scholars and other major secondary sources. The general outline he follows in his exposition of the various parables is logical and helpful. He opens with a "focus" section describing the basic thrust or theme of each parable. He then generally surveys the history of Christian interpretation, followed by an analysis of the original setting in life with a comparison to Rabbinic parallels if applicable, or Jewish tradition in general before bringing us to his conclusions on a particular parable.

Young's analysis of the well known parable of the prodigal son is excellent, and he provides some very interesting background information not found in most commentaries on this parable. He notes that according to Middle Eastern culture and Jewish tradition the older son

Reviews

should act as a mediator in times of family crisis or dispute. This shines more light on the older son's shortcomings. When the younger asked for his portion of the inheritance, the older should have intervened and attempted to talk his brother out of such a shameful request. The older son's inappropriate silence would have been noted by the original audience. The older brother has the responsibility to shield his father from the hurt of such an impudent demand from the younger child. This type of additional information offered by Young shows that in this parable the older son is not merely less important third figure, but a significant actor in this mini drama, and one with some more subtle but significant shortcomings of his own. The original audience then would have perceived the older son as failing in his family role and showing a level of selfishness similar to but more subtle than that of his younger brother. By passively acquiescing to the division of the estate he demonstrates that he too is selfish and self centered only in a different way, thus the later protestations of obedience by the older brother would have had a rather hollow ring to the original audience. The older brother is actually portrayed as being quite emotionally distant from both his father and younger brother, yet the father remains gracious and accepting of him as well. Young's exposition of this parable thus adds greatly to our understanding of this well known parable. Young's use of relevant cultural clues and Jewish sources are a primary strength of this book. Young is not merely rehashing minutiae of linguistic analysis or seeking some novel source critical angle, he is adding valuable new insights to our understanding of the parables through extensive comparison with Jewish thought, theology and culture of the Second Temple period.

Young's interpretation of the perplexing parable of the unjust steward is very stimulating and it might be more controversial than his other expositions. He contends (following Flusser) that Jesus's reference to "sons of light" (Luke 16:8) is not a reference to his own followers but rather a reference to the Essenes at Qumran, thus the parable is an indictment against the Essene policy of total withdrawal from the surrounding society, refusal to interact with outsiders and their financial policies. A less controversial, but illuminating point that Young makes is with regard to the owner's commendation to the fired steward for his shrewd action in reducing the debtor's debt loads. Young indicates that we are looking at an honor and shame culture. Honor being the highest good that can be attained, more prized than even material wealth. The fired steward attained honor for the owner by means of the debt reduction. If the debtors were as yet unaware that the steward had been fired, they would have attributed the good fortune of their debt reduction to the generosity of the owner, and publicly praised his generosity to others in the community. The owner would gain favor and honor within the community. The owner would then be in an awkward position where he could not go back to the debtors and ask for the original debts, such action would garner resentment and lower the high esteem he had just achieved in the community. The steward's personally motivated actions thus gained some goodwill for both himself and his former employer. Even if one rejects the association of "sons of light" with the Essenes, the illumination of the context in an honor and shame culture makes both the actions of the steward and the owner's response to his actions far more intelligible than they would otherwise be to a modern Western reader.

The above discussion selected only two parables to give a feel for his approach and contribution to the study of the parables, however his study adds valuable insights to all

ables he reviews. Overall Young's study of the parables is an excellent and stimulating contribution to the study of the parables and is well worth reading.

Christopher Coles

A. Carson, *New Testament Commentary Survey*. Grand Rapids: Baker, and Leicester: Varsity Press, 2001. 144 pp., paper, \$12.99.

This is the fifth edition of a resource actually begun by Anthony Thistleton, but which Carson has been consistently revising and updating since the third edition in 1976. The present volume seems to cover resources through 1998 very well, with some representation of commentaries written in 1999 and 2000. The multiplication of commentaries and monographs on individual books of the New Testament, and the difficulty of discerning the wheat from the chaff, makes this book a valuable resource indeed -- a must read for the student or pastor who is adding her or his library. Don Carson's expert guidance will save the beginner from many bad choices. Since the book, as a whole, represents one man's opinions, it would be valuable to check his suggestions against the recommendations of other professors or specialists, but Carson certainly provides all one needs to arrive at a "short list" of necessary resources and to be acquainted with the potential pitfalls and strengths of most books that a student might encounter in the course of researching an exegetical paper. This book is highly recommended.

David A. deSilva

R. Telford, *The Theology of the Gospel of Mark*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. 275 pp.

The Gospel of Mark, being the most analyzed and written about Gospel, stands as one of the key sources for early Christian tradition. Mark is the shortest of the Gospels and is generally understood by the majority of scholars as the earliest. Consequently, in recent years Mark has returned to the center as a key source for theology.

W. R. Telford, lecturer in Christian Origins and the New Testament at the University of New Castle in the United Kingdom, has provided a new volume to the excellent Biblical theology series published by Cambridge University, *New Testament Theology*. In it Telford has put together a thorough investigation and discussion concerning the Gospel of Mark's theology from the perspective of redaction criticism. It is important to note that this is not a comprehensive theology of Mark's Gospel. Telford acknowledges its limitations.

In the introduction, he says, "the principal method employed will be the historical-critical one (especially redaction criticism) but I shall draw upon the insights of the newer literary approaches where appropriate." The problem of this statement is that appropriate occasions for literary insights never seems to arise. While most literary critics make strides to acknowledge and often use the findings of historical-criticism within their methodology, this study never seriously considers any recent literary findings. In chapter two (pg. 147), Telford affirms the findings of recent literary studies which support his conclusion that the original ending for the

Reviews

Gospel of Mark was at 16:8. Yet following this conclusion, he raises the question as to why the Gospel is left with a short ending and no post-resurrection appearances are included. The result of the study is left wondering if there are any recent literary findings that may speak to the issue. At least to some limited extent. But Telford does not examine them.

Nevertheless, Telford has put together a thoughtful and helpful resource for scholars studying the Gospel of Mark. One of the greatest assets of this work is the bibliography and footnotes. Within them is a wealth of important scholarship. Anyone interested in Biblical studies and Theology will do well to read this book.

Andrew S. Hami

Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids/Carlisle: Eerdmans/Paternoster, 2000. xxxiii, 1446 pp., hardcover \$75.00.

At first, it appears incongruous that a professor of theology should write a commentary, especially in a series dedicated to the exegesis of the Greek New Testament. Anthony Thiselton, however, is also a distinguished NT scholar, whose works include several articles on 1 Corinthians, as well as several important books on hermeneutics. With a background in both New Testament and theology, Thiselton brings a wealth of learning to his commentary, including numerous excurses discussing important issues within the text, as well as the occasional exploration of *Wirkungsgeschichte*, or “post history” of the text (see especially 276-286, 1306-1313). Especially insightful are references to the Church Fathers, particularly John Chrysostom, as well as allusions to the thoughts of the Reformers.

Yet, Thiselton does not simply review the past. He is well aware of the current trends in interpreting 1 Corinthians, including rhetorical criticism. He is especially indebted to the work of Margaret M. Mitchell (*Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation* [Tubingen: Mohr, 1991]), as well as commentaries by Hayes, Fee, Barrett, etc. While he is open to rhetorical criticism, Thiselton is also aware of the limitations of the methodology, which he outlines in his introduction (pp. 52). He also, correctly, follows the lead of Mitchell and others who accept the unity and integrity of 1 Corinthians, rejecting theories that 1 Corinthians is a composite document made up of fragments of several letters.

Thiselton understands, with Mitchell, that one of the primary themes of 1 Corinthians is the issue of unity. Paul reverses the standards of the dominant culture, which Thiselton in places inaccurately labels as “secular,” where “honor” amounts to self-aggrandizement. Rather, the Corinthians are called upon to reject factionalism and self-seeking. As a result, in his discussion of 1 Corinthians 12-14, Thiselton, as opposed to Fee, sees the primary emphasis of the discussion of the gifts as being an exhortation to unity, rather than a call to recognize diversity. While his views on certain gifts, particularly tongues, will not be acceptable to all, particularly Pentecostal believers, the focus on Paul's imagery as stressing the unity of the church is helpful.

While the book has much to contribute, there are some features that detract from its overall usefulness. The first is, in line with a number of other commentaries published in the last decade, its imposing length. Thiselton at times seems so anxious to discuss every opinion

controversial points that the reader is bogged down in a mass of detail. On manifestation of this redundancy is the citation of works that are now dated, such as Grimm-Thayer, even when these volumes do contribute substantially to the discussion and a reference to BAGD would suffice.

More troubling, however, is the inordinate number of misprints. These are especially prominent in the misspellings of German, Greek and Hebrew words, as well as incorrect spellings of names. Furthermore, on pp. 810-848, the footnote numbers at the bottom of the page do not correspond to the numbers in the text. It is to be hoped that later editions will correct these problems.

Yet, despite these caveats, for the reader who is willing to sift through a mass of detail, Melton has written an important and useful commentary. If one has the time and patience to wade through the details, much may be learned.

Russell Morton

William M. Ramsey, *Historical Commentary on Galatians*. Edited by Mark Wilson. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1997. 366 pp., paper, \$14.99.

This revised edition makes Ramsey's classic work on Galatians newly available in modern typeset, with updated geographical references, use of the reference system of the Loeb Classical Library where applicable, and the like. The first half of the book (originally the second half, in Ramsey's organization of the whole) presents the "commentary," which is more like a series of notes or excurses on specific topics in the interpretation of Galatians. The second half presents a detailed discussion of the history and peoples of Galatia.

David A. deSilva

Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998. 366 pp., hardcover, \$69.95.

Bring together the name Ernest Best and the International Critical Commentary Series of T&T Clark and you can be sure that you are going to be treated to the very best in scholarship, and that is what is realized in this Commentary on Ephesians. The choice of scholar was natural, for Ernest Best began his post graduate theological research with a thesis on Paul's understanding of what being 'in' and 'with' Christ means. Unless that basic concept is clear it is impossible to enter into the theology of St Paul and it is of course a key term in the letter to the Ephesians. Despite this connection, Best questions Pauline authorship.

The exegesis is detailed and thorough. It is judicious in weighing the evidence and there are all the marks of the most careful scholarship from a man from whom we would expect the best. Within this welter of detailed information are the occasional pastoral insights, when for example, Best notes the nature of Paul's praying when commenting on his request for prayer. He is not asking for personal deliverance, but that he might be kept faithful to his calling to make Christ known.

Reviews

The work is based on the Greek text, which is essential for a work of such a standard. However, it is a pity that the publishers have not been able to accommodate some concessions for the non Greek reader such as the Word Commentary series has, for if they had done, I would imagine the series would have a much wider readership outside of the academic community. The work is accompanied by the same high standard of indexing for authors, subjects and texts, which is common with the ICC series.

The only negative comment that this reviewer would give is that Best deals with the letter as though it is written about the experience of individuals, hence his discussion on what the sealing of the Spirit means in 1:13. He follows the well-worn path of relating the text to individual Christian experience when the letter is to the church and its theology is about the church. Such facts, I would suggest, ought to make us ask the question whether the theology is dealing primarily with the community's experience, and secondary with the individual's experience, normally dealt with in the instruction sections to groups of people, i.e. fathers, children, masters etc. Such a refocusing of the hermeneutical principle will bring to the surface thought patterns and hence a theological depth that Best's approach, in this reviewer's opinion, has failed to observe.

Tom Holland, *The Evangelical Theological of W*

Gordon Fee, *Philippians*. InterVarsity Press, 1999, 204 pp., \$17.99.

The outstanding exegete and New Testament scholar Gordon Fee has produced a gem in his IVP commentary on Philippians. This is an illustrious volume in the InterVarsity Press New Testament Commentary Series and a major resource for pastors, students and Bible study leaders. The series focuses on contemporary relevance, solid biblical exposition and a user-friendly format.

Dr. Fee replaced F.F. Bruce as editor of the esteemed New International Commentary series. In that series he authored the commentary on Philippians. However, this latter commentary on Philippians is not just a smaller version of the larger one. The exposition is "lightened up" and the many footnotes of the larger volume have been almost eliminated.

The commentary views Philippians as an ancient letter written in the style of first century letters. Throughout it is based on a mutual friendship between author and recipients and is neither bombastic nor caustic. The setting is carefully placed in the Greco-Roman world of first century Philippi. The letter deals gently with external opposition and internal unrest facing the Christians at Philippi. These are incipient in form and thus not catastrophic but in need of corrective exhortation to avoid future demise.

The passage by passage commentary contains friendly exhortation, encouragement for facing opposition and suffering while partnering in the gospel, rejoicing in Christ Jesus and standing firm in the Spirit.

Richard E. Allis

aham J. Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*. Anchor Bible 32B. New York: Doubleday, 2000. xx + 508 pp., \$50.00.

A. J. Malherbe has contributed much to our understanding of the Greco-Roman legalists and the importance of these philosophical-ethical traditions for our reading of Paul's letters. A commentary on Thessalonians from this distinguished scholar, who has already written several ground-breaking monographs on the Thessalonian epistles, is therefore a welcome source. The volume includes a new translation of the epistles, an introduction to each letter, notes on specific or technical issues in the text, and "comment" sections in which the meaning of the text, enriched by the discussions in the notes, is brought to bear on the pastoral exigencies of Thessalonian Christians.

A striking feature of the commentary is Malherbe's decision to treat 2 Thessalonians as a genuine letter of Paul, addressed to the congregation just a brief while after 1 Thessalonians. It has become fashionable in scholarship to group 2 Thessalonians with "Deutero-Pauline" letters, and so the arguments posed to the contrary by a distinguished scholar are bound to have important reverberations in treatments of Pauline letters — and the tendency to give 2 Thessalonians a secondary place in studies of Paul's theology and ethics — in the decades to come.

Particular strengths of this commentary include Malherbe's sensitivity to the epistolary conventions of Paul's time and the epistolary types that provide a framework for how Paul's letters would have been heard. An even more noteworthy feature is the wealth of Greco-Roman literature brought to bear on Thessalonians as Malherbe scours that all-too-often neglected background for comparative texts that illumine both the world of the addressees and the language and arguments of Paul. Malherbe's own deep involvement with popular philosophical movements in the first-century may occasionally lead him to prefer an interpretation with which a reviewer would disagree, for example reading Paul's censure of the people who say "peace and security" (1 Thess 5:3) as directed against the Epicurean quest for "security" in retirement from public involvement as opposed to the more obvious and ubiquitous Roman imperial propaganda. Nevertheless, Malherbe presents the options fairly, which will allow each reader to ponder the options and decide for herself or himself whether or not to follow Malherbe's conclusions.

Much to the chagrin of its primary readership, the Anchor Bible volumes are becoming steadily expensive, particularly when compared to the costs of other critical, hardcover series. Nevertheless, this particular volume is worth strong consideration for the pastor's and scholar's library.

David A. deSilva

lin G. Kruse, *The Letters of John*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000, 255 pp., hardcover, \$30.00.

lin Kruse, lecturer in New Testament at Bible College of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia, has made a major contribution in his commentary on the letters of John. His work is a volume in the Pillar New Testament Commentary series by Wm. B.

Reviews

Eerdmans. The Pillar series is published for teachers, pastors and students. Emphases are on clarifying the meaning of the text, interaction with informed contemporary debate and avoidance of an overabundance of undue technical detail.

Exegesis of original languages by the author is evident but a working knowledge on the part of the reader is not essential. Exposition is accomplished with pastoral sensitivity and theological awareness. Kruse provides excellent exposition, a treatment of introductory matters and historical context in addition to exploring authorship, purpose, audience and theological themes. He assumes a close relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the letters of John.

The two principle concerns of the literature as identified by Kruse are assurance of the believers and the secessionists. The secessionists circulated among the churches propagating beliefs contrary to the authors teaching confusing the believers. At issue, were the doctrines of the humanity of Jesus, the atonement, the role of the Spirit, the meaning of koinonia and eternal life.

The author's exposition is clear, balanced, insightful and edifying. Solidly based on a knowledge of the Greek text, the commentary carefully provides a verse-by-verse exposition of each letter. At a difficult time in the history of the early church, Kruse perceptively expounds the apostolic defense of orthodox belief. This volume is an invaluable, lucid resource for a study of the three letters for pastors, teachers and serious students.

Richard E. Allis

R. H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (revised). NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. xxxvi + 439 pp., hardcover, \$44.00.

Mounce's 1977 commentary on Revelation was rightly lauded as a new benchmark in biblical scholarship on this elusive text. He provided a thorough explanation of the text in light of John's use of the Old Testament, interaction with contemporary phenomena of the Roman empire and the province of Asia, and other essential features of historical-critical interpretation. In his revised edition, Mounce has updated the bibliography fairly well through 1993, with a few words from after that date. He has modified his own position on recapitulation somewhat, and retained his premillennial orientation. It remains in many ways, however, a 1977 commentary. More recent work in social scientific criticism, or the application of sociology of religion and sociology of knowledge theories to the interpretation of Revelation, have not impacted Mounce's commentary. Mounce's reflections on Revelation as "apocalypse" tend to be limited to formal features of the genre rather than extending to models of how apocalypses shape the hearers'/readers' perceptions of their worlds and motivate them to function within it. All this to say that Mounce's commentary is as good, if not better, than it was in 1977, but has not moved appreciably forward from that point in terms of interpretational paradigms.

David A. deSilva

Edward L. Thompson, *Revelation*. Abingdon New Testament Commentaries. Nashville: Abingdon, 1998. 207 pp., paper, \$22.00.

The purpose of the Abingdon New Testament Commentaries is to provide "compact, critical commentaries on the writings of the New Testament" (p. 9), geared toward upper level college and university students, as well as pastors and other church leaders. When writing such a commentary, especially on the Apocalypse, writers face two temptations. Either they may write a commentary that is excessively detailed and esoteric, or, in the effort to communicate clearly they may write a simplistic commentary. Thompson avoids both of these pitfalls, and in the process provides a lucid, informative commentary, which will be most helpful to the lay reader or pastor. The bibliography (pp. 191-197), while not extensive, provides the reader with a solid foundation. Some of the most important secondary literature on the Apocalypse.

Thompson takes both the message and background of Revelation seriously. The reader is treated to a wealth of parallels from the OT, early Jewish writings, including apocalypses, Greco-Roman parallels, and rabbinic writers. His discussion of Rev. 4-5 (pp. 88-100), the beasts in Rev. 12-13 (pp. 131-143), and the New Jerusalem in Rev. 21:1-22:5 (pp. 180-190) are particularly strong. The reader is reminded that all Christians contemporary to John (pp. 174-175) do not necessarily share John's vision of Rome. John's message of hope and confidence in God is also emphasized (pp. 189-190).

Thompson's outline of Revelation is, perhaps, his weakest point. He follows a conventional pattern of seeing Revelation as consisting of seven parts, consisting of Rev. 1:9-2:2; 4:1-8:1; 8:2-11:19; 12:1-14:20; 15:1-16:21; 17:1-19:10; 19:11-22:5. The seven-fold structure is introduced by an epistolary introduction (1:1-8) and concluded with a final assertion of confidence in God and the Lamb in 22:6-21. While this structuring may be helpful, the reader should also be aware that Revelation consists of numerous ring structures, where the reader is reminded of what has occurred earlier in the text. These are particularly prominent in common language found in Rev. 4-5 and 19:1-10, as well as Rev. 2-3 and 21-22. In short, Revelation has a interlocking structure, which is not well reflected in Thompson's analysis.

Thompson's locates the message of Revelation within the late first century. This fact, along with parallels to Greco-Roman writers and Jewish-Christian tradition, should also warn readers to avoid misusing John's vision as a roadmap to the future. Rather, John's message is a warning against compromise with Rome. From reading this commentary, readers may be encouraged to speculate in what ways current western and American culture, like Rome, are hostile to the claims of the Gospel. For example, what would be John's response to our own compromises with consumerism would be in light of the condemnation of Rome's economy in Rev. 18 (pp. 166-172)?

One final caveat may be needed. The average reader will need to keep the text of Revelation handy when reading the commentary. Thompson's discussions are often brief to the point of abrupt, and the reader who lacks knowledge of the context of Revelation or the ancient world could easily be lost. Nevertheless, Thompson has provided an excellent resource to introduce non-specialists to the Revelation of John. It can be used with profit by pastors and laity, as well as teachers of undergraduates. Readers exposed primarily to popular approaches to John's

Reviews

visions will be challenged, and may need to re-evaluate their positions. As such, the book provides a valuable service.

Russell Moore

A. K. A. Adam, ed. *Handbook of Postmodern Biblical Interpretation*. St. Louis, Mo.: Chalice Press, 2000.

A. K. A. Adam, ed. *Postmodern Interpretations of the Bible – A Reader*. St. Louis, Mo.: Chalice Press, 2001.

"Postmodernism," Richard Rorty is alleged to have quipped, "is a word that pretends to stand for an idea." The perspicuity of Rorty's definition notwithstanding, "postmodernism" is a notoriously slippery term. Depending on who wields it, the word may, for example, serve as a catch-all for trends in popular culture, represent an amalgam of inscrutable ideas of interest to academics, or signify a philosophical *bête noire* that threatens the end of Western civilization and life as we know it. Whether the two books under review here will reinforce or counter any of these or other ideas will of course be up to the reader. In any case the interested reader will find in them a readable, provocative, and most welcome portal into postmodern thinking, in the first case (and in the words of the editor) by "talking about postmodernism" and in the second by "talking postmodern-ly."

While the title of the first book is straightforward, its referent is devious. The table of contents gives it the look of a "handbook," promising (as one has come to expect from such things) a concise but complete capsule of every entry in turn. The topics listed include people prominent in postmodern discourse (e.g. Bakhtin, Derrida, Lyotard), as well as themes (deconstruction, intertextuality, postcolonialism) and postmodern treatments of conventional topics (e.g. historiography, scholarship, truth). Reading through the entries, however, becomes a messy business, for it soon becomes apparent that the entries are not self-contained. The discussion of "postcolonialism," for instance, spills over the margins of its own entry and pops up again within titles such as "identity," "sexuality," and "translation" and in the context of summaries of such figures as Derrida and Lyotard. Voices and topics appear, disappear, and reappear in different combinations and discourses, resisting the sense that anything has been "fully covered."

In a similar fashion the contents of the first book exceed the promise of the title. The entries not only concern themselves with what "postmodern interpretation" looks like but also with aspects of contemporary thought that have influenced its development. There are "postmodern interpreters" of the Bible among the personages addressed. Rather, the reader is introduced to figures whose thought has influenced the way that biblical interpretation is being recast (though few of those addressed have themselves engaged in the practice). Because it does more than address biblical interpretation, this volume is an excellent resource for anyone seeking a substantive engagement with postmodern thought.

The contributors to the second volume take up (directly or indirectly) many of the strains of postmodern thought introduced in the first. The readings presented here offer

findings into the whole of the canon and provide accessible exemplars of postmodern interpretation in practice. They demonstrate both the diversity of perspectives offered by postmodern discourse and the rich benefits to be gained by viewing the biblical text through other lenses.

I recommend these books not only to those who are interested in exploring a new hermeneutic but also to anyone who is interested in getting past the "word that pretends to stand for an idea." As such, I believe they will become an indispensable resource for both the newcomer and the seasoned veteran. I, for one, shall return to them often.

L. Daniel Hawk

Guinness, *Time For Truth: Living Free in a World of Lies, Hype and Spin*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2000. 128 pp., paper, \$10.99.

In 1973, Os Guinness' first book and now classic *The Dust of Death* was published. The breadth of this book astounded many of us. Guinness had managed to analyze Western culture through the 1960's from a Christian perspective in a way that was profound, comprehensive, and quite understandable to those of us living in the midst of that turbulent era. He wrote from first-hand experience quoting directly from the voices of that era. Since then he has been one of the West's clearest voices in providing cultural analysis through Christian lenses. Now he has taken on the monumental task of summarizing and critiquing Post-modernism in the book *Time for Truth*.

Guinness describes how people have been deceived into thinking that the dismantling of truth and the loss of all meaningful and traditional moral distinctions in the West will usher in a New World of "greater enlightenment and freedom." In response to this loss, he describes his purpose to warn the West against what will be the "death knell of Western civilization in general and the American experiment in particular." This is because it amounts "to a profound crisis of cultural authority in the West—a crisis in the beliefs, traditions, and ideals that have been decisive for Western civilization to this point"(13).

Guinness admits that this small book (only 125 pages) is not a comprehensive study of postmodernism, but his work is quite broad and foundational. The first two chapters examine how the loss of truth has effected the crises in ethics and in character. He cites the loss of principled ethics, the preference of social ethics to personal ethics, and the superficial view of evil. He quotes Karl Menninger's analysis of sin being defined down to crime and then eventually sickness. Guinness has a helpful summary of how Nietzsche's view of power has become central to postmodernism. He also shows the character of postmodern ethics in the way the Nobel prize was awarded in 1992 to Rigoberta Menchu, even though much of the writing was not factual but fictional. This development has created a culture of "spinmeisters". He also uses such examples as Samuel Clemens' creation of his alter ego, Mark Twain, as an example of someone who "created himself" in the manner that has become popular for all twenty-first century image-builders. Image has established itself as more important than character.

His third chapter looks at postmodernism's impact on America at the national and global levels. Guinness discusses political correctness, "lawyered truth", and the loss of a center

Reviews

in Western thought. He describes how Clinton became the first postmodern president, followed by a very insightful section on the seven habits of postmodernist lying. In chapter four he shifts building support for a Christian view of truth and begins by comparing Primo Levi's suicide to the Christian witness of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. Guinness writes, "Levi's view of truth left a weary Sisyphus with a hopeless task, Solzhenitsyn's made him a sword in God's hand, allowed him to raise a voice to rally the world" (75). He then lays forth two arguments for a high view of truth and argues that truth must be the basis of freedom. Guinness states, "Truth without freedom is a manacle, but freedom without truth is a mirage" (87). In the last chapters he presents strategies for responding to those who reject truth and at the difficulties one who attempts to live out truth. He uses the method of Francis Schaeffer by demonstrating how postmodernism and relativism clash with reality and cannot really be lived out. Guinness argues that the holocaust teaches us the reality of true evil and that "when we come face to face with raw, naked evil, then relativism, nonjudgmentalism, and atheism count for nothing. Absolute evil calls for absolute judgment" (103). How much more are we aware of this in the light of the events of September 11!

Guinness aptly performs the role of apologist, and continues as one of Christendom's foremost cultural critics. Christian truth stands directly in conflict with postmodernism. Guinness recognizes that we cannot simply replace the postmodern with a return to the modern. They are equally faulty. This is a watershed moment and we must choose the third way, the Christian view of truth, in opposition to both the modern Enlightenment view of truth and the postmodern deconstruction of truth. Those of us who desire to reconstruct society must realize the nature of those ideas that must be deconstructed first. Postmodernism is at the core of this effort.

This is a serious topic for those who want to understand the implications of the loss of truth. Guinness writes "For the lies of Western society—particularly as they are compounded by the "culture cartel" of postmodern academia, advertising, entertainment, and youth culture—more seductive and enduring than those of communist society" (19). This writer has read numerous summaries and critiques of postmodernism and if I were to recommend just one book to explain what postmodernism is, its historic roots and developments, and how Christians should approach this non-worldview world view, then it would be to read and study *Time for Truth*.

Mark Hamilton, Ashland University

Evangelical Dictionary of Theology, 2nd ed., edited by Walter A. Elwell. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2001. 1312 pp., hardcover, \$49.99.

This tome is the second edition of a widely and well-received dictionary in the 1990s which itself was designed to succeed *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, published in 1960. The editor is Walter Elwell, a professor at Wheaton College Graduate School. The goal that Baker set out for this book in its first edition, according to the preface, was "to construct a one-volume reference work on theology that was both up to date and academically accurate, yet accessible to the average layperson" (p. 5). The main differences between the first and second editions are the addition of about 215 new articles and the deletion of about 100 others, along with the inclusion

articles about theologians who are still living, not all of whom might comfortably be considered evangelical.

This caught my attention, so I read the articles on two such theologians. Both were written by R.A. Peterson, and both give a fair and honest account of the contributions of Sallie Krawcheck and Rosemary Radford Ruether to the work of theology today. What impressed me about both is that Peterson chose to conclude each article with a few words about what evangelicals can learn from such theologians, as well as what evangelicals need to be concerned about with respect to their work.

There are four pages listing contributors, among whom are several "big" names, such as Geoffrey Bromiley, J.I. Packer and the late F.F. Bruce, as well (gratifyingly for some) as a few Canadians, such as Ian Rennie and the late Stanford Reid (both Canadian Presbyterians).

Each article is written in a very readable fashion, with a length that in most cases is easily digestible. Cross-references are provided toward other articles that may be of interest to the reader, and a bibliography is provided, listing a short variety of books which presumably were used in the writing of the article.

There were a few areas, such as in the articles on "Church Government" and "Church Offices", where I believe that a more accurate definition could have been given had the various sections of the articles been separated as individual articles, and written by those within each tradition. For example, it might have been more helpful had an Anglican written the section on episcopal church government, a Presbyterian on Presbyterianism, and someone from the Congregationalist tradition on Congregationalism. Likewise, if each office peculiar to a particular tradition had been written about by one from that tradition, there might have been fewer picayune errors.

On the whole, however, this book is a valuable contribution to the continuing life and health of the Christian church, and particularly its evangelical witness. It is a very heavy volume, and readers are advised to keep it on a lower shelf or on a table. It would make an excellent reference volume for the church library, the pastor's study, or the lay person's bookshelf. As well states in the preface, "If this volume informs you intellectually, strengthens you spiritually, challenges you personally, or deepens your walk with the Lord, we will have achieved our purpose" (p. 5). I believe that the purpose has been achieved.

Jeffrey Loach

Harold J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998, 1312 pp..

This work is a revision of the author's *Christian Theology*, first published in 1983, which has become a standard text in seminary systematic theology classes. The overall plan of the book and much of the content remain the same. Erickson has updated the discussion to reflect the changing theological landscape. This updating is especially evident in the Logomene section, which contains a new chapter on postmodernism and new sections on reconstruction (chapter 2), structuralism and reader-response interpretation (chapter 4), and speech-act theory (chapter 6). In his chapter on theological method, Erickson has inserted a new chapter, which he calls "consultation of other cultural perspectives" (pages 74-75). In the course of

Reviews

the book, he responds to some other recent texts, such as Stanley J. Grenz's *Theology for Community of God* (pages 1044n17 and 1045n19). He also refers briefly to the views of other theologians (pages 307 and 386n13).

The book's clear presentation and its usefulness in teaching have always been among its strengths. In this edition, Erickson has enhanced its usefulness to teachers by adding objective chapter summaries, chapter outlines, and study questions to the beginning of each chapter. Before, the extensive Scripture and subject indexes make the text very useful as a reference. Despite its length, the hardcover printing is very reader-friendly, with a good binding, attractive layout, clear headings, and a readable font.

Other strengths of Erickson's volume include his careful descriptions of opposing viewpoints and the irenic tone he maintains throughout. In light of this general thoughtfulness, it is unfortunate that he has chosen not to revise his statement that Arminianism is based "in part upon [God's] foreknowledge of *merit* and faith in the person elected" (page 852 in the revised edition, 835 in the original; emphasis mine). Arminian theologians do not argue that salvation is based on human merit, even in part. Erickson's discussion of Arminianism in general would be improved if he addressed the Arminian view of corporate election, which reflects Arminius' own perspective and has broader acceptance among evangelical Arminian theologians today than does the election of individuals based on God's foreknowledge of their response.

Nevertheless, this update ensures that Erickson's text will continue to be a popular choice for evangelical seminaries looking for a moderately Reformed text in systematic theology. Readers of all theological persuasions will continue to benefit from Erickson's careful discussion of the issues, even if they ultimately disagree with his conclusions.

Brenda B. Collier

James Leo Garrett, Jr., *Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical, & Evangelical*, Volume 2. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995. 872 pp. (Out of print.)

In this second volume, James Leo Garrett brings to a conclusion the systematic theology begun in his first volume, published in 1990. Volume two begins with the work of Christ, continues with the Holy Spirit and salvation, and concludes with the church and other things. His method, described in the subtitle of the volume, remains the same as in his first volume. In each chapter, after a brief introduction, he discusses Old and New Testament data, surveys the history of the doctrine, and provides a systematic formulation. His discussion follows an outline format.

As his subtitle indicates, Garrett takes an evangelical approach to his topics, flavored with a nonsectarian Baptist perspective. He affirms universal atonement and perseverance (which he prefers to call "abiding in Christ"), but he sidesteps some of the usual Calvinist/Arminian debates. His discussion of election tends toward a Reformed view, although with some tentativeness. He comes to no conclusion on whether we should identify and order the decrees of God (p. 447-448). On the question of whether election is of individuals or of a people, he concludes, "Inasmuch as we become Christians as individuals even as we are made to belong to the family or the people or the church of God, it would seem impossible as well as undesirable

empt a total dissociation of election and individual destiny. What is called for is a proper balance between the collective and the individual" (p. 454). He does not attempt to delineate that balance. His treatment of spiritual gifts is non-Pentecostal but open to the validity of all spiritual gifts today. On church order, he discusses various issues of interest to Baptists but advocates no particular polity.

One of the strengths of his volume lies in its inclusion of topics not usually covered in systematic theology texts. For example, his discussion of sanctification includes chapters on spiritual disciplines, stewardship, and prayer. His discussion of the church includes a discussion of worship in various traditions and in the contemporary church. The section on the church also includes a chapter on church, state, and society, as well as a discussion of church discipline. His inclusion of practical topics helps to avoid a split, all too common in theology texts, between theology and ethics.

The great strengths of Garrett's work are its thoroughness of coverage, its copious resources, and its breadth of perspective, especially its inclusion of various theological traditions in each topic. The methodology of moving from biblical data to historical development to systematic formulation is excellent. This approach benefits from Garrett's encyclopedic knowledge of historical theology. The volume contains thorough Scripture and author indexes, but its subject index is disappointingly meager. The book's outline format partly makes up for that weakness.

Oddly, however, for such a long work of systematic theology, it actually seems to contain very little systematic theology, as such. In his systematic sections, Garrett surveys other theologians, often with little synthesis of his own. For example, in his discussion of the extent of atonement, Garrett reviews the historical development of various positions and then summarizes theologians' arguments in favor of particular atonement and in favor of general atonement. After citing Donald Bloesch's and Millard Erickson's comments in favor of universal atonement, Garrett concludes by saying simply, "These arguments seem persuasive" (p. 65).

Similarly, his chapter on justification consists of a short discussion of Old and New Testament concepts, a long survey of the history of the doctrine, and a "systematic conclusion" of one paragraph. This paragraph does draw brief conclusions, stating that justification should be seen as declarative, and faith is the condition rather than the grounds of justification (p. 276), but does not attempt to flesh out or even support his conclusions.

In some chapters, Garrett simply juxtaposes contrasting or contradictory opinions without comment. The reader is sometimes left wondering what Garrett himself believes about the topic in question. For example, in his systematic formulation of conversion he raises questions about whether conversion is a work of God or a work of human beings, whether we could affirm a strict *ordo salutis*, and whether conversion is once-for-all or repeatable. Although he summarizes theologians on different sides of these questions, he offers no opinions or conclusions himself.

With all its virtues, Garrett's *Systematic Theology* remains an encyclopedic prologue to systematic theology rather than a fully developed systematic theology in its own right. For this reason, it would not make a very good stand-alone text for theology courses. Furthermore, the awkward separation between the person of Christ in volume one and the work of Christ in volume two could create problems for seminaries who divide their sequence of courses at a

Reviews

different point. Students might also find the dense discussion and outline format rather than a more readable format. Since the publisher has allowed the work to go out of print, this issue is a moot point for the present.

Nevertheless, for those who can find copies through used or out-of-print bookstores, this volume would be an excellent reference work for teachers, advanced students, and pastors. Its survey of biblical and historical material would provide a solid foundation for lectures, papers, and sermons.

Brenda B. Col

Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994; reprint Grand Rapids and Vancouver: Eerdmans and Regent College Publishing, 2000, 691 pp.

This volume is a reprint of Grenz's theology text published in 1994 by Broadman and Holman, which recently allowed it to go out of print. I reviewed the original volume in the 1995 issue of this journal. The reprint, a joint venture by Eerdmans and Regent College, is a paperback rather than the original hardcover. The content is identical to the original, and the same indexes (subject, name, Scripture) are included. The only changes in the text appear to be the correction of a number of typographical errors that appeared in the Broadman volume.

A few changes have been made to the presentation of the book, with mixed results. The use of a smaller, lighter type font shortens the book from its original 890 pages to 691 pages (Unfortunately, for anyone who has developed lecture notes around the text, this means that it has been repaginated.) Pages are more dense and less easy to read than the original, which makes the text less student-friendly. However, the outlines at the beginning of each chapter have been moved to a detailed 24-page table of contents, giving students a clearer guide to the book's overall organization and enabling them to navigate through the book more easily. The improved formatting of chapter subheadings provides a clearer guide to the organization within each chapter.

Grenz's text is still an excellent synthesis of systematic theology around the theme of the church as a community, a solidly evangelical treatment that interacts profitably with contemporary thought. Professors of theology who want a broadly evangelical (or non-Calvinist Baptist) theology text will be glad to see this work back in print.

Brenda B. Col

John H. Leith, Charles E. Raynal, eds., *Pilgrimage of a Presbyterian: Collected Short Writings*, Geneva Press, 2001.

John Leith, noted professor at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, has long been a respected voice in the Presbyterian Church (USA). His many books, including "An Introduction to the Reformed Tradition" have been valued for years. One who reads his books recognizes that his purpose is to state theology in understandable language. His manner is forthright and direct.

h, in his classes often quoted Reinhold Niebuhr's words: "At any rate I swear that I will never agree to be a preacher of pretty sermons." Without a lot of pomp and circumstance, Leith both preached and taught with a grasp of the confessional heritage for the Reformed tradition and with a solid basis of biblical understanding.

Leith himself, when approached about this book compiling his 'shorter writings', wondered if his major works contained most or all of what would be included in this collection. The reader will agree that there is something interesting and unique in these collected sermons and writings. For one, they are in direct response to controversies and challenges that have faced Presbyterians since the forties. Many are quite interesting, although in the spirit of Leith, they are not 'pretty'! The writings reflect a serious and often conflicted voice in relationship to his denomination. Leith describes his theological position as 'critically orthodox.' Some of the sermons are classic looks at major tenets of the reformed faith such as predestination and the perseverance of the saints. The book includes sermons, lectures, photographs and a complete bibliography of Leith's writings.

Cliff Stewart

Donald K. McKim, *Introducing the Reformed Faith: Biblical Revelation, Christian Tradition, Contemporary Significance*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. 261 pp., paper, \$17.95.

The name 'Donald McKim' has become synonymous with 'accessible reference works in the Reformed tradition' in Presbyterian circles in North America. If you look on the shelf of any Canadian or American Presbyterian pastor, you will probably find at least a couple of books written or edited by McKim. With *Introducing the Reformed Faith*, he has not let us down. This is one of the most readable and commendable books on the Reformed tradition that I have ever read. Were I not Presbyterian myself, reading this book would make me think very seriously about becoming one! The book helps to make clear that, as McKim states in the introduction, "The Reformed faith is a faith of *living people*" (emphasis his).

There are nineteen chapters in this volume, the first sixteen of which deal with major topics of interest in the Reformed tradition. It is, in many ways, laid out like a systematic theology, beginning with Scripture and ending with the end times. McKim opens the book with suggested ways to use it, either as a study for an individual or for groups. He also suggests that one could read only the text, or the text and the endnotes. The endnotes are somewhat voluminous in themselves (50 pages of somewhat fine print), but give insights that, for many readers, are helpful. These include word origins, quotations from scholars, historical notes, and quotations that help to clarify the points he makes in the book. That being said, one could read only the text itself and still be greatly edified.

Each chapter is laid out just as the subtitle of the book states: biblical revelation, Christian tradition, contemporary significance. As part of the "Christian tradition" section, each chapter has a "Reformed emphases" subheading, in which McKim makes clear where Christians in the Reformed tradition tend to stand on the matter being discussed. Here, he often will cite a creed or statement of faith from the Reformed tradition. He is careful to note that there is not

Reviews

unanimity among Reformed believers on all matters, and he explains, where appropriate, why some of the different opinions are among the various strands of the Reformed tradition. Each chapter concludes with "Questions for reflection", which are useful both for group and individual study.

McKim uses a number of "big" words, which he defines well, making the book accessible to anyone with a secondary school education. He is very committed to the use of inclusive language, which sometimes makes the grammar awkward. Many of his illustrations are from his own experience in the United States, which do not always resonate with a Canadian reader (for instance, the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy in the 1920s was highlighted more than the Scopes trial!) Still, I would not hesitate to hand this book to an informed seeker who desires to learn more about the Reformed tradition, provided the seeker would sit down and discuss each chapter with me as she or he read. If one has spent one's whole life in a different theological or ecclesiastical tradition, reading this book all at once, without an opportunity for verbal reflection, could be somewhat overbearing.

Some might suggest that in this relatively small book, McKim has attempted to conciliate Rome. True, he aims high, and covers all of his bases quite well. The only pitfall I noticed in this midst of this was the common problem of glossing over some issues that probably deserve more lengthy treatment. He remedies this in the endnotes by giving numerous citations to sources in which the issue at hand can be explored much more deeply.

The 'nice touches' in this book come near the end. McKim spends chapter 17 citing other Reformed scholars, some of whom came up with different emphases for the Reformed tradition than this book shows. He cites the work of A.A. Hodge, the late scholar of Princeton; John H. Leith, of Union Seminary in Virginia; as well as I. John Hesselink and Jack Rogers. In chapter 18, McKim answers some common questions about the Reformed tradition, questions I am asked often. It is in this (sadly) short chapter that he addresses, in only four paragraphs, one of my passions about the tradition, which is church government. The nineteenth chapter is a question (one for each week of a year) catechism, which McKim prepared to be "Reformed and ecumenical" (p. 186). It, too, is a useful tool. Following this is a list of Presbyterian and Reformed churches known to exist in Canada and the United States. Recognizing that this approach is not the only approach by which to understand the Reformed tradition, he includes comparative sources near the end of the book to give the very curious some additional reading.

As I constantly am updating my curriculum for teaching newcomers to my congregation about the Reformed tradition, I will use this book as a source, and will surely write it out in a short time due to the number of times I will turn back to it for reference. For a believer in the Reformed tradition or outside the tradition, it is a book well worth reading.

Jeffrey F. Lovell

Leon J. Podles, *The Church Impotent: The Feminization of Christianity*. Dallas: Spence, 1997. xviii + 288 pp, paper, \$10.77.

Leon Podles' book might easily be dismissed by Evangelicals as one of the more bizarre entries in the male/female leadership debate. Such a dismissal would be entirely

understandable. Podles' view of Scripture fluctuates. Most of his discussion treats the text as a whole, but, when he does comment on origins, he contends: "The main books of the Old Testament took their canonical form in the midst of the Exile" (65). "The writer of Genesis" "blamed the exile on "a flaw in the relationship of man and woman. This flaw was projected back to the very beginning of history" (64). Few Evangelicals would posit a pool of authors shaping the Genesis account of Adam and Eve to explain the exile. And few should be comfortable with the New Testament theory that the gospels were written as apologies to the Romans and therefore the Jews, for whom the Romans felt no special affection, were the enemies given most prominence" (81). Problematic, too, is his contention the Holy Spirit is "the reciprocal love between the Father and Son" which "becomes itself a person" when that love "attains fullness"

His main argument that sex does not equal masculinity/femininity, sex and gender are different, and, therefore, the Persons of the Trinity are masculine, but not male, while their nature is feminine, but not female, is at best circular. It rests on an inductive sexual observation - men separate, women unite or commune - which is posited back into the supposedly non-sexual Godhead. Such reasoning triggers implications Podles would very much want; for example, at the moment of this review a transgendered candidate is petitioning a nomination in our vicinity using the same basic argument sex does not equal gender, arguing his sex is male, his gender identity female, so he has had himself scientifically validated. While his argument is no stronger than Podles', it does make a reader question the logic of the underlying theory of the book:

Why use the term gender when sex is explicitly not involved? Why ask whether God is masculine or feminine, positing definitions back to God drawn from human behavior? Such a procedure is similar to asking what race God is (Is God white or black?) by basing one's discussion on current socio-anthropological or ethnographic descriptions of races. The great Marcus Garvey objected to just such reasoning: "Our God has no color, yet it is human to see everything through one's own spectacles, and since the white people have seen God through their spectacles, we have only now started out (late though it be) to see our God through our own spectacles" (*Philosophy and Opinions*, 1:44). One could paraphrase: "While our God has no sex, it is human to see everything through one's own spectacles of gender, so we men posit God as masculine (and disagree with feminists who label God as feminine...)." But, with gendered language not consistent in ancient Hebrew and Greek for all 3 persons of the Trinity, and verses explicitly resisting identifying God with such categories (e.g. Deut 4:15-16, Mark 12:25), why do

Why is God not supragenderal? As God is not Jewish, though God worked powerfully through the Jews, God need not be labeled masculine to work powerfully through males. This point underscores a series of inconsistencies in Podles' methodology. For example, he uses the gender based language argument to claim masculinity for the Father and Son, but ignores gendered language in his discussion of the Spirit (the Spirit is feminine in Hebrew, neuter in Greek). He also avoids discussing the obvious objection against gender-based language having universal gender references (e.g. how is a "year" feminine and a "day" masculine in Hebrew? How are a "year" neuter and a "day" feminine in Greek)? Other inconsistencies include claiming Jesus choosing only male disciples "to spare women that burden" of martyrdom (79), and commenting eight pages later "the sacraments have always been open to women, as has

Reviews

martyrdom" (87). Finally, a heavy dose of Roman Catholicism (e.g. "Mary is the mother of Church", 85) might close out Evangelical interest in this book altogether. But such dismissal would be a mistake. This last part, the heavy Roman Catholic nature of the book, is actually strength and its real contribution.

Leon Podles himself was a Roman Catholic pre-seminarian who dropped out of seminary because of the endemic, rampant homosexuality (x). Given the recent high profile Roman Catholic scandals (especially currently in Boston with Paul Shanley and the embattled Cardinal Law), the book becomes more than simply a heterodox offering in the seemingly endless debate on female leadership, this time on the complementarian side. Podles' complaints and the final analysis are essentially about the "homosexualizing" of Christianity through "feminizing" of it. In other words, this is not a simple recruit in the firing lines of the current Evangelical in-house debate. It is much more: a critique of the legacy of historic Catholicism with an impassioned plea that Evangelicals not follow its errors.

One does not need to accept all his bio/psycho-speak postmodern theomythology to realize that Roman Catholic theology and practice are in deep trouble in its high incidence of pederasty among its ordained leadership. Neither should we be put off by his English professor's penchant for hyperbole ("The Methodist Church is a women's club at prayer" [xv]) or "*Christianity Today* has made as many compromises as it can with feminism and ignores the problem of the lack of men in the church" [xv]) to recognize this is a hurting man who is delivering a serious warning. If we take into account the context out of which Podles is writing, Evangelicals on either side of the women's leadership debate can learn something useful.

When he addresses the issue of homosexuality he can provide provocative insights (e.g. 70-71). Refreshing is his break with the usual man is active, woman is passive mythology and particularly enlightening is his analysis of the origin of that chestnut, the Aristotelian revival of medieval scholastic thinking with its bridal and maternal theology (102ff). His helpful detailing of the shifting of the bride of Christ imagery from the collective to the individual explains the disenfranchisement of men from the Church (and also enlightened me personally why, since early puberty, if not before, I have always loathed the hymn "In the Garden" and Warner Sallman's "bearded lady" picture of Christ). His final plea that brotherly love be salvaged from sexual aberration so that churches can create a safe place to grow our sons healthfully into holy men is a concern all of us need to take to heart.

Like Ezekiel lying down on his sides for 390 and 40 days respectively to gain attention for his points (Ezek 4:4-6), Professor Podles' approach may appear at times to be a strange one but his warning is timely and serious.

William David Spencer, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

James R. White, *The God Who Justifies*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2001, 394 pp., \$19.99.

The Reformers of the 16th century viewed the doctrine of justification as being at the very core of the Gospel. Martin Luther described justification by faith alone as the article by which the church stands or falls. He wrote: "When the article of justification has fallen

Everything has fallen. Therefore it is necessary constantly to inculcate and impress it, as Moses said of his Law (Deut. 6:7); for it cannot be inculcated and urged enough or too much."

James White makes a valuable contribution to the literature on this doctrine with *The God Who Justifies*. This book is written with a 21st century audience in mind for the purpose of acquainting a new generation with the basics of the doctrine of justification. It makes a welcome addition to such classics as James Buchanan's *The Doctrine of Justification* written in 1867.

The book is divided into two main sections. The first section contains an overview of topics related to justification. White discusses the biblical definition of justification, the role of imputation and the central importance of God's Word in laying out the parameters of justification. He devotes one full chapter to the grounds of a believer's justification, namely, the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and the implications of that unique salvation event for our justification. White frequently refers to the wisdom of past writers on the subject. He freely quotes from James Buchanan, John Murray, Jonathan Edwards, John Calvin, and a number of other church fathers to reinforce with the reader that his is not a novel approach to the subject but rather is right in line with traditional Christian teachings on justification.

The second section contains a detailed exegesis and commentary on a number of New Testament passages relating to justification. The passages, taken from Romans, Galatians, Thesians and James are presented in Greek (from the Nestle-Aland 27 text) and in English. Alternate translations are provided when there is an issue on how a word or phrase should be rendered.

James White carefully steps through these texts to present the case for our separation from God due to sin, our inability to justify ourselves before God and the need for God to justify the ungodly. He demonstrates from the Greek text as well as the context of the passages that justification is spoken of as a God-declared righteousness (in Paul's letters) and as a righteousness demonstrated to others (in the letter of James). White works through the places where textual variants play a role in the exegesis of the passage. He also discusses the case of how to proceed in understanding the meaning of a text when the translation of a phrase is uncertain. An example is found on page 186 of the book, referring to Romans 3:22. Paul uses the phrase "*Pisteōs Iesou Christou*." Is he writing about *faith in Christ* or the *faithfulness of Christ*? James White wrestles with this and other issues. He details how a translator must work through grammar, context and other factors to best determine how a word or phrase is best translated. White's discussions on how to approach the work of translating Scripture is not merely theoretical. He was a critical consultant for the update of the New American Standard Bible in the 1990s.

The length of the book and its use of detailed exegesis from the Greek text might seem daunting to the average reader. However, the nature and importance of the subject requires careful exposition and argumentation. In an age of short attention spans, an author may be tempted to write about the doctrine of justification by faith alone in only a cursory manner. The average reader can get through White's book and understand it. But it will take time. Trying to short-circuit that process would be like someone new to the sport of baseball asking an expert to explain the rules, history and strategies of baseball and to cover it, in great depth, and do so in

Reviews

only 30 minutes. Reading and thinking through *The God Who Justifies* will take time and will be worth every minute of the effort.

This is an excellent overall treatment of the topic. James White is faithful to Scripture on the subject and does not deviate from centuries of church teaching on the subject. One aspect that I really liked was the author's emphasis on holding these truths and doing so passionately. Justification by faith is something not only to be studied but cherished as well. It is the means by which God regards us as being in right standing before Him because of Christ. This is the most vital truth of our life in Christ. As Luther pointed out, if the knowledge of justification falls away, the knowledge of other doctrines will fall away as well. White's zeal for the subject and his sound exegetical and theological treatment of justification in his book show that fervor and scholarship can be found together in the same work.

Walter Har

Joel R. Beeke and Sinclair B. Ferguson, eds., *Reformed Confessions Harmonized*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999. 271 pp., paper, \$21.99.

As a Presbyterian, I was excited to receive this book for review. Many years ago, as a divinity student, I stumbled across a used book in a Christian bookstore in Toronto entitled *Harmony of the Westminster Presbyterian Standards*, for which I paid the princely sum of CDN\$35.00 at the time – but what a find! It illustrated parallels between the Westminster Confession, the Larger Catechism and the Shorter Catechism, using a pattern similar to Bruce Throckmorton's ubiquitous *Gospel Parallels*. The present volume has rekindled my excitement, in that it has gone a step beyond by adding parallels from earlier materials – the Belgic Confession of 1561, the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563, the Second Helvetic Confession of 1566, and the Canons of Dort of 1619. Altogether, these represent three strands of the Reformed tradition: the Dutch-German (Belgic, Heidelberg, Dort), the Swiss (Helvetic), and the Scottish-English (Westminster). Facing pages show these seven columns under several rubrics: theology, anthropology, Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology.

Some who are not part of the Reformed tradition may think a book like this to be a bit of an eye-glazer, but this is a valuable tool for any Christian who takes the Bible seriously. Much evangelical theology owes some of its expression to the Reformed confessions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Any student of Protestant history will quickly tell you that these documents made a significant impact on the life and faith of the church universal in the years around their compilation and publication.

While many Reformed churches have fallen away from the use of catechetical materials in their programs of preparation for profession of faith, it still finds regular use in affirming the faith of the church in worship (as a change from the use of the Apostles' Creed, for example), in illustrating the points of a sermon or lesson. If, for example, you were preaching a series on the Ten Commandments, you could use a resource like this to find out that both the Heidelberg Catechism and both the Westminster Catechisms address the decalogue, and help to clarify the meaning behind the commandments. So, to use the fifth commandment as an example, you could look in *A Harmony of Reformed Confessions* on pages 152 to 157 to find, among other things

question 124 of the Larger Catechism asks, "Who are meant by father and mother in the fifth commandment?", with the answer ensuing.

What brackets the *Harmony* is equally as helpful as the *Harmony* itself. The introduction includes a brief overview of each of the confessions used in the book, which gives the reader a snapshot of the circumstances behind the preparation of each document. Then, a 24-page annotated bibliography concludes this valuable source book – a tool worthy of a book all on its own. It is compiled following the pattern of the Belgic Confession, the oldest Reformed standard included in the *Harmony*. It is limited to works in English, and, as Dr. Beeke confesses, "could be of value to readers of Reformed persuasion" (p. 247). It might, however, also be valuable for those outside the tradition who want to study it from an historic, confessional perspective.

This book would be a useful addition to every pastor's library, including those who come from churches that are not accustomed to confessions and catechisms.

Jeffrey Loach

Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson, eds., *Marks of the Body of Christ*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999. 179 pp., paper, \$18.00.

Utilizing Martin Luther's seven "marks" of the church this book is the compilation of presentations by an ecumenical group of scholars including Gerhard Forde, Richard Lischer, Alan Wood, John Erickson, K. Paul Wesche, Richard Norris, Jr, David Yeago, Carl Braaten, Robert Jenson and William Abraham. This diverse group of essayists brings intelligent insight from Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist and Orthodox thought.

The reader will find Luther's "marks" quite provocative, particularly as they are contrasted with the church of today. Suggestions brought by the authors are relevant and important. No doubt readers will find an historical ledge to stand where one can look at the perspectives of the church today versus the values of Luther.

One criticism of the book is that there is neither an introductory nor concluding chapter summarizing with a broad brush the direction or conclusion of the contributions included. Perhaps a joint concluding by both Jenson and Braaten would have been helpful in piecing together any threads of commonality found in the book.

Certainly these "marks" of the church listed by Luther and the discussions of this book could provide interesting background for a class to study in the local church.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, Texas

Ann Braude, *Women and American Religion*. Religion in American Life, ed. J. Butler and H. S. Gandy. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. 141 pp., hardcover, \$24.00.

Ann Braude begins her treatment of women's contribution to American religion with the comment that although women comprise the majority of membership in almost all religious groups throughout American history, they nevertheless have had to take a backseat to male

Reviews

religious leaders (pp. 11-12). In spite of this, women have made a significant contribution to the development of religion in America in a great variety of ways.

Braude begins to survey these contributions with the early Puritan period in American history. In the 17th–18th centuries she shows that women's contributions were in plain religious households in the New World. Although restricted at first, women's roles began to expand in the 19th–20th centuries through their use of spiritual gifts to effect church and social growth and reform (pp. 12-13).

Women have played a significant role in American religion, yet Braude contends this has often been overlooked. She shows how women's activities and beliefs have been meaningful to shape the development and growth of American religion. Braude highlights women's contributions from various groups. She focuses on women's activities in sects and groups such as the Shakers with Mother Ann Lee (p. 30), the Quakers with Mary Dyer and Sarah and Angelina Grimke (pp. 43-49), Christian Science with Mary Baker Eddy (p. 53), Pentecostalism with Aimee Semple McPherson (p. 116), in addition to Roman Catholics (pp. 85). Braude also highlights women's contributions in various ethnic groups such as Jewish women (p. 66), Native American Chief Wilma Mankiller of the Cherokee Nation (p. 81), as well as Chinese women in America (p. 76), Muslim women in America (p. 131), and African American women like Jarena Lee (p. 41).

Braude concludes the work with a discussion of the contemporary period "Since the 1960's" (p. 111). She addresses issues of women's roles in church leadership today and women's quest for ordination and equal rights in the church. At the end of the book is a timeline highlighting women's contributions in America for three centuries (pp. 134-35) as well as a bibliography for further reading (pp. 136-38).

The work is broad in its spectrum and it is quite readable. Braude deals with the religious contributions of women in America from many different groups and voices. This is the strength of the work. Its inclusivity of women from various historical time periods as well as various ethnic groups makes it a rich and valuable survey of American women in religion. Braude provides a panorama of the breadth of women's contributions to the development of religion in America.

JoAnn Ford W

Colin Duriez and David Porter, *The Inklings Handbook*. Chalice Press, 2001. 244 pages, hardcover, \$32.99.

There is great relevance to this book with all the renewed interest in Tolkien accompanying the release of the Lord of the Rings films. With this revived interest in Tolkien has been a resurgence of interest in the group of English writers known as the Inklings. The Inklings include J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, Owen Barfield and a few others who drift in and out of this informal gathering and who met in Oxford from 1933 to 1949 once or twice a week to read their works out loud to one another. Duriez and Porter have put together a handbook on the Inklings which includes a series of six essays about the writers

h writings along with an elaborate glossary of ideas gathered about these people and their associates.

The Inklings Handbook is divided into two parts with the first having six essays on the Inklings and the second as a type of encyclopedia or comprehensive guide to the group's personalities, associates, and literary works. The book begins as if it is going to be an interesting description of the writing craft and of the friendship among the Inklings probing into the ways they enhanced each other's particular natures and works. The first chapter of only four and a half pages uses a variety of resources to describe the development and voice of the Inklings. The chapter is drawn from the novelist John Wain's biography (Wain an early participant in these meetings) and is particularly insightful. This chapter left me hungering for more, however. The second chapter is a detailed twelve-page chronology of the history of the Inklings' reading of their various works to one another along with the dates of their publications beginning with 1917 and Tolkien's starting of *The Silmarillion* through the death of Tolkien in 1973 and Owen Barfield in 1977. This section had wonderful tidbits of information about the Inklings, such as from a reference dated Thursday, April 13, 1944 gathered from a letter from Tolkien to his son. Duriez and Porter note Tolkien writes concerning a book being written and read to the group, "The best of it, according to JRRT (Tolkien), is Warnie's chapter on the court of Louis XIV. He is not partial to the concluding chapter of CSL's (Lewis) *The Great Divorce*." Or the notation from May of the same year when Tolkien reads two chapters from *The Lord of the Rings* which Tolkien approves with "great fervor" and is moved to tears.

The next couple of chapters are a bit disappointing to me. Chapter three focuses only on the *Chronicles of Narnia*, especially on how the ideas of Narnia developed, on the history of Narnia, and on the geography of Narnia. This chapter had me puzzled as to what it had to do with the Inklings in general. The fourth chapter does the same concerning Middle Earth, again with little relevance to the Inklings. The fifth chapter is the most interesting one to me. Here the Arthurian legend is discussed and this ties together the Inklings since various members were influenced by this legend and used it in their own literature, especially Lewis and Charles Williams.

The sixth chapter concludes the essay section of the book. It focuses on Lewis, Tolkien, and Williams and their views of imagination and theology. This six-page chapter could have been the basis of an entire book. The emphasis is upon the romantic element in their works and one of the common influences on all of them, such as natural theology or George MacDonald. These essays conclude after only forty-three pages and are followed by one hundred and eighty pages of an encyclopedia of Inklings-related subjects, entitled *The Inklings from A-Z*. This section was very broad and comprehensive and could have been entitled, "Everything You Wanted to Know About the Inklings and More." I particularly enjoyed the essays on issues I was familiar with, such as the affirmative way from Charles Williams or the backgrounds of some of the younger members of the Inklings. The book can be a useful tool and is filled with insightful information on the Inklings. I think I would have liked it better had the second part been a separate book by itself and the first part had been the beginnings of another book of essays on the Inklings. I have to admit I have come to like the cartoonish nature of the slipcover of the book but initially I delayed reading the book due to this cartoonish cover of Tolkien and Lewis

Reviews

standing outside The Eagle and Child pub in Oxford, one of the frequent meeting places of Inklings.

Mark Hamilton, Ashland University

Rowan Greer, *Christian Hope and Christian Life. Raids on the Inarticulate*. New York, Herder and Herder, 2001. 282 pp., \$24.95.

The purpose of this book is to revive an approach to Christian faith and life which has recently been much neglected: this life in the context of hope for the life to come. The subtitle refers to the necessary limits of such a quest, and of the way in which the author's main sources have probed eternity's sheer impenetrability and mystery. An introduction to the main exposition is provided by an extended account of New Testament teaching on the relation between eschatological hope and the Christian life. No attempt is made to synthesize the teaching, and a range of emphases is placed side by side, from the more temporally oriented eschatology of Paul to the below-average pattern that the author discerns in the Fourth Gospel. There is no treatment of the Book of Revelation, perhaps a strange omission in the context.

The main content of the book is to be found in extended accounts of the thought of four authors, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, John Donne and Jeremy Taylor, each of them prefaced with an account of his religious development. From the ancient world come Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine, in whose thought we discern the sheer complexity of the Christian tradition. In these expositions, we see something of the conversation that has always taken place between the Platonic tradition and the biblical gospel, for both of these thinkers are deeply platonic, and yet in different ways. While Gregory's thought simply cannot be made coherent, Augustine's is much more nearly so; and while Gregory says many things that verge on what was later to be rejected as Pelagianism, Augustine's greater pessimism about the human condition gives a shape to his thought that Gregory's lacks. Moreover, his stronger distinction between the soul and the material creation saves him from Gregory's virtual pantheism. The two classical writers from the Anglican spiritual tradition give the exposition a chiastic structure, for Jeremy Taylor is shown to echo some of Gregory's emphases, while Donne is more Augustinian.

It is good to have all four of these great thinkers expounded in such depth and detail, especially for the reminder of the impoverishing effect of so much modern Christian activism. This was also highly salutary reading for your reviewer, who is rather skeptical about this particular tradition, and, in context, very Anglican – tradition of Christian spirituality. But let me put an, I hope, gentle, question. Does not the modern reaction against Platonising spirituality, for all its aridity, have a genuine criticism to make, that traditional eschatology has been weakened by a lack of concrete contribution from a notion of eschatology as the renewing of both the heaven and the earth alongside its treatment of the destiny of the human creature? That is to say, has the tradition not been too exclusively preoccupied with the relation between the soul and its God? While any corrective to the sentimentality of so-called creation spirituality is to be welcomed, must we not also acknowledge that the injection of Platonism into Christianity did carry a heavy price in an over-spiritualizing of the tradition that overlooked the fact that our bodies relate

ne definitely, and, in the context of the doctrine of the resurrection, more positively to our
nerial context that was allowed, certainly by the great Father of all western theology?

None of that, however, should be allowed to detract from the value of this
ashionably edifying piece of writing.

Colin Gunton, Center of Theological Inquiry, Princeton

hryn Lindskoog, *Surprised by C. S. Lewis, George MacDonald, and Dante*. Mercer
iversity Press, 2001. 221 pp., hardcover.

It is refreshing to read the work of an articulate, brilliant liberal arts person who is
ulped in her subject matter. Lindskoog's knowledge and insight about Lewis, which she first
onstrated in her now classic *C. S. Lewis, Mere Christian*, is displayed in an even greater
ught provoking manner in this scholarly, yet highly readable book of twenty-three essays.
The first seven delightful essays center primarily on Lewis. There is the amusing "Who Is This
n?" the emotional comparison of Lewis to Beatrix Potter, Lindskoog's own fantasy into the
nd of Lewis called "The Splendid Lands," a summary of Lewis' ideas on Christmas, and a
lvy discovered essay by Lewis entitled "All or Nothing."

The next eleven essays connect Lewis to the ideas of various other writers, including Dante and
 MacDonald, but also Sinclair Lewis, Dorothy Sayers, Willa Cather, D.H. Lawrence, and Mark
ain.

The final five essays are her sage observations about Lewis on topics such as Natural
w, joy, and writing. She tells how Lewis often gave away writing pointers to both friends and
angers. She says that after reading her thesis "he pointed out one weak sentence where I could
ve been misread, and he included the following bit of free advice: 'Most readers will
understand if you give them the slightest chance. (It's like driving cattle; if there's an open
away anywhere on the road, they'll go into it!)" This section also provides an essay of
ndskoog's personal discoveries and insights into Dante.

First and foremost Lindskoog is a great storyteller. In her essay, "Unexpected
asure" she writes,

The Lewis family had many silly nicknames. Their mother often called
their father "Old Bear," and when they got older the boys secretly called
him "Potato," as he pronounced it—"Pudaita." The boys were named
Warren and Clive, but when they were little they were usually called
"Badgie" and "Babs." Most boys wouldn't like to be called Clive or Babs
very well and when Clive was only four years old he announced, "I'm
Jacksie! Jack was the only name he would answer to from that day on.
When he grew up and became a famous writer, he signed his books C. S.
Lewis. But his friends and relatives called him Jack all his life.

It has been a long time since a book brought me such pleasure and delight. Even if you
ve never read the works of Dante and MacDonald, if you have done any extensive reading of

Reviews

Lewis, then this book will provide immense pleasure. It may even stir you to probe into the works of Dante and MacDonald. I often have students ask me how to learn to write. I provide a two-fold answer, write and read great writers. Lindskoog, like Lewis, is the type of writer that those who aspire to write must read.

Mark Hamilton

J. I. Packer, *Faithfulness and Holiness: The Witness of J. C. Ryle*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2002. 272 pp., hardcover, \$17.99.

Noted scholar J. I. Packer writes to pay tribute to the life and witness of Anglican Bishop John Charles Ryle (1816-1900). Tribute is due to Ryle who certainly graced the 19th century with significant evangelical influence.

Packer's intent is to introduce Ryle to evangelical readers of today. Unfortunately, the volume lacks significant biographical data to introduce Ryle. Instead the reader is again and again subject to the hyperbole of Packer who does not do much to create new interest in Ryle. One begins to wonder if the book is more a reflection of Packer's allegiance to "Puritanism" than a biographical piece on Ryle. Most chapters are much too short and the reader is hungry for more detail about Ryle. Disappointing to discover that J. I. Packer's commentary on Bishop Ryle is only a third of the book with the other two thirds being a reprint of Ryle's own work, *Holiness*.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, Texas

Steven D. Reschly, *The Amish of the Iowa Prairie, 1840 to 1910*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000, 270 pages.

Reschly's work represents a further addition to the growing literature that considers the Amish and Mennonite experience in America from a sociological perspective. After giving some background material on the Amish origins in Europe and their migration to America, Reschly focuses his study on the Amish community that established itself in Iowa beginning in the 1840s. He works with the thesis that the Amish experience of "marginality and persecution in early modern Europe" led them to develop a repertoire of attitudes and social structures which enabled them to maintain their community even in the midst of multiple migrations (pp. 7-8). In effect, they established a "portable community" whose dynamics allowed ironically for both stability and adaptability on the Iowa prairie.

Reschly develops his thesis through eight chapters. He sets forth the specific attitudes and institutions developed by the Anabaptists and their Amish and Mennonite descendants in chapter one. Chapters two through five delineate some of the most characteristic features of the Amish "repertoire" that made possible the continuation of their distinctive community: the innovative Amish agricultural system, preservationist patriarchy, limitation of their relationships to the modern nation-state, and creation of strategies of land ownership and inheritance that fulfilled their practice of modified community of goods. Chapter six is a fascinating look at the "sleeping preacher," Noah Troyer. His trance speaking, laced as it was with critique of numerous

of the Amish "Ordnung," served to strain the dialectic between individual freedom and communal responsibility. The timing of his messages could not have been more critical, for the Amish were facing a number of internal and external forces that threatened to divide the community in the 1870s and 80s. In chapter seven Reschly shows how the religious divide among the Amish, catalyzed by Troyer, led to a schism in the Amish community between the tradition-minded Old Order Amish and the change-minded Amish-Mennonites. The final chapter considers changes in Amish migration strategies, especially due to the impact of these controversies within the Amish community.

Reschly's narrative is spiced with fascinating personal stories gleaned from such sources as correspondence and diaries. The strength of the book is in the statistical mining of census and land records that yields a wealth of insights about Amish farming practices, family fractions, and land acquisition and holding. Other noteworthy elements are the stories related about the Amish attitude toward the Civil War (some sons of Amish families did serve) and to the formation and demise of new Amish settlements. Especially impressive are the forty pages of notes that demonstrate the thorough research that undergirds the work.

If I do have a disappointment with this work, it is in the opening chapter, where Reschly sets forth the historical foundations for Anabaptism in general and the Amish in particular. He accepts the "assured results" of those who propound the polygenesis theory of the multiple origins of Anabaptism. Though this approach has yielded a more accurate understanding of the diversity and origins of the movement, there are several features of the theory, as reflected in Reschly's discussion, that are problematic. Reschly follows the polygenesis theory's overemphasis on the dissimilarities within the various branches of Anabaptism. As C. Arnold Snyder has argued in *Anabaptist History and Theology*, there is more continuity among the various expressions of Anabaptism than polygenesis theorists have allowed. In addition, Reschly's declaration that "Anabaptism as a religious movement resulted from three failed attempts to impose a radical version of Christianity on the entire social order" (p. 13) is far too simplistic to explain the varied nuances within Anabaptism. Though the Peasants' War, the failure of the radicals to win over Zurich and Zwingli, and the Munster debacle do play key roles in the collective consciousness and subconsciousness of Anabaptists, there are other significant influences on the movement, one of which is the tug in the direction of mysticism, spiritualism, and late-medieval piety as seen in the Christ-mysticism of the Dutch Anabaptists and the love-piety spiritualism of Denck.

I also felt that Reschly's discussion of Pietism needed further precision. His observation that radical Pietists "often considered Anabaptism their precursor and even sought contact and mutual support" (p. 18) has some truth to it. Radicals did fellowship with Mennonites and the Radical Pietist historian, Gottfried Arnold, did honor the Anabaptists by including them in his *History of the Heretics*. But Radical Pietists were also critical of Anabaptists for their perceived legalism, externalism, and divisiveness. Interestingly, Gottfried Arnold gave an inordinate amount of space in his discussion of Anabaptism to the Anabaptist-spiritualist, David Joris. I also find problematic that Reschly is willing to grant that there are "several central tendencies" that are discernible across "the spectrum of [Pietist] movements" (p. 18), but does not grant this same point to Anabaptism. Pietism is unquestionably more diverse in its origins and expressions than Anabaptism ever was.

Reviews

In spite of these scholarly points of debate, I would commend Reschly's work to any student of the Anabaptists and Amish, especially when he turns to his topic proper.

Dale Storr

Webster, John, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth*, Cambridge University Press, 2000.

This is the sort of book on which one may write a very large review, or a very short one. All the reviews I saw in a day spent reading through the periodicals in Princeton Seminary's book room were of the short variety. And wrong. They say things like, "There is no consistent formula of interpreting the various aspects of Barth's theology." Sure there is. My thesis about this book is that each of the 17 different authors proceeds by asking questions of Barth. This is Barth's own approach to theological matters and it seems like a helpful approach for a book about Barth.

Granted some of the questions are more difficult than others. I find Trevor Hart's and Alan Torrance's so. Yet as one begins with John Webster's clear summary of the progress of Barth's life and thought in 14 pages (sic) and concludes with Alasdair Heron's reflection on how he came across Barth's writings as a student and how he practiced theology in an era in which Barth was both lauded and criticized, what we get are clear questions which allow us to proceed with the task of understanding Karl Barth, "the most important Protestant theologian since Schleiermacher," as Webster describes him.

Webster's question is, is Barth so important as all that? Christoph Schwobel writes about Barth's theology. What he does is asks Barth's questions after him. He examines in brief one dispute after another in Barth's career, from his earliest articles through the Church Dogmatics. What is helpful about this is the rich overview which is both precise and yet broad. Is Barth's conception of the task of theology as important as his material contribution to theology? If we weigh these two on a scale, we might remember Barth smiling about the angel's laughter at the wheelbarrow full of the white bound volumes of the Dogmatics. But on the other scale are the countless questions from Barth reflecting on the task of bringing together empirical reality and Christianity through asking questions. Such questions!

Trevor Hart's article on Revelation is difficult because he creates a very wide landscape in which Barth is one figure who can't possibly defend all fronts. And Alan Torrance's article on the Trinity is difficult in part because his question is difficult, how is the Trinity to be conceived?

Francis Watson asks, how does Barth correlate the four sources of Christian theology: Scripture, tradition, reason and experience? His answer is along the lines, the Bible is not read in a vacuum, and Barth recognizes that; yet for Barth it is the Bible which keeps our focus on the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Watson's thesis is that the intent of the Church Dogmatics is to encourage readers to reread the Bible.

Bruce McCormack attempts the difficult theological task of finding the central doctrine in Karl Barth. Is such a task possible, or fruitful? Von Balthasar chose grace as the central doctrine of Barth's work. Grace certainly pervades the Dogmatics. McCormack chooses election. Barth's view of election is a correction to the classical teaching he maintains. He proceeds

providing a brief summary - another time this procedure in the book works well - of Barth's view, against Calvin's. He then offers the question, what is the logical relation of God's gracious relation to the trinity of God? McCormack avoids some of the problem in finding the one general idea by working hard to set Barth in a larger discussion concerning God.

On and on the good questions and ideas go. George Hunsinger, for example, begins with George Herbert's summary of Chalcedon Christology. He proceeds to demonstrate how Barth's Christology differs from that of Alexandria with its tendency to Docetism and of Antioch, with its tendency to Nestorianism.

After chapters which tackle the questions of Barth's theological architecture, the concluding chapters of the book consider Christian ethics, an important topic since Barth is sometimes criticized for not considering the practical implications of theology; politics; religions; feminism; and modernity and post-modernity.

The book even comes with an index, a rare addition in works which contain essays by many authors, and a helpful one. As the whole book is.

Robert Ives

Christensen and Shari MacDonald, *Our God Reigns: The Stories Behind Your Favorite Praise and Worship Songs*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2000. 143 pp., paper, \$9.99.

Did you know that the author of one of North America's favorite praise songs was once the first runner-up in the Miss New Mexico contest? It's true! Karen Lafferty, who penned the words and wrote the music for the well-known song "Seek Ye First", was once a beauty queen. Her story, along with twenty-four others, appears in *Our God Reigns*, co-written by a self-described "worship pastor, journalist, and husband/father" and an author and editor. What Ken Beck is to hymn stories, these two are to the stories behind praise songs. *Rev. magazine* (January/February 2001 issue) showed an advertisement from Kregel stating that this book was also available with a companion compact disc (advertised cost: US\$21.99).

As both a pastor and a musician, I enjoyed reading these stories. However, as a Canadian and a Presbyterian, some of them were unfamiliar to me. I would have appreciated having the CD to listen to while I read, but alas, the CD did not come with the review copy! I did know 15 of the 25 songs examined, and found myself humming them as I read about their genesis. Among the best-known songs cited in the book are "As The Deer" (Martin Nystrom); "Give Thanks With A Grateful Heart" (Henry Smith); and "Lord, I Lift Your Name On High" (Rick Founds).

Several common threads appeared in a number of these stories. The most outstanding of them was the connection that so many had with Christ For The Nations Institute in Dallas, Texas - an organization I learned about via the Internet (www.cfni.org). The degree of influence that this organization has had over contemporary praise and worship is pervasive. Other common threads included Youth With A Mission, Christian Copyright Licensing, Incorporated, and a few of the larger contemporary churches in southern California.

The authors interviewed each songwriter, and allowed each one to review the interview material for accuracy before the book went to print. Commonly found in most stories were

Reviews

anecdotes of the circumstances around the writing of the song. (This stands in contrast to hymn stories, which tell something of the whole life of the writer; this can be accounted for by the fact that most contemporary songwriters are still alive.) Many of the circumstances outlined in the stories were tales of pain or poverty, but that strong faith brought them through every trial.

For worship leaders whose congregations use contemporary music regularly, this book will be a handy reference tool for the purposes of introducing the songs. For worship leaders who are largely unfamiliar with the genre, it serves as a modest introduction. The book is written in a very folksy style (the frequent use of the term "gonna" was a bit disturbing). No stories are more than four pages long; the book is easily read in a matter of a couple of hours.

Jeffrey F. Lov

Jan G. Linn, *The Jesus Connection: A Christian Spirituality*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 110 pp.

This small, attractive book is by Jan G. Linn, Professor of Ministry at Lexington Theological Seminary. Both the seminary and publisher are agencies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Linn writes for mainline churches and leaders who may be strong in openness and service but are experiencing "theological slippage." He means by that a slide in religion in general, spirituality that generic, and a bland, anything-goes approach to Christian life. "This book," says Professor Linn, "is my attempt to address this problem. It begins with conviction that spirituality in the church ought to have something tangible to say about relationship to Jesus Christ. In other words, I contend that Christian spirituality is inextricably bound to the claims of the New Testament in its proclamation of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord" (pp. 2-3).

Like Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship*, Linn's first chapter is crucial to the argument. The author challenges all spirituality that calls itself Christian to get specific. "I want to argue that Christian spirituality offers more than an idea or an example in Jesus. It is an invitation to know him, experience him, love him, and belong to him" (p. 7). That kind of language – and that focused reality – just might be good news to some people, and in some churches.

Linn continues with major chapters on signs of spiritual growth, ways of praying, and marks of a spiritually mature church. Briefer chapters treat the work of the Holy Spirit, the need for discipline, and the struggle with discouragement – topics not discussed often enough. The whole is written in a flowing, lucid style with examples drawn from the author's classroom teaching, retreat leadership, and personal life. He is to be commended for courageously tackling a problem that has lain too long untreated. His discussion makes a good start in the long rehabilitation that lies ahead. I am grateful to the Ashland Seminary alumna who introduced me to this fine book!

Jerry Fl

Min and Nigel Palmer, *The Spiritual Traveler: England, Scotland and Wales: The Guide to Sacred Sites and Pilgrim Routes in Britain*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist/Hidden Spring, 2000. 320 pp., \$20.00.

The brothers Palmer have created a comprehensive pilgrim's guide to sites sacred throughout Britain. It is at one time an introduction to spiritual pilgrimage, a brief history lesson, a survey of the sacred landscape, and a careful guide to thirteen pilgrim routes in England, Scotland and Wales,

The authors, experts in Britain's pilgrim routes, and historic church sites, have given the reader a marvelous tool with which to make pilgrimage. Spiritual travel is more than making a journey to a distant land or even following an itinerary to sacred sites. The Palmers alert us to the simple truth that every ancient traveler to sacred places knew: that the journey to the divine begins with the first step and begins within the pilgrim." (xi) Sacred travel invites you to maintain a singular focus, live with heightened awareness and anticipation, and move at a slower pace.

A brief history of the nation sets the stage for an intriguing discussion of Britain's sacred landscape with its stone circles, holy wells, sacred cities, and flora and fauna. A chapter is devoted to each topic. Explanations are supplemented by commentaries on specific sites, cities and regions as well as photographs, sketches, diagrams, and sidebars.

The pilgrim guide section of the book takes you town by town along each well-trodden route with a brief historical commentary, anecdotes, sketches and photos, and literary quotations. Directional boxes give clear instructions and mileage for navigating your way to each point of interest. Strip maps, similar to those found in medieval pilgrim's handbooks, are printed vertically in the margins to give you a visual perspective on your journey.

Here is a wonderful book for all seasons. Pick it up on a cold winter's evening and dream about following a pilgrim path next summer. Open it in the spring to plot your journey. Carry it with you as a guide along the way. Retrieve it in the fall to reflect upon your experience. I have used the Palmer's work in each season as I planned and followed the famous Canterbury route and a portion of the Ely to Walsingham route through East Anglia to Norwich and St. Julian's Church. The text prepared me for the pilgrimages, guided me along both routes, and alerted me to significant historical events and sites along the way.

Travel stirs something deep within. But a sacred journey heightens the experience as you narrow your focus, open yourself to the serendipity of the road, and discover things you could never learn as a tourist. It is a pilgrim's delight just to be on the way. *The Spiritual Traveler* is a wonderful volume not only for its content but also for the inspiration it gives. Reading its pages sets your "toe to tapping," your mind to wonder, and your spirit to soar. Journey well!

Rick Ryding, Seattle Pacific University

Reviews

Ben Patterson. *Deepening Your Conversation With God: Learning to Love to Pray*. Beth House, 2000.

Ben Patterson is not "into" prayer. He confesses that he missed the religious genre whatever it is that makes people enjoy the act of praying. With refreshing candor Ben writes a book which encourages us to learn to love to pray.

For homiletical purposes the entire book is filled to the brim with marvelous illustrative material. To simply say 'illustrative' is not enough — for the illustrations are very persuasive. For example is Patterson's citing of theologian Hans Kung's massive 602 page treatise entitled, 'Being a Christian.' Not a word in Kung's book about prayer! Asked why, Professor Kung answered, in effect, 'I forgot.' He spoke about the publisher's deadline, the harassment he was receiving from the Vatican, and he simply overlooked 'prayer.' It is a real life parable reminding us that prayer is always the first thing to go when we get caught up in the busyness of the church and the hurried pace of the world. Writes Patterson, '...only prayer can deliver us from that pace.'

This book is far from a scholarly treatise on prayer, but it is a very practical one in the style of Ben Patterson's previous books. Preaching on prayer? — this is a wonderful book with sermon ideas. Lacking a prayer life? — this is a motivational book particularly for a pastor.

Cliff Stev

H. Wayne House. *Charts of Cults, Sects, & Religious Movements*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000. 352 pp., paper, \$26.99.

Wayne House has prepared a very useful source book for nineteen different cults, sects and religious movements. They are presented alphabetically, from Alamo Christian Ministries through to The Way International, and include such well-known groups as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Eckankar, Freemasonry and the Jehovah's Witnesses. House acknowledges in the preface that since most of the work for the book was completed in 1990 there may be some information included in it that is not current. Nevertheless, it gives an exceptionally good snapshot of each group. House further acknowledges that there is no commonly accepted definition of a cult or a sect, but that he uses the terms to refer to "doctrinal deviation from orthodox Christianity and not in reference to sociological or psychological characteristics" (p. 9).

As it is a group that generates significant discussion among Canadian Presbyterians, some of whom would consider it a dubious choice to be included among cults, sects and new religious movements, I chose to study the chapter on Freemasonry as part of this review. Though the author made use of an abbreviation which he did not spell out — "A/W" — the section was otherwise clear and concise. House made use of a variety of sources for his material, both primary and secondary, which was helpful. This way, the reader is first introduced to what the organization says about itself, then to what those outside, both sympathetic and not, say about it. He begins each group's chapter with a section on facts and history about the organization followed by several pages of theological issues and the group's position on them. Each page

up in chart form (as with other Zondervan books of charts), with three columns: position, report, and orthodox response.

The positions that are addressed by the author are both those that are commonly considered and some that are less well-known. For example, in the chapter on Freemasonry, House discusses such well-known issues as "The God of Freemasonry is most often referred to as 'The Great Architect of the Universe' (G.A.O.T.U.)" (p. 142), and some lesser-known issues such as "Part of the Masonic plan of salvation includes the ultimate realization that we are not only morally good, but divine" (p. 147). The exhaustive, but not overwhelming, nature of the author's work makes this a treasure-trove for pastors and lay people alike as they seek to understand what is of God among the religious groups of the world today.

There are two appendices, the first giving an extensive description – in chart form – of orthodox Christian doctrine, in the same rubrical order as one would find a systematic theology. This is especially helpful for seekers or unbelievers who might pick up this book for general interest, as it shows them not only what is heretical, but what is considered orthodox Christian doctrine as well.

The second appendix contains five creeds of the church – the Apostles' Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Constantinopolitan Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Definition of Chalcedon. Curiously, the wording cited for the Apostles' Creed varies from what would be familiar to many as a liturgical document. Similarly, the wording of the Nicene Creed would surprise some readers, as would that of the Constantinopolitan Creed, which without the *filioque* clause otherwise reads as the Nicene Creed would to many believers.

Finally, House furnishes the reader with a significant bibliography for those who may wish to do further research into any of the groups studied in the book. On the whole, this book is well worth having on the shelf for the sake of reference, especially if you have ever thought even once of inviting that pesky door-knocker into your home for some dialogue!

Jeff Loach

David A. Evans and Peter W. Flint, eds., *Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature 1*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1997. xii + 176 pp., paper. \$20.00.

The first in the series *Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature, Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls* offers the reader several contributions on the prominent theme of eschatology and messianism as shared and developed among the writings of the Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT), the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), and related intertestamental, Jewish literature. This volume aims to portray the eschatological emphases found among these writings as by no means monolithic in perspective. Although, clearly, these writings and their intended audiences shared various views on future events (1), the nature of the expectations vary to a considerable degree and may or may not always remain consistent even within a particular group of writings themselves.

Representative of the variety of eschatological and messianic perspectives claimed by the book's contributors, the book itself contains articles ranging from a discussion of a Moses

Reviews

typology of prophetic messianism as perhaps used in DSS and NT sources (by Paul E. Hughes, 10-22) to a consideration of Paul's use of and dependence on Merkabah mysticism in his conception of his apostleship (by James M. Scott, 101-119). Other contributions, from well-known scholars in the field (e.g., Peter W. Flint, Martin G. Abegg, Jr., John J. Collins, and Craig A. Evans), offer views on biblical and non-biblical scrolls (and their uses) and their relationship to various traditions and philosophical ideas portrayed within the Judeo-Christian heritage of the Greco-Roman culture. A consistent theme among all the contributions in this volume insists on the variety of interpretations one finds in the dramas of or leading to (and the persons involved in) "the end." In addition, the DSS themselves have much to offer toward the interpretation of eschatological and messianic texts of early Judaism and Christianity. An underlying concept of the contributors is to view the DSS as a *link* between eschatology and messianism in the especially among the prophetic books, and their later manifestations in the NT corpus. The contributors highlight the activity of reinterpretation and re-appropriation of these themes found in early Jewish and Christian writings, showing that this process can already be detected in the DSS themselves. Eschatological and messianic perspectives of early Judaism and Christianity need not be based on the Greco-Roman, religio-philosophical environment; although, they certainly reflect involvement in a Greco-Roman social context.

A book of this sort may easily become overly technical and beyond the grasp of a broader readership. Not so with this introductory volume. Although one may find the last two articles of the book (dealing with the complex topics, in themselves, of throne-chair [Merkabah] mysticism and Johannine messianism, respectively) a bit more technical than the previous seven, the book as a whole is both erudite and comprehensible to the reader not so steeped in the contributors' scholarly milieu. This volume is valuable both for its contribution to scholarship on the DSS and its portrayal of the DSS as integral to conceptions of eschatology and messianism among early Jewish and Christian writings.

C. Jason Borders, Brunel University/London Bible Coll

Avraham Negev and Shimon Gibson, eds., *Archeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Land* (revised and updated edition). New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group, Inc., 2000. 555 pp., hardcover, \$39.95.

This work is a definitive, one volume archeological encyclopedia of the Holy Land and is a must acquisition of anyone interested in biblical study. It has over 800 entries and 200 illustrations including pictures, maps and diagrams. The work is a recent revision of the original 1972 version having been revised previously in 1986 and 1990. There are 125 contributors to this exhaustive work. The original (1972) edition had 600 entries by 20 scholars with 200 illustrations and cost \$15.95.

In the 2001 edition, entries begin with ABARIM (see Nebo) and include geographic, historical and biblical references concluding with ZUZIM; EMMIM. The latter were two people referred to in Genesis 14.5. In addition to the 285 illustrations, there is a chronological table tracing the archaeological periods from Paleolithic to Ottoman, 1917, thus spanning

ennia, a chronological chart of the kings of Israel and Judah as well as the Hasmoneans, the Hordians and the Procurators. A helpful glossary is also a part of the end material.

Distinguished scholars from all over the world have contributed from their expertise on site by site descriptions of digs, archeological discoveries, historical commentary and general articles. This work can serve as a ready reference and commentary for biblical study. Negev is Professor of Classical Archeology at the Institute of Archeology of Hebrew University. He has directed numerous digs and is a prolific author. Shimon Gibson is a field geologist currently in charge of the excavations on Mount Zion, and editor and an author of many articles.

Richard E. Allison

Strobel, *The Case for Christ: A Journalist's Personal Investigation of the Evidence for Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998. Paper.

The central thesis of this book describes the pilgrimage of Lee Strobel, an investigative journalist, to ascertain reliable information to either document the existence of Jesus Christ as the Messiah, or to defy that he was who he claimed to be, the divine and only Son of God. Though the author is an atheist, the diligence with which he searches for answers about the historical Jesus may give meaning to the personal search of those who read this book.

Through a long, tedious process of interviewing the most astute Biblical scholars, Strobel's questions are answered in profoundly convincing dialogues. In the book he shares each interview verbatim in the detailed, unbiased manner to which he is accustomed to reporting trials as a former legal editor of the *Chicago Tribune*.

Each section begins with a documented criminal case which has been carefully researched and prosecuted with an occasional sentencing of the innocent, the result of improperly gathered or mishandled evidence or of unreliable witnesses or contrived circumstances or testimony. Strobel progresses then into a similar argument against or in support of a piece of evidence in the Scriptural context of Jesus' life; e.g., in his first interview with Scottish professor Craig Blomberg at Aberdeen University, Strobel questions the credibility of the authors of the gospels. Blomberg's trust in the ancient texts is supported by the eyewitness theory of their authors, contrasted against the fictitious naming of the apocryphal gospels. Such ordinary, well-known characters as Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are accepted as authors, regardless of their poor credibility. John's authorship is unanimously attested to by more than a dozen Biblical scholars, interviewed by Strobel (Strobel 1998, 26-28).

The time period of thirty to sixty years encompassing eyewitness accounts of Jesus' life is considered "negligible by comparison" to the usual formulation of legend which normally occurs over a 400-500 year period after the death of the individual. Such is the case of Alexander the Great who died 323 B.C.E. Accounts are considered accurate though recorded 400 years later (Strobel 1998, 40). Blomberg's eyewitness theory is further argued by Jesus' appearance in resurrected form to some 500 persons after his appearance to the twelve disciples. These people were already participating in organized worship by the time Paul was given their creed of beliefs. That the event of Christ's resurrection, though not officially recorded "can be dated to within two

Reviews

years of that very event. This information pretty much weakens the mythological concept of legends developed over time corrupting the eye witness accounts of Christ's life" (Strobel 1998, 44).

The Yale Law School editor's questioning uncertainty is further addressed by Blomberg as he denies that oral tradition has allowed the writings to become distorted in the fashion of telephone conversations; rather, that they were carefully passed along only when the author believed the accuracy of the story. Thus, allowing for variations and wording omissions, Strobel describes the Gospels as "extremely consistent with each other by ancient standards, which are the only standards by which it's fair to judge them" (Strobel 1998, 56-57). He further notes that there are no adverse witness accounts contrary to Scripture (Strobel 1998, 66).

Blomberg concludes by saying that, "Many New Testament scholars have come to faith in Christ." Strobel defends his disbelief: "I am not a scholar, but a skeptic, an iconoclast, a hard-nosed reporter on a quest for the truth about this Jesus who said he was the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (Strobel 1998, 68).

Further investigation provides conclusive evidence for the multiplicity of copies that are so vital to Bruce Metzger, Princeton Theological Seminary professor and author of fifty books, who argues for the authenticity of manuscripts carefully cross checked to match bits of papyrus dated to C.E. 98-117 for the Gospel of John. A wealth of evidence exists in Greek documents, manuscripts, and lectionaries for the New Testament, compared with other "books of antiquity" (Strobel 1998, 80).

Strobel finds answers for other inquiries, such as why the earth became black at the hour of Christ's death (Strobel 1998, 110-111); the Talmud, Mishnah, and Josephus accounts of Jesus' healing ministry. Was it ministry or sorcery (Strobel 1998, 112-113). He interviews Edy Yamauchi at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, former Buddhist now a follower of Jesus, an archaeologist and student of twenty-two languages. Strobel learns that the documentation of Jesus' life exceeds that of any founders of an ancient religion.

Hel continues the archaeological search to document Luke, Mark and John by conferring with John Mc Cray, professor of New Testament and Archaeology at Wheaton College. To Strobel, archaeology may project similar light on the evidence as serology and toxicology provide for the crime scene in the present day. Luke's credibility had been questioned following identification of Lysanias as tetrarch in Abila near Damascus and of *politarchs*, who were unknown in Roman documents. Archaeologists have located evidence to support Luke's credibility in both instances. Similar digs in the region have established the reliability of John and Mark (Strobel 1998, 132).

Of particular interest to Biblical scholars is the absence of information from archaeological digs to support the *Book of Mormon*. McRay quotes the Smithsonian to support this claim, considering the New Testament to be "accepted as a remarkably accurate source book" (Strobel 1998, 144).

The search for validity in the person of Jesus continues through the "behaviour reflecting personality" concept of psychological profiler John Douglas, who was able to accurately describe the character of the actual San Francisco serial killer portrayed in "Silence of the Lambs" by "left-behind products of the person's behaviour" (Strobel 1998, 175). In support of this theory,

Methodology of professor Ben Witherington III, scholar of Christology at Asbury Theological Seminary was the target of Strobel's questions. To Strobel's question about and identity crisis in his life, Witherington denies such with the affirmation only of points of confirmation: at Jesus' baptism, temptation, and Transfiguration. He concluded that confirmation of Jesus' identity became real in the minds of his disciples following the crucifixion, that Jesus had performed the work of God (Strobel 1998, 184-188).

The arguments continue in logical fashion as the book's author finds answers to such questions as: Was Jesus crazy when he claimed to be the Son of God? (profile evidence). Did Jesus fulfill the attributes of God? Did Jesus and Jesus--alone--match the attributes of God? (fingerprint evidence). The resurrection is researched similarly through interviews with contemporary Biblical scholars. In the end, Strobel concludes that the evidence is heavily weighted in favor of Christ. He asks similar consideration of the reader, but in case the evidence is inconclusive, he suggests continued investigation from "respected experts." He concludes that it is vital that the reader not accept Jesus as only a great moral Teacher, but to "fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God (Strobel 1998, 365-367). Thus, his bias against the Christ seems to have shifted to apologist, who would find agreement with all those whom he has so carefully confronted with some antagonism throughout his search for veritable information. Perhaps, the shift begins to occur during the interview with Alexander Metherell, M.D., Ph. D., radiologist, physiologist, and engineer. The reader should be forewarned that this physician leaves nothing to chance in establishing the cause of death of Jesus Christ.

The book covers a wide range of methodologies for gathering data, comparing, contrasting, and analyzing it according to the means available now and at time the Gospels were written. The author's need to search for such information speaks to the similar longings of the reader, perhaps justification enough for writing such a novel. Certainly, nothing seems left to conjecture in the mind of this theorist. Above all, once certain hypotheses have been clearly proven, he is accepting of the conclusions as fact. But he does not exclude the possibility that he may have overlooked some facet of the search for truth within the records of what is known of the Christ. He encourages the reader to embark upon a similar quest for evidence.

Marigold Marsh

Michael Ruse, ed., *Philosophy of Biology*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1998. ix + 370 pp., paper, \$22.00.

If you have slipped behind in your reading on the contemporary debates in biology, or the acknowledged difficulties in neo-Darwinian explanations of the origin and nature of life, of species, and evolution, or if you want to catch up on the overlapping issues between biology and religion – on life, design, sociobiology, ethics, God and cloning, this collection of essays can be very helpful. The volume identifies 13 topics in the academic discipline of Philosophy of Biology, and collects 37 previously published essays from biologists, philosophers and theologians – past and present. The essays are filled with engaging facts, inferences, competing explanations, arguments, theorizing and speculations. Some of the chapter topics directly engage theological terrain: Evolution and Ethics, God and Biology, and Cloning, as well as the enduring

Reviews

questions of What is life? and the need of Explaining Design. There are also topics of more refined intramural biological debate, which, complex as they may be in details, nonetheless show the outsider several of the acknowledged problems in Darwinism and neo-Darwinism. The problems include contrasting views on Darwinism and the Tautology Problem (is natural selection just a conceptual way of interpreting the relationship between biological species, or that turns out to be only a truth by definition – a non-empirical proposition - hence a fatal flaw Darwinism?); The Challenge of Punctuated Equilibrium (one of the most prominent challenges to the orthodox and neo-Darwinian theory of slow gradual change, from the pen of Stephen J. Gould and others); The Problem of [Species] Classification (we observe distinctly different kinds of animals – snakes, fish, birds, rabbits, humans – not a seamless continuum of imperceptibly different life forms, which fuels the unresolved problem of the definition of a “species”); Teleology (must a Darwinian reject all notions of design and purpose – say, of the eye of a scavenger, because modern science [naturalism and/or atheism] requires it, or to the contrary must a biologist be a teleologist in order to have any story to discover and explain?). Finally, the topic of Human Sociobiology is not yet on your radar screen, the three articles in this volume can serve as good icebreakers. Sociobiology is one of the most intently discussed topics in evolutionary studies, having already spawned evolutionary ethics and evolutionary psychology. It is a topic that continues to grow in influence upon, and penetration into, the contemporary mind.

Ruse provides an informative and critical Introduction (pp.1-26) to the essays, as well as a helpful annotated bibliography of this relatively new academic discipline of Philosophy of Biology (pp. 363-370). Three articles are from theologians, i.e., William Paley, Arthur Peacocke and Philip Hefner. Biologists and philosophers are responsible for the rest, although in some cases an author's atheism may prove to be the determining factor, e.g., Richard Dawkins and J.I. Mackie. There is little space granted to theistic evolution, creation science is represented by a selection from the 1981 State of Arkansas Act 590 and Ruse's critique of it as “the ultimate fraud.” There is no essay in the volume arguing for intelligent design theory.

Two examples of the engaging nature of the essays are noted here. The topic of God and Biology includes the pantheistic argument by Arthur Peacocke. He reasons that any view of God as Creator and Sustainer of the world, given biological evolution, “impels us to take more seriously and more concretely than hitherto the notion of the immanence of God-as-Creator – that God is the Immanent Creator *creating in and through the process of the natural order...*[such that] ‘The processes themselves, as unveiled by the biological sciences, *are God-acting-as-Creator, God qua Creator.*’” (p. 339) Here there is no irreconcilable conflict between God and evolution, rather one is directed to discover the seamless activity of God in the fact of biological evolution. This seamless merging of Darwinism and divine activity of creating new life forms does, however, create a massive rip in the moral nature of God. That is to say, the incalculable amount of pain, suffering, death, and mass extinctions of most of the life forms that ever came into existence over millions of years must also be understood to be God-acting-as-Creator, too.

On the topic of Evolution and Ethics, an essay by Ruse and E. O. Wilson provides a sociobiological link between these two realms. They argue that evolution has made us via natural selection and survival of the fittest, yet we now find altruism and beneficence to be constituent of human (and humane) society. Christianity teaches such a morality, but God stands behind it

Simon on the Mount. Sociobiology (or maybe it is time to distinguish atheistic and theistic sociobiology, as is common in distinguishing atheistic and theistic forms of Existentialism) allows only naturalistic causes and explanations of phenomena, including morality. Thus, ethical systems have no ultimate objective foundation, but evolution makes us think that such foundations exist. "Evolution tricks us into beliefs about objectivity, and therefore, in this sense, morality is only a collective illusion of our species!" (p. 24, 316).

Howard M. Ducharme, University of Akron

Mann Christoph Arnold, *Why Forgive?*. The Plough Publishing House, 2000.

Arnold's book is not an easy one to read because it touches reality quickly and does not go! For who among us is not tempted to seek revenge, to deny forgiveness? Perhaps the most effective way to discuss forgiveness of another is to share the stories of people who have struggled with the effects of violent crime, abuse, bigotry and war. The author shares human stories of people who now reap the benefit of forgiveness and the stories of those who have been unable to cope in a healthy manner with great injustice.

Forgiveness of others is simple in one sense, and complex in another. In a day and age when we cry out for 'closure' for families of victims of heinous crimes, one finds the message of this book to at least bring important matters for consideration. Individuals interviewed for the book have varied ways of dealing with their hurt.

The author addresses many ways in which people are hurt. Somewhere in the book the reader will be touched with a familiar situation. Forgiveness of others is one aspect of forgiveness. For others God needs to be forgiven. And, then, there is the matter of forgiving oneself.

In a familiar style to many books, each chapter begins with an appropriate quote to the specific subject faced in the chapter. This Chinese proverb cited capsulizes the book's message and challenge: 'Whoever opts for revenge should dig two graves.' The real life examples of this book allow the reader to not feel the object of many 'oughts' and 'shoulds' and 'shall nots' but rather provide the opportunity to listen in to another human being as he or she struggles with forgiveness issues.

A certain strength of this book is the wide variety of people who contribute their honest feelings and struggles. One senses that the author himself does not look at the subject merely from an objective standpoint but is personally involved in the daily process of forgiveness and conciliation. This book can be recommended by pastors to those who are struggling with such issues.

Cliff Stewart

Reviews

Dean Merrill, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry Church: Finding a Better Way to Influence Culture*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997. 183 pp., paper, \$12.99.

In the course of Israel's history she encountered two approaches to her as a vassal foreign power. Assyria and Babylonia used a policy of violence and exile, intimidating nations which they conquered into grudging compliance. Persia, on the other hand, felt it easier to exercise control over happy subjects, so allowing them to return to their ancestral homes where they were able to live in more peaceful coexistence. Dean Merrill in this intriguing book points out that in practical terms, Christians, who should be known by love and peace, act toward those with whom they disagree in society at large more like pillaging Assyrians than conciliating Persians. (Though he does not mention it in this volume, it should be noted that Christians seem to treat their own brothers and sisters with whom they disagree in even a more violent, and violent manner).

One chapter title in particular summarizes Merrill's interest in the book: the Christian stance in a fallen society. He addresses elements of the fallenness of society and various ways Christians do, and should respond. I found a number of points striking, but one which I found most telling was the use of distortion and half-truths by Christians to support their views against those, especially the news media, who they consider being truth-distorters. One wonders if the Christian faith is so weak that its practitioners need to resort to other than Christian means to defend it.

The book is challenging and readable. It deserves discussion in churches and classrooms, and might find a place in adult discussion groups or even a Sunday school class for thinking believers (something which should not be, though all too often is, an oxymoron).

David W. Baker

Kenton C. Anderson, *Preaching with Conviction: Connecting with Postmodern Listeners*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2001. 160 pp., paper, \$10.99.

Eager to read a mystery novel combined with a practical lesson on writing a sermon—if so, this is your kind of book! Of course, it is difficult to imagine how such a combination could occur, but it does in this book by Kent Anderson who attempts to tackle in practical form what it means to preach to our postmodern culture. Anderson, in fact, practices what he preaches as he teaches via a story an intriguing way of writing a sermon that touches the hearts of modern listeners.

Propositions have to be made in sermons, but the author rightly notes they are not the best place to start. "If the task is to connect the listeners with the text and engage them with the sermon, it might be better to think in terms of the people rather than the principles." Presented are some clever progressions for one to keep in mind in the sermon writing process. 1. So what? (Tell the story.) 2. What's what? (Make the point.) 3. Yeah, but... (Engage the problem.) 4. Now what? (Imagine the difference.)

The reader will appreciate the many quotations from noted homiletics that add spice to the discussion. One would recommend this book to pastors who would like some creative input to the sermon constructing process.

Cliff Stewart, Abilene, Texas

St. Moreau, Harold Netland, and Charles Van Engen, eds., *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000. 1068 pp., \$60.00.

Having done well with Evangelical dictionaries in theology, counseling, and homiletics, Baker Books continued the trend with one on missions. No comprehensive missions dictionary had been published since 1971, and so much has changed in missions history and practice in the last three decades. Thus the publishers have provided a much-needed resource and could realize good sales.

It is an Evangelical dictionary in terms of the interpretative point of view rather than in subjects covered. Thus articles cover mission histories of work done also by Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and mainline Protestant denominations. Writers from these traditions have authored some of the articles. Adventists, Pentecostals and Charismatics are accepted under the general Evangelical umbrella, though they would have been suspect three decades ago.

The two greatest indicators of the dictionary's Evangelical perspective are the list of the contributors and the theological topics that are included. A great majority of the writers come from schools and mission agencies associated with Evangelical constituencies. The theology articulated comes predominantly from the Reformed heritage, though it is irenic in tone.

Anabaptist, Wesleyan, and Pentecostal perspectives are not well represented in the doctrinal articles of the volume, though these traditions represent sizeable constituencies within American Evangelicalism. Why topics of systematic theology were included is not always apparent, since their missiological implications frequently were not developed.

It is a comprehensive (though not exhaustive) treatment of missions in terms of representative biographies, country and continent surveys, country and agency histories, mission theory and practice, and Evangelical reflection on all of the above, in over 1400 articles. Of the 13 persons included, 105 are women, and 92 are non-Western. The article on Third World women by Sakki Athyal, for example, is outstanding. Geographical articles in general are good. The articles by Mark Shaw on Africa, and Bong Rin Ro on North and South Korea, William Taylor on Latin America, and Roger Schroeder on Oceania, among others that could be mentioned, are excellent. Conversely, articles on Eritrea, Estonia, the Falkland Islands, and similar small countries, are so brief that one wonders why they were included. A person could do well with Patrick Johnstone's *Operation World*.

My personal interest in missionary biographies made these articles favorite reading. Most traditions are reflected among the selected entries. But seldom do the biographical sketches exceed one column, and most get less space. One understands the restraint on space, but do not normative figures like William Carey, David Livingstone, J. Hudson Taylor, and Mother Theresa deserve more coverage? Some contributors seemed not to be fully conversant with the people

Reviews

about whom they were writing. The article on Eli Stanley Jones, for example, does not even mention Jones' autobiography *A Song of Ascents* in its suggested bibliography. In the interest of historical trivia, it would be nice to know who was really the first single woman to arrive in a foreign mission field. Three articles in the dictionary make claims for different contestants: Cynthia Farrar (pp. 355-356), Sarah Gorham (p. 401), and a Miss Newell who married Karl F. Gutzlaff (p. 422).

Evangelical missiology has come into prominence in the last three decades. Part of that is the reason that the many articles on mission theory, practice, and strategy are so helpful. History, anthropology, and sociology are applied to questions of missions in the present context. One senses the tensions within the missionary enterprise: between "church growth" theories and "indepth evangelism" strategies; among advocates for "proclamation", "presence" or "holistic mission priorities; between "mission agency", established churches and "independent, native churches; and between "word-centered" missions and "Spirit-centered" evangelism. The dictionary is quite even-handed on these questions, and, when evaluative statements are made, they tend to be balanced. For students and practicing missionaries, these articles may be the most helpful.

As is to be expected in a work of this magnitude, there are typographical errors and occasionally factual errors. Among these are the following: the Evangelical Lutheran Church most certainly did not establish a presence on the Faeroe Islands in the "mid-eighth century" (p. 351); Count Zinzendorf welcomed the Moravian exiles, the Unity of the Brethren, to his Herrnhut estate and not the Dutch semi-monastic group the "Brethren of the Common Life," as the article on the History of Missions asserts (p. 444); one of the three divisions of Poland which destroyed its political unity did not happen in "1975" (p. 762); J. Oswald Sanders did die in 1980 as the article on him states, but the dates after his name incorrectly read "1902-92" (p. 852); George Whitefield is incorrectly identified as a "Scottish evangelist" (p. 1015); and the article on Zimbabwe cites African and mixed race evangelists from South Africa as coming to Mashonaland in the "mid-twentieth century" before the British political presence was established in 1890 (p. 1044).

As the Preface of the dictionary indicates (p. 7), the volume is written for a popular rather than an academic audience. However, students, pastors, and missionaries will find it quite helpful for introductory articles on a wide range of mission subjects. Given the priority of missions among Evangelical groups, this dictionary should have long and satisfactory use among its intended audience. I would hope that it does well enough to merit a second edition when errors could be corrected and weaknesses could be addressed.

The highest recommendation I can give the book is to recount my own experience reading it for this review. I found myself captivated by the entries and read two to three times more articles than the usual sample to review a dictionary or encyclopedia. The book does capture one's interest; what more needs to be said?

Luke L. Keefer,

Stephen H. Webb, *Taking Religion to School: Christian Theology and Secular Education*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2002. \$20.00.

Stephen Webb's book along with George Marsden's, *The Soul of the American University* and Bruce Kuklick and D. G. Hart, eds, *Religious Advocacy and American History* is a response to the growing interest in the confessional voices increasingly heard in the academy. For its part, Webb argues that the teaching of religion has always been and must be a particularistic religious activity. With the advent of postmodernism, claims of this sort seem almost as banal as they are ubiquitous. Webb goes beyond this simple truism, however, to claim that self-conscious religious and theological particularity is not only consonant with the nature of religion itself, but also in the mandate of the secular academy, and the religious lives of the students and instructors who inhabit it.

Webb disputes the notions that confession has no place in the secular academy, that it will unleash antagonisms barely suppressible under more objectivist pedagogies, and that a confessionally-sensitive pedagogy cannot be distinguished from advocacy. Of particular note is his argument that religious stridency, which is often attributed to fundamentalists of various sorts, arises, in part, from the emasculating silence imposed on theological reflection in western public life. Since many are only exposed to a generic, theologically-evacuated caricature of religion, they are ill-prepared to deal with the substantive theological issues which routinely emerge in the interaction of various religious communions in pluralistic societies. Webb's counterarguments deal carefully and successfully with these concerns.

Webb suggests several pedagogical strategies that can be used to encourage confessing practices in the Religious Studies classroom. He insists that no student should be compelled to confess his or her religious (or non-religious) views, but space must be made for these expressions nonetheless. Because religion itself is ineradicably particular, it is critical that Religious Studies' pedagogies exemplify this fact. Students should be invited to role-play as religious believers and exercise their "religious imaginations" in the attempt to sympathetically "play out" the experiences of a believer from the inside.

For all its virtues, Webb's account would have been strengthened if he had reflected more systematically on the nature of religion. He is by no means oblivious to our Enlightenment heritage, especially its withering attack on localism, confessionalism, and particularity. But has he adequately reckoned with the massive reconceptualization of religion that occurred in the Enlightenment and in the pietistic, romantic, and evangelical reactions to it? For example, can religiously meaningful confession even exist in formal settings composed in part of unbelieving strangers? It seems that it can only if confession can be plausibly construed as simply asserting doctrinal propositions or personal religious experiences.

But what sense can be made of a confessing classroom pedagogy if confession can only be situated in corporate and liturgical settings? It is surely instructive that the classic creeds of Christendom confess before all else that it is *we* who believe. It seems that ecclesiologies as diverse as Friedrich Schleiermacher's and the Eastern Orthodox Church's must challenge *any* presentation of their faith in propositions abstracted from communal and liturgical contexts. Webb's nuanced account does not totally ignore this type of classic confessionalism; nevertheless, the academic setting in which religious views must be expressed clearly favors the

Reviews

propositional theory of religious confession and its derivative, personal confession. Webb is surely correct in affirming that the nature of religion ought to govern religious pedagogy. But is it not also true that an academic pedagogy confines what is meant by religion to contestationally-constructed, doctrinal propositions and their close cousins, personal religious experiences, which can only enter the classroom if they too are formalized as contestational propositions.

In the aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Towers, it was instructive to note apologetic tactics used by those who defended Islam. Most western experts pointed to the Koran's doctrinal strictures against these terrorist acts in their attempt to distance radicalism from mainstream Islam. What was particularly interesting, however, was the desire of many Islamic leaders to defend their religion by inviting interested parties to their temples. This "neo-modernist" gesture was very important in that it assumed that Islam can only be exemplified in communal life; it can only be truly confessed in the enriched environment of its visible manifestation. Ultimately, every religion depends on a community of believers who treat each other and those around them in ways that make aberrant behaviors implausible expressions of what is being manifest elsewhere.

In the clamor to re-gain admittance into the postmodern academy, it would be ironic if confessing communions were admitted only insofar as they are rendered in terms of doctrinal and personally-experiential modes of expression. Communitarian epistemologies, ontologies, and ways of life must be severely attenuated if they are to successfully compete for pedagogical attention. Regrettably, Webb's pedagogy does not seem to have scrutinized its own implicit theology of formal institutions and their rationalizing processes nor how they may, quite apart from the intentions of the instructors or students, cast religious life into a mold fashioned out of the very bowels of modernity.

Joel L. From, Briercrest Bible College

The Leadership Bible, New International Version. Grand Rapids: The Zondervan Corporation, 1998. 1679 pp., paper, \$24.99.

The NIV Leadership Bible is one in a sea of different "life situation" Bibles that can be purchased from your favourite Christian book retailer. There seems to be such a plethora of these Bibles, each with its own series of notes for the reader's edification, it is getting to the point where one might roll one's eyes and ask, "Another one?"

This Bible, which is also available in hard cover, is replete with leadership tips and mini-studies, as well as a "unique home-page study system" which is laid out in three easy steps on the laminated bookmark, which comes with the Bible. One can use this method to engage in studies under the rubrics of personal development, skills, and relationships, with a great variety of sub-topics under each rubric. These studies are designed to last either one or two weeks and can be used in groups or in personal devotions. Among the "home-page" contents are studies on character, integrity, leader qualifications, wisdom, accountability, conflict management, decision-making, time management, interpersonal relationships and servant leadership – all issues that

ner to people who are in leadership, either in the church or in the world. There are suggested pages for memorization included in each weekly study.

My own experience in following these different studies is that, while they are faithful to texts they are set with, they tend to apply more to those who are involved in lay leadership, in a church or outside the church. As a pastor, I found some of the applications somewhat fanciful, but that may be why they didn't call it the "Pastoral Leadership Bible". Occasionally, I find that the hermeneutics were stretched a bit to come up with the leadership principles that are applied, particularly in the Old Testament. However, if one is prepared to overlook these – and they may merely show a theological bias – the other features of this Bible that foster the application of Christian leadership principles in daily life outshine the parts which one might consider controversial.

Studies of different Bible characters are also available in this Bible. For example, surrounding Genesis 14, there is a brief (12-line) commentary on the life of Melchizedek. The authors comment on what is known biblically about Melchizedek, and close with an application for leaders: "Melchizedek met Abram's physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Often the best remembered leaders are those who graciously serve the individuals who comprise their team. Melchizedek points us to Jesus not only as a priest and king, but also as a servant leader" (p. 18).

The paperback version is bound surprisingly well, and sits open without a great deal of struggle, except at the front and back. It is somewhat heavy, as these sorts of study Bibles tend to be, but this is necessary because of all the "extra" notes that have been placed in it.

I would commend this Bible particularly to those who are in leadership positions outside the church. The kind of person who comes to mind is the man or woman who is responsible for making significant decisions in his or her job, and needs to be able to do so with integrity and good ethical practice – something we would wish for anyone in leadership, but especially Christians in the workplace. *The NIV Leadership Bible* is another useful tool in making disciples for Jesus Christ.

Jeffrey F. Loach

alter R. Hearn, *Being a Christian in Science*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997. 178 pp., paper.

We live now in what might be called the Era of the Glimpse of God, in a new epoch ushered in by the serendipitous discovery of the Cosmic Microwave Background Radiation in 1963, for which the Nobel Prize in physics was awarded in 1978 (on the discovery, cf. Hugh Ross, *The Creator and the Cosmos: How the Greatest Discoveries of the Century Reveal God* 2nd ed.; Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1995], *passim*). Since at least 1965 it has been understood that this discovery signaled humankind's first glimpse at the beginning of the cosmos, implying even to many agnostics that if the universe began, the existence of a Beginner was more than just an attractive speculation. When in 1992 the "greatest discovery in the history of mankind" was achieved (so Stephen Hawking) clarifying details of this radiation, a discovery which one physicist described as "looking at the face of God" (so George Smoot), the personal concepts implicit in the new era became even more understandable throughout the world.

Reviews

It is in this light then that the helpful thoughts of Hearn's book should be examined. The goal is to assure a young person who may consider a career in science, or a theological student who might like to understand better how modern science works, that positive contributions can be made to both the Christian and the scientific communities and that this can be done with joy (2). Hearn also writes in the light (or darkness) of another background. Hearn is well aware of the tragic assault against science in the public arena mounted by the dangerous pseudoscience peddled by Christian sectarians of the "Young Earthism" movement which dogmatically tout a 4000 year old cosmos, the unobserved short-term macroevolution of species following a worldwide flood, and humankind walking with dinosaurs, along with the total rejection of modern science that such claims entail. As John Polkinghorne, *Belief in God in an Age of Science* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 88, aptly observes, "The ghost of Archbishop Ussher has not been wholly exorcised from theology." Hearn alludes to the vocal devotees of this ghost on at least three occasions (16, 22, and 97). Deeply unbiblical in some of its tenets, especially in its insertion of the death of plants and animals into Romans 5:12, this embarrassing anti-scientific sect poses a tremendous national threat (so Langdon Gilkey) to the budding interest in science and technology among our nation's youth, both outside and inside of formal Christian education. The political tactic employed by "Young Earthism" is deliberately divisive, pillorying the entirely appropriate naturalistic methods of experimental science as atheistic, disingenuous; failing to distinguish in methodology between theory and fact, surreptitiously taking scientific comments out of context to exaggerate, while at the same time bombastically claiming the imprimatur of "True Science and Education" for its devotional pamphleteering! All of this regrettably forces sincere Christian young people to choose between ungodly science and the "inerrant Bible." The discouragement and distortions Christian young people face due to this sectarian influence in many churches and in the thinking public at large (where, alarmingly, this pseudoscientifically based movement is often associated with the intellectual worth of Christianity itself), when considering a career in science or when reflecting upon the connection between their faith and science, need to be met by books like Hearn's *Being a Christian*, as well as by objective critiques of the sect and its philosophical underpinnings (as in, for example, Ronald Numbers, *The Creationists: The Evolution of Scientific Creationism* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992]; Robert Pennock, *Tower of Babel: The Evidence Against the New Creationism* [Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1999]; Steve Weinberg, *Facing Up: Science and Its Cultural Adversaries* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001]); and, from a liberal theological perspective, Langdon Gilkey, *Blue Twilig Nature, Creationism, and American Religion* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001]).

Hearn is under no illusion about the fact that he is on the battlefield for the Christian mind and is concerned that its potential influence for much good in the scientific and technological world should not be lost to coming generations. He wants to explain the methods of science, that they are restricted to physical cause and effect (17, 38), and that in deciding whether science is the right career path you should keep in mind that "Christian behavior is rooted in biblical precepts and in loyalty to Jesus Christ" (40). If a young person feels called into a career in science (or, I might add, wants to investigate its experimental results), Hearn offers assurance: "If scientific work is your calling as a Christian, you will be welcomed into a wonderful family"

Hearn advocates looking to God in the face of temporal pessimism, letting the optimism generated from eternity help you serve here and now in the way you are called.

The opportunity to be a witness within the scientific community is greater in the new era than ever before and Hearn is right both to detect and to encourage this. As an example, he cites the work of professed agnostic astronomer Robert Jastrow, formerly director of NASA, whose book, *God and the Astronomers*, is so widely read. Like many scientists, Jastrow rejects Einstein's impersonal God of rational order but is not sure on how to proceed. Hearn argues that Jastrow needs prayer, not condemnation (well aware that many famous scientists have unjustly been personally attacked by Christian sectarians) for holding naturalistic presuppositions, "Who knows, perhaps in Robert Jastrow the Son of God will live – before the sun dies" (97). If I may, I would like to insert a personal testimony. I was once present in a conversation with Nobel laureate Richard Feynman at the University of California at Irvine, where Feynman had just delivered a memorial lecture. A physics colleague of mine there cordially presented Feynman with a genuine Christian witness. Feynman demurred, saying that he could detect nothing about the universe to suggest the existence of God. However, I suspected then that Feynman was confused about how some Christians could be intellectually credible and seek to reject modern scientific methods, replacing them with fantastic philosophical speculation. A stumbling block had been placed in his way about what Christianity was and he never recovered from it. Feynman died shortly thereafter. Now, in the new era, the opportunity to be a Christian witness in the scientific community is very much enhanced and ever increasing because the entire climate of skepticism is being influenced in a positive way by new experimental discoveries. If Christian young people respond to God's calling to enter science, in careers like astronomy, biochemistry, geology, paleontology, paleobiology (where the macroevolution of hominids to modern man does not at all have to be accepted as an assured experimental result given recent DNA evidence from Neanderthal fossil), and physics, for example, they will have the opportunity to make new discoveries that affect humankind for the better and have the further satisfaction of being a respectable Christian witness used of God.

While the concept of spiritual life is foreign to science itself because it deals with only measurable physical properties, the Christian in science can develop spiritual life via fellowship with the Holy Spirit and through learning Scripture. A Christian in science will not be in an isolated position. There are good journals, like *Science & Christian Belief*, to help, as well as a number of theology and science groups (107-110, 126, and 137). Hearn includes a little exhortation on "The Bible and Science" that is timely (117-19). Hearn further urges that a Christian's life in science can be one of adventure and fulfillment; he gives his own convincing testimony to that effect.

Hearn cites a few examples of Christians in science (and theology) who extend their witness to the general public, like astronomer/pastor Hugh Ross, whose "writing and speaking have helped to demonstrate to conservative Christians that big bang cosmology and an ancient earth are compatible with a faithful reading of the Bible" (137), and like Robert C. Newman, whose "Progressive Creationism" in J. P. Moreland and John Mark Reynolds (eds.), *Three Views on Creation and Evolution* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999], 105-33, is worthy of perusal, and the responses to it by Walter L. Bradley (134-36) and Vern S. Poythress (148-52) in *Three Views*.

Reviews

Hearn offers a useful set of notes to each chapter and a good working list of references which also might have included Nathan Aviezer, *In the Beginning: Biblical Creation and Science* (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV, 1990) and, with apologies for mentioning my own work, "Biblical Creation and Science: A Review Article," *JETS* 39/2 (1996), 289-91.

I highly commend *Being a Christian in Science* to theological students who may wish to explore the methodology of the physical (natural) sciences. There is no need for Christians to fear the experimental findings of modern science; rather there is an emerging realization of harmony with a literary interpretation of the Bible. There is a need, however, for all Christian students to understand what science is and what it is not. Hearn is helpful here as is John Rennie, "Fifteen Answers to Creationist Nonsense," *Scientific American* 287/1 (2002), 78-85 (81, 82) who fairly observes, from the physical cause and effect perspective of science alone, that "The origin of life remains a mystery" and that "A critical tenet of modern science is methodological naturalism – it seeks to explain the universe purely in terms of observed or testable natural mechanisms." Being a Christian in science, if you become a cell biologist or a paleobiologist, for example, does not mean that you have to agree with the arguments of a John Rennie, but you might want to present other plausible interpretations of the available evidence. Being a scientist or desiring to understand the experimental findings of modern science from a sound theological perspective will not conflict with Christian convictions and biblical faith. In fact there are influential venues in the new era for Christians in science to honestly and professionally present cogent arguments based on experimental findings and scientific methods (not on religious speculation as a replacement for the very successful scientific methodology that underpins our technology, our military, and our industrially based economy), arguments which suggest an active role for the biblical God. In doing this, Christians in science will keep in mind that such potentially persuasive arguments will fall short of formal proof, given God's desire to remain invisible and to let His power and divinity be inferred by those who will thoughtfully contemplate His creation (Romans 1:20).

Christians in science today, like Hearn, are concerned for their Christian testimony and do not want to be lumped together with sectarian activities which are widely regarded as against the public trust, as recently illustrated by the Iowa Academy of Science's Position Statement on Pseudoscience for the public good: "Pseudoscience is a catch-all term for any mistaken or unsupported beliefs that are cloaked in the disguise of scientific credibility. Examples include assertions of 'scientific creationism,' the control of actions at a distance through meditation, and the belief in levitation, astrology, or UFO visitors." Every young person contemplating whether God would like him or her to study science and every theology student who would like to better understand how all of those programs on television (like Paleoworld and the Discovery Channel) can fit productively into practical ministry should take time to pray and study the Bible using sound hermeneutical methods. Hearn's book will be a very welcome complement to such valuable and worthwhile endeavors.

Paul Elbert, Visiting Professor of Theology and Science
Church of God Theological Seminary

at E. Alexander and Marsha Ann Tate, *Web Wisdom: How to Evaluate and Create Information Quality on the Web*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999. 156 pp., \$50.

With the phenomenon of millions of web sites popping up daily, we, as web users, need to be able to apply great wisdom to ensure that what we place on the web will be found, read, and used. Second to this, with all this information available to us in microseconds, we need wisdom to discern what is valuable information and what is garbage. (If you are uncertain of the amount of garbage out in cyberspace, do a simple search and marvel at the number of hits you receive!)

This book, *Web Wisdom*, is information to both the user of the web and a web page developer. Janet Alexander and Marsha Tate are reference librarians at Widener University's H. P. Lovecraft Memorial Library. Using this experience, they apply the evaluation method used for printed material to the web. The main idea of this book is to apply critical techniques to the web that those we would normally apply to other written materials. By applying these critical techniques to web pages, web masters are prepared to present information that is reliable and trustworthy.

Web Wisdom helps web users understand the complex issues that arise from the information that is published non-traditionally via the web. One major issue the book addresses is the need to be people of discernment. Anyone can publish on the web in contrast to traditional printed material. As such, this book takes the evaluation methods of printed material (accuracy, objectivity, currency, objectivity, and coverage) and demonstrates how differently these are applied to written, published works than to web material. What we have taken for granted in the published world, we seem to ignore in the web world. Being critical evaluators of web information is key to how we use and repeat information we obtain from the web.

Another valuable component of this book is the discussions on the types of web pages and the purposes for which they are created. By understanding why people create pages and the types of pages that reside on the web i.e., advertising, advocacy, information, personal, and entertainment, we are better able to create pages that serve the purposes we intended.

As an instructor in the field of technology and ministry, I have been presented with the challenges of deciphering information found on the web. My goal, with the help of this book, is to create responsible web users and web page developers. Students need to understand how the information they process from the web can hurt their own credibility and the credibility of their churches and ministries.

I would encourage anyone who uses the web, either for information or for promotion of their organization, to understand the key elements of evaluation of web pages and web sites. This book is a wonderful resource and one that I will encourage other faculty, students, and members of my family to read. We all need to become responsible purveyors of accurate information.

Vickie Taylor

Reviews

Andrew Careaga, *eMinistry: Connecting with the Net Generation*. Grand Rapids: Krey Publications, 2001. 216 pp., paper, \$10.99.

With all the attention given to the Internet, both negative and positive, it is refreshing to have a book written to assist people in ministry with decisions about how to use the Internet effectively. *eMinistry* is a practical book that shows us that the Internet can be used successfully in reaching the unchurched. We can dispel many of our fears about the Internet and find ways to enhance ministry while not sacrificing community for the sake of the computer.

Careaga spent time researching this topic by talking with people from many walks of life, interviewing theologians, pastors, missionaries, teenagers, technology gurus, and frequent NetSurfers. What he discovered was surprising and encouraging to all who have reservations about the effectiveness of the Internet in today's ministries. He has even included at the end of every chapter valuable web links for them.

Regardless of whether we are ready or not, people are using the Internet as a means of finding information and developing communication. If the church decides to bypass this form of technology, we will find ourselves outside of the communication loop. As Careaga writes, "Will the church be there for online seekers with a message of salvation and hope? Or will we choose instead to ignore the impact of this new medium and let other belief systems influence the hearts and minds of the Net surfers" (p. 35)? The "itching ears" of the eGeneration are searching for something to "hear." What will they find?

To assist those who are interested in Internet ministry, this book offers resources and information geared toward understanding and developing a successful Internet ministry. The book is presented in two parts; the first addresses the characteristics of the net-generation, and the second explores the online world. Careaga is careful to address both the drawbacks and the benefits of the Internet ministry.

If you are wondering whether Internet ministry is right for your church, *eMinistry* is a must read for you. I am using this book in our "Technology in Ministry" class to give pastors and church leaders useful information regarding their ministry settings.

Vickie Taylor

Mark Stover, ed., *Theological Librarians and the Internet: Implications for Practice*. New York/London: Haworth Information Press, 2001. 201 pp., hardcover, \$59.95.

One of the most significant innovations of the late twentieth century has been the democratization of information through computer technology. Once the exclusive domain of large institutions, the impact of the integrated circuit in decreasing computer size, along with the development of the graphical user interface (GUI) to make computers user friendly has moved information technology from the exotic to the mundane. The result for libraries and librarians, as well as library users, has been profound. Yet, how much has this new technology affected theological libraries? How effectively are theological librarians using the new technologies? Do the new technologies mean that we can do away with the traditional humanities library in general and the theological library in particular?

While these greater philosophical questions are not addressed in *Theological Librarians and the Internet*, the nuts and bolts issues of how librarians may make effective use of the technology is discussed in great, if not, for the non-professional, agonizing detail. The essays included in the book are: "Internet Shock, Change, Continuity, and the Theological Librarian," by Mark Stover (pp. 1-12); "Religious and Theological Journals Online: The ATLA Serials Collection Project," by Mark Dubis (pp. 13-15); "The Function of Web Catalogs in Theological Libraries," by John Dickason (pp. 17-43); "Electronic Journals in Religious Studies: Theological Libraries Prepare for the Digital Future," by Marshall Eidson, (pp. 45-67); "Theological Distance Education: A Librarian's Perspective," by Dave Harmeyer (pp. 69-86); "The Creation of the Hush Center Internet Guide," by Charles K. Bellinger (pp. 87-96); "Homiletics and Liturgics on the Internet," by Robert R. Howard (pp. 97-104); "Accessing Digital Images: Sources for Christian Art on the Internet," by Elizabeth Davis Deahl (pp. 105-125); "Opening the Front Door: Designing a Usable Library Website," by Andrew J. Keck (pp. 127-137); "Using the Web in Religious Studies Courses," by Rebecca Moore (pp. 139-150); "Some Selected Internet Sources for Novice Researchers of Christian History," by Michael Strickland (pp. 151-160); "Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations for Web Design in Religious and Theological Academic Libraries," by Mark Stover (pp. 161-201); and, "Virtually Jewish: The Creation of a Jewish Internet Tutorial," by Terren I. Wein and Juna Z. Snow (pp. 203-214).

As in any edited volume, the articles vary in readability and in usefulness for various readers. A number of articles presuppose an understanding of library jargon. Other articles, such as those by Bellinger, Howard, Deahl, and Strickland, provide useful information and web addresses for a wide constituency. One should, however, be cautioned web addresses can change with remarkable regularity. Other articles, such as Keck's, are addressed to information professionals, but are also useful to the more general reader. Moore's essay is most helpful for teachers of religion or theology who are attempting to integrate Web resources into their classes.

Readers may be surprised to learn that, while print journals may be superseded by the advent of the web, libraries focusing upon the humanities will still need to acquire books. The reason, in part, is because of copyright law. Unfortunately, the book only touched on this issue very briefly. The restrictions of the copyright law are why many texts available at "free" sites are, in fact dated and precritical. Thus, the user finds the interesting phenomenon of the latest technology only being able to access older material.

The book fails to mention some of the great frustrations in Web searching. A chapter on boolean searching would have been helpful for the novice. Furthermore, the inadequacies of search engines are not explored. The writers assume also a certain degree of information literacy on the part of their audience.

In conclusion, while *Theological Librarians and the Internet* does not discuss all the important issues facing the theological librarian in the new information age, it is a useful introduction to some of the areas of major concern. It provides a good introduction to both the promises and problems of the Internet as applied to religious studies. Non-librarians also will find some informative articles, but should avoid the jargon-laden ones.

Russell Morton

Reviews

Walter P. Wilson, *The Internet Church*. Nashville: Word Publishing, 2000. 174pp.

It is no secret that one of the buzz words for the church of today is "online." exactly what that means for the local church is complicated. On the one hand, we all understand that our culture has become so dependent upon the Internet that one can hardly escape its place in our homes, businesses, and churches. On the other hand, can the church effectively use the Internet as a medium to reach men and women across the world without becoming isolated and out of touch with humanity?

Wilson has done a good job of helping the general public become aware of the need to use this effective medium for spreading the gospel and touching the lives of the lost, forgotten, and the hidden. His background prepared him to write this book. His experience as the co-founder, Chairman, and CEO for Exclaim Technologies, his heart for the lost, and his passion for the Great Commission give him the wisdom he shares with the church. Wilson shares with the church the practical advice needed to take advantage of this "global communications tool" that God has provided to the world.

Helping the church and its members to grasp the concepts of Internet usage for church purposes is not an easy task but as Wilson explains, "...this is not about technology; it's about the Great Commission and our obedience to our Creator and Redeemer" (p. 14). His thesis for the book is centered on the viewpoint that we as Christians must look at the Internet as a way in which God is moving to bring to completion His mission of having His truth proclaimed to the very ends of the earth.

Most of the book's 12 chapters help the reader understand the importance of the Internet in today's ministries. The focus is to guide us to a comfortable place in this world of fast-paced change. We all know that the church is one place where change is difficult and slow. But when it comes to getting onboard with Internet ministry, being slow can make one's ministry culturally irrelevant.

The journey through this book begins with an understanding of the call of the church, the church's inadequacies, and the faithful provision of God who calls and equips and concludes with an understanding of how we can renew and transform our ways of thinking. Wilson calls this transformation the change from "atoms to bits."

The final chapter in the book deals with practical ways in which the church can use the Internet for ministry. Wilson shares examples from his own church and stories from other churches.

If you or your church is uncertain whether Internet ministry is for you, I highly suggest reading this book. You will be gently guided through all your questions and concerns and you will have a greater understanding of your role in the world. I recommend this reading for pastors to help develop a philosophy of technology in the local church and for helping people understand the need for some form of Internet ministry.

Vickie Taylor