

Jim Rosscup, Commentaries for Biblical Expositors, Sun Valley, CA: Grace Book Shack, 1993, x + 314 pp.

This helpful guide to Bible study helps is by a professor at the Master's Seminary, a dispensational school founded by John MacArthur, so reflects a theological tradition which must be kept in mind while reading Rosscup's evaluations. Following a foreword by John MacArthur, and a preface by Cyril Barber, the author discusses some of the volume's limitations, the main being its selectivity. He sets out to highlight works most useful to preachers. He purposefully avoids, e.g., the older, Puritan reprints, but by no means eschews older works (Calvin, Darby, Keil and Delitzsch, Tregelles). He notes commentaries in a separate, 13 page chapter under headings of "Detailed exegetical", "expositional survey" and "devotional flavor."

The main body of the work consists of: whole Bible commentaries, those on the entire Old Testament, the Pentateuch, individual OT books, the entire NT, background and special studies on the Gospels, and individual NT books. As a rule, each entry provides a paragraph description of the work.

By its nature, such a collection as this is out of date by the time it appears. It will also not include works seen as important by others. Rosscup does not avoid commentaries which markedly differ from his theological position, and often his comments can be useful, though one is at times unclear as to his definitions, e.g., what does "liberal" indicate? This volume could find a place in the libraries of churches and pastors who come from a similar hermeneutical position, though if they had Carson and Longman's volumes (the latter reviewed below), this book would be redundant.

David W. Baker

Tremper Longman III, Old Testament Commentary Survey, 2nd ed., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995, 185 pp., \$10.99 paper.

Tremper Longman, professor of Old Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary, has done a great service for students and teachers of Scripture. We are constantly asked for recommendations concerning commentary purchase, and now we can direct enquires to this useful resource, and its companion on the New Testament by Donald A. Carson.

The work goes beyond the title, in that the first quarter of the volume addresses OT reference works (introductions, theologies, histories, archaeology, atlases, ancient Near Eastern text translations) and Hebrew helps, before moving on to commentaries, which themselves are divided into one volume works, sets, and individual commentaries. Five appendices cover: an OT library on a budget, the ideal OT reference library, five star commentaries, and the author's own commentaries.

Each entry has a brief (2-3 sentence description), an evaluation of the intended audience (layperson, minister, scholar) and a rating system.

This volume should find a place in all church and pastor's libraries, as well as in all seminaries and Bible colleges. We thank Dr. Longman for his diligence.

David W. Baker

Book Reviews

John H. Sailhamer, Introduction to Old Testament Theology: A Canonical Approach, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995, 327 pp., \$19.99.

The question of what it means to do Old Testament Theology is one of the key issues in contemporary biblical study. John Sailhamer has made a timely contribution to the debate. He writes primarily for students, though also with a concern for the wider context of contemporary evangelical OT scholarship.

Sailhamer writes as an evangelical, committed to scripture as the inspired word of God, who wants to reformulate what an evangelical understanding of Old Testament Theology should be. He draws widely on earlier forms of the debate in the 17th and 18th centuries, as well as interacting with contemporary debate on Old Testament, linguistics and hermeneutics. The heart of the book is a methodological discussion in which Sailhamer presents the debate in the form of a number of polarities. He argues that OT Theology should focus on the biblical text, rather than the events underlying the text; that it should be canonical, rather than critical; that the interpreter's approach should be confessional, rather than descriptive; and that the shaping should be diachronic rather than synchronic (though on this last point he recognizes that much depends on the purpose for which one is producing the work).

Two points in particular distinguish Sailhamer's evangelical stance. First, he insists that the historical accuracy of the accounts of events recorded in scripture is paramount; without that, the truth of scripture is imperilled. The emphasis on text rather than event is not meant, therefore, to deny that it is genuinely historical events to which biblical narrative refers; simply that the establishing of such historicity is an apologetic task distinct from that of theological interpretation. Secondly, Sailhamer "strongly urge[s] the consideration of a return to the notion that the literal meaning of the OT may, in fact, be linked to the messianic hope of the pre-Christian, Israelite prophets" (p. 154). He offers an interesting historical excursus on how the Reformers often understood the literal meaning of scripture in terms of the medieval Jewish commentators' notion of *peshat*, which had itself been developed for polemical purposes to defend Judaism against Christian interpretations of scripture, and sees his proposal as an escape from a profound Protestant dilemma.

How should this learned and lucid study be evaluated? I offer one regret, and two suggestions for continuing debate. My regret is that a textbook for students should be so largely a methodological discussion, with little in-depth engagement with the biblical text itself. Of course, the methodological issues are important and entangled and need this kind of discussion; but the danger is that students may too easily suppose that they can know what Old Testament Theology is without extensive immersion within the OT itself. Sailhamer is aware of this danger, but the final form of his text does not direct the reader sufficiently to the biblical text.

In terms of attending to the canonical shape of the OT, I am surprised that so much emphasis should be laid on Deuteronomy 33-34 (and possible links with Josh. 1 and the end of Malachi). Sailhamer's purpose is clear (p. 249) - to see a canonical shaping in which prophecy has ceased, scripture is the locus of divine revelation, yet there remains a hope for the return of prophecy in the future. This is a suggestive interpretation. But I think that attending to the canonical shape will more often mean that we focus on precisely those passages that both Jews and Christians down the ages have focused on. For example,

within Deuteronomy, the Shema (6:4-9), which is the keynote of the Mosaic exposition of the covenant, and whose prime importance is acknowledged by Jesus, though linked, of course, with Lev. 19:18 (Mk. 12:28-34); within Exodus, the revelation of God's name and nature to Moses (Exod. 3, 34) and of His will to Israel (Exod. 20); within Genesis, creation, fall, and flood (Gen. 1-9) and Abraham's faithful obedience when faced by the supreme test (Gen. 22). No canonical interpretation that focused on this material could ever be open to the charge of being arbitrary or finding meaning where none (or less) was intended.

Finally, I think it would be more helpful if there was more discussion of what it actually means and involves to talk about God. It is all very well to draw a sharp distinction between revelation and religion, and to emphasize that the Bible is the former. But surely what we need is substantive criteria to enable us to know that when people talk about God, it is genuinely God that they are talking about. It is of limited help to say that we believe the biblical writers, if we do not make clear how our speech today as Christians can truly witness to God. There is surely more to theology and witness than simply reiterating the words of scripture (as Jesus' teaching in parables clearly shows). The Old Testament itself is acutely aware of the human tendency to turn God-directed language and practice into idolatry. More focus on this issue might help students to see why the OT matters so much for our Christian faith.

R. W. L. Moberly, University of Durham

R. Norman Whybray, Introduction to the Pentateuch, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, vii + 146 pp., \$12.99.

Anyone familiar with recent writings on the Pentateuch will be well aware of the difficulty of trying to write a straight-forward introduction to this subject. The past two decades has witnessed an ever growing chorus of influential voices raised against the Documentary Hypothesis which was expounded so ably by Graf, Kuenen and Wellhausen over a century ago. Gone are the days when all 'respected' scholars accept, as a matter of fact, that the Pentateuch consists of four main documents, J, E, D and P.

Charting the course of recent studies, Whybray argues that the Pentateuch was probably composed by a author of considerable literary skill during the exilic or post-exilic period. While this author made use of some earlier sources (mainly the 'legal' material), he invented most of the Pentateuchal narrative in order to produce a history of the Jewish nation, similar in style to those penned by Greek historians of the sixth and fifth centuries B.C..

Since it is not possible to critique fully Whybray's position in a brief review, the following comments must suffice. First, Whybray is highly skeptical regarding the historical reliability of the events recorded in the Pentateuchal narrative. He dismisses as essentially unhistorical, for example, the accounts concerns the patriarchs, the exodus from Egypt and the construction of the tabernacle. In adopting such a position Whybray follows a growing trend whereby biblical traditions are only accepted as historical when there is clear corroborating evidence. While such a stance at first sight appears highly sensible, it fails to take into account the nature and antiquity of the biblical material, and the fact that supporting evidence may have long since perished, or, if not, yet remains to be uncovered by an archaeologist's trowel. (Given that three-quarters of Genesis records various incidents involving a single family that immigrated from Mesopotamia to the land of Palestine some

4,000 years ago, it might well be asked, what kind of corroborating evidence would one expect to discover?) Moreover, Whybray tends to emphasize overly the degree of historical skepticism expressed by biblical scholars. For example, as regards the tabernacle he ignores completely the views of J. Milgrom (*Leviticus 1-16*, pp. 29ff.) and K. A. Kitchen ("The Tabernacle - A Late Bronze Age Artefact," *Eretz Israel* 24 [1993] 119-129) who both support the basic historical reliability of the biblical account. Furthermore, Whybray's skepticism towards the historical value of much of the Pentateuchal material is striking given his belief that the Pentateuch parallels other ancient near eastern "histories." These, he notes, exhibit a transition from "mythical origins of the world to accounts of actual historical persons and events" (p. 36). Yet, although Whybray argues that Genesis 1-11 reports "mythical origins of the world", he does not appear to take seriously the possibility that the material beyond Genesis ch. 11 may record events involving real people.

Second, while Whybray claims to adopt a synchronic approach towards the Pentateuch, viewing the final form "as a 'book' which exists in its own right as an artifact with a theme and a message" (p. 135), the present reviewer was struck by the dominance of the diachronic method, with much discussion focusing on the origin of the material. Readers seeking here a thorough-going synchronic reading of the Pentateuch will be disappointed. Moreover, Whybray's interpretation of the whole is colored significantly by his understanding of the process by which the Pentateuch was composed. As a consequence he fails to appreciate the way in which the universal character of Genesis 1-11 is an integral part of the message of the Pentateuch as a whole. (Whybray is quite mistaken in separating the early chapter of Genesis from the rest of the book; various important themes link the so-called primeval history to the patriarchal stories.) Genesis to Deuteronomy is not merely a history of the Jews, it announces that through the Jews, and in particular a royal descendant of Abraham, all the nations of the earth shall be blessed by God, reversing the consequences of humanity's expulsion from the Garden of Eden.

Third, Whybray tends to highlight those parts of the Pentateuch which support an exilic or post-exilic date for the final composition of the Pentateuch, without at the same time drawing attention to those aspects which run counter to such a conclusion. For example, given the hostility which existed between Jews and Edomites in the exilic period, as reflected in the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, is it not remarkable that the author of Genesis should create a literary fiction in which the Edomites are portrayed as descended from Isaac's eldest son, Esau, and that this Esau was robbed of his birthright by his younger brother Jacob/Israel?

Much more could be said about Whybray's views on the Pentateuch. While evangelicals, who have consistently argued it, are likely to support Whybray's rejection of the Documentary Hypothesis, they will be less inclined to accept his skepticism about the historical trustworthiness of the Pentateuchal narrative. Whybray's approach, however, probably reflects one of the main directions in which Pentateuchal studies will proceed. If evangelicals are to participate in future discussion they will need to take seriously the views outlined here.

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

Donald E. Gowan, Theology in Exodus: Biblical Theology in the Form of a Commentary, Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994, 297 pp., \$28.00.

This innovative study by Gowan addresses a very basic yet extremely important question: What does the book of Exodus say about God? Organizing Exodus into a number of distinctive sections, Gowan highlights the various ways in which the divine nature is portrayed in the narrative (e.g., 'the absence of God' in chs. 1-2; 'the Divine Destroyer' in 5:1-15:21). The treatment is selective with certain passages being examined in considerable detail and others being discussed very briefly, if at all. While Gowan succeeds well in highlighting the main themes developed in Exodus regarding the divine nature, certain aspects of what Exodus has to say about God are overlooked (for example, the idea that the tabernacle as God's dwelling place is constructed using materials that are indicative of royalty). Although the treatment is not exhaustive, it is certainly much fuller than one finds in traditional commentaries and this is clearly the major strength of the book. Moreover, Gowan sets these themes within a larger context, exploring their development in the rest of the Bible and in Jewish and Christian thinking. Although Gowan's reading of the text is undertaken with considerable expertise—occasionally one might wish to adopt a different interpretation (e.g., on p. 163 Gowan's view of death is much too positive)—there is a tendency throughout the work to jump between reading the text in its received form and the text as reflected in the sources which some scholars believe were used to compose Exodus.

Although Gowan usually skirts round any discussion of the process by which the text was composed, he nevertheless introduces the results of such research into his discussion. Thus, for example, he links the account of the building of the tabernacle with the Priestly source which he dates to the time of the Babylonian exile (p. 186); no reference is made to scholars like J. Milgrom (in his major commentary on Leviticus 1-16) or K. A. Kitchen ('The Tabernacle - A Late Bronze Age Artefact' *Eretz Israel* 24 [1993] 119-29) who offer substantial reasons from viewing the tabernacle material as originating from a much earlier period. By following Gowan's approach one is no longer reading exactly what the book of Exodus has to say about God, but rather what hypothetical sources, which may even contradict one another, are supposedly saying. This leads on to another important issue regarding Gowan's general understanding of the book of Exodus. In line with the critical position reflected in his study, Gowan adopts a somewhat skeptical view towards the historicity of the events recorded in Exodus; he sees, for example, the account of the theophany at Sinai as having its origin in cultic worship, far removed from any actual mountain in the Sinai peninsula (p. 174). For him, this presents no real problem. The book of Exodus 'represents the chorus of voices of those who found that the claims of this document correspond to reality as they knew it, to their own experiences of who God is and what God does. We cannot know how the author came to these insights (apart from a theory of divine dictation), but we do know that these insights were validated by one generation after another—and that was certainly not because someone once said it, but because they discovered their (sic.) truth for themselves. It is this ongoing testimony, then, ... that provides for me a basis for speaking of the truth of scripture...' (p. xvi). Thus, according to Gowan, although the narrative itself may in places be fictional, it reflects a true understanding of God. In this way he seeks to preserve the belief that the book of Exodus provides an authoritative testimony to God's nature. Yet, it must be asked, why should the shared religious experience of those Gowan believes were responsible for the book of

Exodus be any more authoritative regarding the nature of God than that of any other group of ancient people? More significantly, perhaps, Gowan fails to acknowledge that the shared religious experience reflected in the OT as a whole affirms that God revealed himself through mighty deeds in Egypt and by speaking at Mount Sinai. If on this issue the shared religious experience is mistaken, what credibility can be given to anything else that is stated regarding the nature of God. If God did not act and speak in the unique way that the book of Exodus claims, why should we believe anything else that Exodus claims about God's nature? By conceding that the narrative is essentially a fiction, it appears to this reader that Gowan undermines the very theology which he sees the narrative as proclaiming and which he so ably expounds. In marked contrast, those who accept the essential historicity of the events reported in Exodus have a much firmer basis for claiming that what the book has to say about God is true. While these criticisms highlight two major weaknesses in Gowan's general approach to the book of Exodus, there is nevertheless much that can be learned from his reading of the text. For the many insights which he offers, he is to be warmly thanked.

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

Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, *Numbers: Journeying With God*, International Theological Commentary, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans., 1994, xiv + 194 pp., \$13.00.

As the title of the commentary suggests, Sakenfeld's undergirding presupposition concerning *Numbers* is that it is a book about God. It is about "the promised yet ever-surprising loyalty of the God who refuses to let go of the people, no matter how rebellious they may be. It is a book about God's provision of material sustenance and leadership, God's acts of intervention on behalf of the people, and God's sustaining blessing of the people as a new generation arises and stands poised at the edge of the Promised Land" (pg. 2).

From the onset of the commentary, it is clear that Sakenfeld possesses her own convictions regarding matters such as composition, date and historicity of the book of *Numbers*. But, in keeping with one of the primary objectives of the *International Theological Commentary*, she focuses on the received form of the text rather than its component parts, devoting more attention to theological matters than she does historical issues.

However, unable to ignore entirely the historical questions begged by the *Numbers* literature, Sakenfeld adequately engages those difficulties pertaining to, for example, tradition-historical matters, holiness in the priestly tradition, and the priesthood itself. But, as skillfully as these diachronic issues are dealt with, the strength of Sakenfeld's work lies decidedly in her ability to organize a seemingly disorganized conglomeration of material into a literary presentation that is both coherent and meaningful to contemporary readership.

From the context of what has become an increasingly active postmodern climate, Sakenfeld, as much as she is able, successfully speaks to the church in all of its diversity while maintaining a basic commitment to the person of Jesus Christ. At the same time her non-testamental approach to *Numbers* circumvents many of the various snares associated with biblical dichotomization and further supports her intention to bring present-day

relevancy to the text.

Her many comments make meaningful to Christians the struggles, ancient rituals and sometimes confusing legislative mandates of a society often perceived to be largely different and vastly remote from our own. Consequently, textual material generally unfamiliar to contemporary Christians is able to inform and shape their perceptions and attitudes.

Sakenfeld brings clarity to the timelessness of issues such as (1) the fulfillment of God's promises, (2) the way God deals with those who are rebellious, (3) the divine expectations concerning church leadership, and (4) the divine importance placed upon community holiness. The clarity concerning these topics and others compels the reader to reflect upon the relationship between God and human community in all generations. *Numbers* is successfully brought beyond generational cultural boundaries which span the millennia.

In her determination to maintain an unprejudiced approach to the Bible, Sakenfeld's own field of certainty is detected in her various discussions of social issues related to women's rights. Although this inclination often times yields compelling insights, at other times, her predisposition regarding these issues is prohibitive in that other equally important applications are not developed.

Overall, Sakenfeld's work is balanced and helpful, her theological concerns remaining consistently laudable. The literature is handled with a high degree of scholarly integrity and her perceptions are communicated in a manner that is decidedly reader-friendly.

Paul L. Engstrom, Fridley, MN

Eryl W. Davies, *Numbers* (New Century Bible Commentary), Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, lxxiv+ 378 pp., \$23.00.

In keeping with *The New Century Bible Commentary's* concern for scholarly detail, Davies has masterfully assembled a comprehensive presentation of *Numbers* that is intellectually gratifying. The reader will appreciate how Davies works through a scrupulously crafted outline of the *Numbers* material, paying careful attention to syntactical and etiological matters, and making liberal reference to the views and concerns of other commentators and analysts.

With the seemingly random ordering of a wide range of material including narrative, poetry, tribal lists, census lists and legislative mandates, *Numbers* is notoriously difficult to assemble into any kind of coherent structure. However, this complication is moderated as Davies focuses the readers' attention on three loci claimed to constitute the overarching structure of *Numbers*:

(1) *The theology of the land*. Throughout the commentary, Davies observes the close association among God, the people's obedience or lack thereof, and the land. Concerning these three, there is indeed an undeniable interplay that deserves the attention Davies offers it.

(2) *The status and duties of the priests and Levites*. Without

question, the book of *Numbers* deals at some length with these issues. Davies focuses particular attention on the priestly hierarchy, discussing where appropriate, a recurring theme related to the distinction between the Levites and the “sons of Aaron.”

(3) *The holiness and purity of the emerging nation of Israel.* Excellent discussions concerning the tension between the clean and unclean, and the holy and the profane are found in Davies’ work. In regard to these matters, Davies devotes attention to the tabernacle, the Israelite camp, God, and to the varying degrees to sanctity within the sphere of the sacred.

Throughout the commentary, Davies’ incisive examination of these three loci is reasoned and thorough.

Admitting that the large number of disconnected units frustrates any attempt to trace a coherent plan in *Numbers*, Davies assists an awareness of the book’s inner cohesiveness by defining the book’s principal theme as “Israel’s journey to the promised land” (pg. liii). Concerning the overall structure of *Numbers*, Davies offers convincing explanation as to why temporal considerations are to be subordinated to geographic references. Although he acknowledges there to be several chronological indicators which appear to occasionally mark decisive breaks (1:1; 7:1; 9:1, 5; 10:11; 20:1; 33:3,8), Davies divides the book into the following three larger sections: (1) the sojourn at Sinai—1:10:10, (2) from Sinai to the plains of Moab—10:11-22:1, and (3) preparations for entry into the land—22:2-36:13.

It is the apparent miscellany of the book that presumably prompts Davies to devote as much initiative as he does to compositional issues. Unfortunately, this focus limits the commentary’s theological contribution as issues related to textual construction take priority over contemporary application relevant to present-day readership.

In what has become an increasingly active postmodern climate, it is difficult to justify the measure of attention Davies gives to the variously hypothesized pentateuchal strands. Concerning this emphasis, the principal question to be asked should not be related to the veracity of his particular conclusions, but rather, to the practical value of such a venture in general. Contemporary readership is much better served when efforts concerning textual analysis are related to the application of the material rather than the reconstruction of textual pre-history.

However, Davies does not intend to dissect the text into complicated vivisections and leave for the reader the task of re-assembling the fragments. On the contrary, although much attention is paid to compositional analysis and commentary, Davies works successfully to bring a certain clarity to the book of *Numbers*.

The reader will appreciate the systematic and deliberate approach with which Davies addresses the material. New sections begin with concise summaries, giving the reader opportunity to keep larger contexts in view. Always careful and exacting, verse by verse expositions offer clear, helpful analyses.

Davies offers the more learned reader a commentary that is crafted with great precision and detail. The literature is handled with a high degree of scholarly integrity and

his perceptions and analyses are communicated in an extremely clear manner. Nor surprisingly, he includes an exhaustive bibliography that presents no omissions given the particular direction of Davies' work.

Paul L. Engstrom, Fridley, MN

Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary*, The Old Testament Library, Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993, 1077 pp.

J. A. Thompson, *1,2 Chronicles*, The New American Commentary, Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1994, 411 pp.

The appearance of two uniquely different commentaries on Chronicles is a welcome addition to works available on these greatly neglected biblical books. John A. Thompson will be known to readers of this journal through his contributions to biblical archaeology (Eerdmans, 1962, a volume that has gone through three editions) and previous commentaries on Deuteronomy (InterVarsity, 1974) and Jeremiah (Eerdmans, 1980). Sara Japhet will be less familiar to our readership, though she has made significant contributions to scholarly research on Chronicles for many years.

Japhet's imposing volume provides an opportunity for a leading scholar of Chronicles to present in one place the results of many years of research on these books. This alone makes the commentary a welcome contribution to the literature on Chronicles. By "imposing" I do not mean to imply that the book is too long. Though it is a massive tome and will no doubt receive some negative reviews for this reason, it should be remembered that Chronicles is one of the longest books of the Old Testament, and Japhet's work is certainly not disproportionate when compared to some of the burdensome commentaries being written today for much smaller biblical books (compare the 979 pages on Amos by Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman).

After a brief "select bibliography," the volume has a fifty-page introduction containing sections on each of the following: Name of the book and its place in the canon, Scope and extent of the Chronicler's work, Contents and basic structure, Sources and their use, Author and his time, Text and versions, Literary genre and forms, Language and style, and Aim and major theological themes. The rest of the volume consists of commentary, in which each pericope is introduced with the RSV translation for the verses in view, followed by brief notes on the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew and the RSV's English rendering. This is followed by a unit in smaller print entitled "Structure, sources and form." The concluding unit for each pericope provides the commentary proper, usually breaking the passage into smaller paragraphs, or occasionally, verse-by-verse commentary. Unfortunately, the volume includes no indexes.

The publication of this volume in such a well-known series will make more readily accessible Japhet's penetrating and persuasive views on authorship, already widely known in scholarly circles (see Sara Japhet, "The Supposed Common Authorship of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah Investigated Anew," VT 18[1968], 330-371). She has played a major role in leading a paradigm shift among scholars working on Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah (see also the works of H. G. M. Williamson). Japhet has succinctly summarized her views here: "Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah constitute two different works by two different authors" (p. 4). In general, she argues persuasively that Ezra-Nehemiah

was a departure from the normal form of history writing used during the Persian period, and that it deviated from the biblical model of history writing, that is, the Deuteronomistic History. On the other hand, Chronicles is more traditional in form and continues the literary tradition of biblical historiography, even though it differs in theological purpose from the earlier biblical historians.

Thompson's volume begins with a 25-page introduction including sections on name and place in the canon, the text of Chronicles, the sources, the literary forms, authorship and unity, historical situation, date, theological themes and vocabulary. The commentary proper presents each pericope in the NIV, followed by a paragraph or two of general discussion and succinct comments on the text, often in a verse-by-verse format. Thompson chose to limit important philological, syntactical and exegetical concerns to the footnotes, and has clearly kept his target audience in view ("the pastor and student rather than the technical scholar," p. 12). Consequently, his work reads much easier than Japhet's, though hers obviously is more exhaustive.

Thompson's introduction is a good, concise entrée into all the major issues on the books of Chronicles. His is not an attempt to make any original contributions to the scholarly discussion, but to summarize and condense that discussion for the non-professional Bible student. As an example, the reader may consult his excellent summary of the Chronicler's "all Israel" concept, which is an important theme in the secondary literature and in the books of Chronicles themselves.

These two commentaries make very different contributions to the study of Chronicles. Thompson's volume is helpful for the busy pastor, but will not have the kind of impact his previous commentaries on Deuteronomy and Jeremiah have had. Japhet's writing style is at times cumbersome, though her work is extremely well organized and structured. Hers is an impressive accomplishment and one which will take its place on my shelf of books on Chronicles alongside Williamson's work (*1 and 2 Chronicles* [New Century Bible Commentary; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982]). Williamson's commentary will continue to hold pride of place, though Japhet's will certainly demand wide respect, and I am sure, be used with great benefit in the future. Bill T. Arnold

Leo G. Perdue, ed., *Wisdom and Creation: The Theology of Wisdom Literature*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994, 208 pp.

This is a comprehensive and most insightful volume on the theology of the wisdom books of the Old Testament by one of the leading scholars in the field, professor Leo G. Perdue. A book that surveys the theology of biblical wisdom has been needed for a long time and the author is to be congratulated on this volume. Leo G. Perdue is a prominent author who has written extensively on the wisdom literature; probably most well-known are his monographs *Wisdom and Cult* (1977) and *Wisdom in Revolt* (1991).

A major and important concern of Perdue is to integrate the wisdom literature into the Old Testament theology at large. Since Old Testament theologies predominantly have been built up around themes like "covenant" or "salvation history", wisdom literature has often been peripheral or at least of secondary importance. In part one of this book, Perdue outlines in a lucid way how some more recent Old Testament theologies have integrated wisdom into their presentations of Old Testament theology. The conclusion from this

survey is that the wisdom literature is grounded in creation traditions and that it has a universal orientation towards faith and ethics. This coincides to a large extent with his own assertion that at the center of the sages' understanding of God, man and the world is creation theology.

Perdue proceeds by analyzing how scholars who specifically write on the wisdom literature, present its theology. This he does by categorizing scholars under the headings "anthropology," "cosmology" and "theodicy," terms that Perdue relates closely to creation and makes extensive use of throughout his book. Here each term indicates what different scholars find to be distinctive for wisdom theology - interest in man, world order, or the defense of divine justice.

Perdue is anxious that the modern interpreter try to avoid imposing upon the texts ideas that are foreign to the thought world of the sages. The method he chooses is to concentrate on observing the language the sages employ when they refer to God, themselves and the world. By noting the metaphors and the esthetical features of their rhetoric Perdue finds the means to reconstruct and gain an understanding of the theological thinking of the sages. A problem for the method, however, also noted by Perdue, is that the sages evidently were reluctant to use metaphors directly about God and that those metaphors tend to appear only by allusion in the description of God's activity. It is therefore the delicate task of the exegete to recognize these metaphors as they relate to the world of the Israelite society of that day. The esthetic dimensions of the texts are important for Perdue since he finds the variety of literary forms and artistic features to be essential components employed by the sages in the presentation of their teachings to stimulate the imagination of their contemporary readers.

The term "imagination" is important for Perdue's understanding of the sages' activity. On the basic level imagination is defined as what integrates experiences and perceptions into coherent wholes, but imagination can also reach further and be creative in that it constructs a world view that involves the unconventional as well as the transcendental. Perdue is fascinated by the way the sages used their imagination creatively to shape a world view that was coherent and provided the context of wise living.

In the second and major part of the book Perdue successively moves through the wisdom books, including the so-called apocrypha. This part of the book supplies short introductions to each biblical book followed by commentary section on all passages that relate to creation of the world or mankind. Both the introductions and the commentaries are up to date and reflects clearly Perdue's familiarity with modern scholarship. The footnotes constitute an excellent source for references to major as well as more specialized literature covering a wide field of scholarship.

In the discussion of individual books and passages the limitations of Perdue's method become evident. Since creation is defined as the sole basis for theology in the wisdom books, much of the text material in, e.g., the book of Proverbs, is never touched upon. For example, passages depicting God as the supreme ruler of reality and judge of bad and evil fall outside of the discussion if they don't happen to contain a reference to creation. Since Perdue's definition of creation is very wide, these saying could still have been included, even if their specific content would have been subordinated under the over-all theme.

In my view, it is unfortunate that Perdue restricts himself to be so descriptive in his approach. His aim is to describe their theological thinking and as much as possible

refrain from systematizing the material. But an inevitable and necessary systematization still occurs when he discusses books and passages and relates them to creation and its sub-themes: anthropology, cosmology and theology. It would be most interesting to follow Perdue in a discussion of the implications of this creation theology - both for their day and our time.

Perdue is fascinated by and throughout his book demonstrates that there is deep meaning to be found in the metaphors and rhetorical structures used by the sages to formulate their world-view encompassing God, themselves and the world. In doing this he is himself an excellent example of the benefits of "imagination" in the sense that he himself uses the term - an activity that brings coherence and structure to a material that in itself is heterogeneous. After reading this excellent book on wisdom theology one longs to follow Perdue further and listen to him when his "creative imagination," as the sages of old, create new worlds and new realities.

Lennart Boström, Orebrö Missionsskola, Sweden

T. A. Perry, Wisdom Literature and the Structure of Proverbs, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1993, 160 pp., \$29.50.

One should not read this book assuming it is primarily about biblical wisdom literature or the book of *Proverbs*. Instead, the book addresses the "structure" of thought behind proverbial and wisdom literature that spans the biblical through medieval era's. Perry chooses the quadripartite structure to emphasize his thesis that wisdom literature and wisdom proverbs are "wisdom" because of a commitment to challenging the alleged authoritarian and wooden nature of "popular" sayings. For Perry, wisdom pronouncements are made by faith in God; yet faith allows for richer and more productive sayings since they are composed to couch divine wisdom within the contexts of experience and circumstances. Thus wisdom proverbs reflect the *relative* appropriateness of behavior rather than mere autonomous, absolutistic, and tyrannical pronouncements of fact about life, which Perry assumes is a characteristic of "popular" sayings.

The argument flows steadily from the introduction, identification and definition of the quadripartite model, toward the useful implementation of it as a hermeneutical tool to expound proverbial material more accurately and realistically. In this sense Perry's work is helpful in providing the exegete with another set of questions to ask the text in determining its meaning. His structuralist approach is enlightening in its reminder that proverbs have not only content and form, but reflect a logical substratum in human thought that itself can produce truth even apart from experience, though not inconsistent with it.

Perry's weakness is his presuppositions about the wisdom movement in biblical times and the intentions and creative efforts of its sages. The assumption that wisdom is always a guild's reaction against popular sayings about the ways of the world is a questionable starting point for fathoming wisdom literature, at least biblical wisdom literature. Though wisdom literature indeed challenges naive generalizations of the masses and twisted maxims of the wicked, it should not be a foundational assumption that wisdom pronouncements themselves do not draw richly from colloquial observations, and, are not indebted to inductions from common people's own experiences. The deductive potential in structural analysis should not preclude the inductive conclusions of an entire community.

The benefits, in addition to an unfortunate aspect of Perry's methodology is found

in the book's concluding remarks on Prov. 13:24, "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him." Taking his lead from Rabbinic insight that one can be too swift to taxonomize proverbial parallelism as "synonymous," Perry emphasizes that verbal discipline is denoted in the second stich in distinction from physical chastisement (rod). He then forms the following quadripartite matrix:

1. give/verbal chastisement (+/+) = love
2. give/physical chastisement (+/-) = not hate
3. withhold/verbal chastisement (-/+) = not love
4. withhold/physical chastisement (-/-) = hate

Such a structural parsing of the proverb is instructional, though it begs his question--verbal rebuke is good, and physical rebuke is negative. However, Perry then engages Rabbinic tradition to help interpret the proverb as meaning the "threat" of physical punishment rather than actual corporeal discipline. Certainly one sympathizes with Perry's concern for many children who are physically abused, perhaps even some because of this specific proverb's admonition. But if the clear reading to the proverb that equates hatred with withholding physical discipline is trumped with subsequent *traditional interpretations*, then revelation has not been served well. The assumption that propositions #1 and #4 are preclusive rather than complementary is a fallacy in this particular structuralist methodology.

However, if one learns from Perry's constructive recommendations to peer deeply into the logical categories of human thought and discernment, and if one sees the value of oppositional, polar constructions of wisdom, his volume will contribute to one's deftness in biblical interpretation.

Daniel C. Fredericks, Belhaven College

T. A. Perry, Dialogues with Kohelet: The Book of Ecclesiastes: Translation and Commentary, University Park: Pennsylvania St. Univ. Press, 1993.

T. A. Perry is a professor Modern and Classical languages at the University of Connecticut who in this book provides his own translation and a short commentary to the book of Ecclesiastes. In the preface professor Perry presents his approach to this enigmatic book. He finds the book to be structured as a transcript of a debate between two figures, the Presenter and Kohelet. In this fictional debate, Kohelet is the skeptic who bases his arguments on experience, while the Presenter is the man of faith who indicates a broader perspective and, to a large extent by ironical questions, challenges the views of Kohelet.

Perry finds this debate to be running throughout the whole book of Ecclesiastes. In his translation the different voices are easily identified by different typefaces. There is a thin frame to the debate section represented by the first verses (1:1-2), where the Presenter supplies a short introduction of Kohelet, and the epilogue (12:8-14), where he rounds up the debate and finishes the book with a concluding address to the reader.

In the introductory part, Perry discusses the complexity of interpreting the book of Ecclesiastes and presents his own "solution" to the problem--that the book as a whole consists of a continuing dialogue. In the introduction it becomes clear that the Jewish tradition, represented by medieval commentators like Ibn Ezra and the modern commentator Mordechai Zer-Kabod, is an important source to Perry in his interpretations. Other commentaries that Perry often interacts with are those by Crenshaw, Gordis and Whybray.

It needs to be noted that, from Perry's reconstruction of the book, Ecclesiastes appears a type of debate that in form is very different from, e.g., the debate between Job and his friends. As Perry reads the book the two speakers interact much more closely, even to the point of interrupting each other. Often one speaker begins a sentence which is picked up and continued by the other. This arouses certain scepticism for different reasons. One thing is that it is often unclear why certain verses are attributed to one or the other of the speakers even though Perry attempts to build up a "profile" for each of the speakers. Furthermore, if Perry is right, from a form-critical perspective this unusual form of disputation tends to make the book of Ecclesiastes rather unique among the literature of the Ancient Near East.

A problem with Perry's approach is that it is supported by frequent additions to the Hebrew text without text-critical support. The additions are usually noted in the commentary, but without much motivation except that they help to bring out the dialogical character of the text. Perry's translation includes also a number of non-conventional readings of the text which help him to solve many of the so-called contradictions in the book. Perry suggests unusual interpretations of words and expressions, reads sentences as ironical questions instead of statements, finds quotations, etc. Many of these readings have been suggested by other scholars and as they are adopted by Perry they help him in distinguishing the voices of the two debaters. The problem with identifying ironical statements or questions is that since these features are not visible in the Hebrew text, it is to a large extent Perry's own dialogical approach that both suggests and supports them.

In an excursus Perry discusses what he calls "dialogic markers". These stylistic markers help him to recognize changes in voice. The problem is that the markers referred to by Perry are not very distinctive linguistic elements. They often occur in the text without any particular function and it is very much up to the interpreter if they introduce something new like a change of voices. This is true to the simple conjunction *waw*, but also of the others mentioned: *gam*, *'ani*, *ki*, *re'eh*. Again it tends to be Perry's own dialogical approach that leads him to regard them as dialogical markers in certain cases and others not.

Perry's translation and commentary is most interesting and stimulates the discussion of this difficult book of the Bible. Perry challenges traditional interpretations and presents non-conventional readings of the text. His references to ancient Jewish sources often brings other perspectives than are found in commentaries. The present reader regrets that he has not been convinced by his main thesis- that the book can be read as a continuing dialogue between two speakers. If Perry is right, this would certainly be a fantastic way to solve many of the difficulties in the interpretation of the book of Ecclesiastes.

Lennart Boström

Stephen R. Miller, *Daniel* (New American Commentary, vol. 18), Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1994, 348 pp.

This volume represents yet another example of the paradox which is all too common among those who claim to hold a high view of Scripture: in the effort to maintain a particular definition of Scripture's reliability, and demonstrate that Scripture really is reliable in just the precise way the reader believes it must be, the actual hearing of the Word of God becomes less important than proving one's high view of that Word. Commitment

to the importance of Scripture as God's Word to us, however, should lead us to be ever more sensitive to the meaning of that Word in its cultural and literary context (as the Word made Flesh!), and Miller's volume takes us back one giant step in that pursuit.

The author claims at the outset that "one's view concerning authorship and date is significant because it ultimately determines the interpretation of every aspect of this prophecy" (23). Because of this, Miller devotes much of his introduction (as well as the commentary) to building a case against dating Daniel in the period of the Hellenization crisis of 167-164 BCE in Palestine, which has become the dominant view in recent scholarship. Miller notes that this view was pioneered by the third-century critic of Christianity, Porphyry. When Miller, however, uses the origin of the theory in Porphyry to discredit those who now support the Maccabean period date, he lines up more closely with the strategies familiar to polemics of every age (cf. the rampant use of insulting legends about Hebrew origins to discredit Jews in the Greco-Roman era) but inappropriate for genuine scholarly discourse.

Miller frames the discussion in strongly ideological terms: those who accept an early (sixth-century BCE) date credit the book with being "historically reliable" (23) and affirm the ability of God to predict the future (24), while the position which posits a later date is said to assume that Daniel is "nonhistorical" and consists of "pseudoprophecies." Framed in these terms, the second-century date is tantamount to an assault on the reliability of Scripture—a rhetorical strategy which Miller continues to pursue throughout the work. Choosing Daniel as the place to draw such battle lines, however, results in a skewed portrayal of the evidence and an unwillingness to engage in true dialogue with the critical investigation of Daniel (even the critical investigation carried out by evangelical scholars like John Goldingay).

The real issue in interpreting Daniel is *not* God's ability to reveal the future (which happens regularly in *prophetic* literature), but whether or not Daniel (particularly chapters 7-12) is to be read as a prophecy or an apocalypse. Miller does not appear to understand (or at least honor) the distinction of genres which has been the focus of so much scholarly activity in the last twenty years. When Miller uses the phrase "biblical apocalyptic" in reference to Daniel (193), he uses the adjective "biblical" as a sort of "fence about the Law" of biblical exegesis to prevent the reading of canonical texts in light of the insights gained from reading extra-canonical apocalypses like *1 Enoch*, *4 Ezra*, and the like. This flies in the face, however, of the scholarly method, which seeks to understand the canonical texts by growing in sensitivity to the workings of the genres and conventions in which the word of God was enfolded. When one is forcing a canonical text to fit a certain mold against the tendencies of its own generic features, is one not honoring one's view of Scripture rather than the Scripture itself? The result is that Miller makes claims for Daniel that no one would think of making for *1 Enoch* based solely on the inclusion of the former into the official canons of church and synagogue, and not on any identifiable distinctions of form or genre.

Miller spends twenty pages attempting to cast doubt on the arguments for a later date through a mixture of critical argument and blatant sophistry, but without ever truly refuting them. The sheer bulk of evidence that Miller must confront begins itself to confirm the impression that Miller is in over his head. The victories he does claim, moreover, are based first on a poor engagement with the complexities of the compilation of the Septuagint.

This is not a canon which closes so early that a late date for Daniel's inclusion is prevented, for the LXX continues to grow to include the Catholic and Orthodox Deuterocanonical books (our "Apocrypha") well into the first century BCE. Second, Miller asserts the antiquity of the book by pointing out references to Daniel in Ezekiel and other books, as well as to the presence of archaic terms in the book. This, however, strategically ignores the discussion of the complex redactional history of our canonical Daniel—all proponents of a later date would agree that the tales from chapters 1-6 are significantly older in content, and probably written form, than the apocalyptic sections. The existence of separate Daniel legends included in the Septuagint but not the Masoretic Text bears witness to the original independence of Daniel traditions in early Judaism.

Perhaps the greatest affront to the critical reader, however, is Miller's conscription of Jesus as a witness for the early date of Daniel. Miller quotes Matt 24:15, naming Mark 13:14 as a parallel witness, as evidence that Jesus names Daniel as a prophet who predicted future events, and that, because Jesus quotes the text, Jesus attests to Daniel's personal authorship of the visions in chapters 7-12 (as opposed to some anonymous second-century Jew). The problem with this, of course, is that Mark records no mention of Daniel by name at this point. Miller neatly avoids the whole question of recovering Jesus' sayings from the gospel tradition, and merely assumes that Matthew's version is as accurate as Mark's. Now, while the Jesus Seminar has clearly gone too far, we cannot ignore the difference in Marcan and Matthean sayings, assuming now one, now the other, to be the *ipsissima verba* of Christ (whichever version best suits our needs at the moment!).

If the Marcan version is given priority, which tends to be the trend in scholarship, then Jesus has merely taken a phrase out of an Old Testament book in order to frame his eschatological discourse: he has not named Daniel or set his divine seal upon a sixth-century date for the origin of Daniel 7-12. Jesus' use of phrases here and in Matt 26:64 (par. Mark 14:62) from the visions of Daniel makes no claims about authorship or original meaning, using the material rather to give meaning to the new situation in Jesus' life and the life of the church. Once more I bump up against the iron brackets that "canon" means for Miller, for the claims he makes about Daniel on the basis of allusions in the Synoptic Gospels could then also be advanced for *1 Enoch*, which has left its mark particularly on the Gospels and Revelation, but which is quoted as prophecy (and explicitly attributed to "Enoch, the seventh from Adam!") in Jude 14-15. Should we then say that if Jesus' own brother (for we cannot question authorship) bears such a witness, we are wrong to view *1 Enoch* as a composite work written by a number of pseudonymous authors between the mid-third century BCE and first century CE? I do not believe Miller would go this far, but his line of argumentation certainly opens up such embarrassing possibilities.

In sum, this is a deeply disappointing work, another instance of an attempt to defend the traditional view failing to meet the best of critical scholarship with the most honest and nuanced rebuttals. This is not to say that traditional views are indefensible—just that this effort must be done *much* better and with considerably greater nuance than one finds here. The insights which the commentary does offer are fatally flawed by the framing of the discussion (see the first quotation from Miller above). Those seeking the best of evangelical scholarship on Daniel would be much better served by John Goldingay's volume on Daniel in the Word Biblical Commentary series. His commitment to the Bible as word of God combined with his fine appreciation of genre analysis and composition history make it a

superior contribution to the pastor's or student's reflection on Daniel. David A. deSilva

Robert P. Gordon, ed., The Place Is Too Small For Us: The Israelite Prophets in Recent Scholarship, Sources for Biblical and Theological Study, Vol. 5, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns 1995, xviii + 638 pp.

For the greater part of this century scholarship in the prophetic literature proceeded along lines remarkably similar to New Testament scholarship's quests for the historical Jesus. Study of the prophetic books focused on the task of identifying those elements which could be reliably attributed to the prophets, as opposed to those which were added during the transmission and redaction of their oracles, with a view toward reconstructing the authentic prophetic experience, theology, and kerygma. While this excavative project retains a prominent place in the study of the prophets, recent scholarship has given rise to a vast array of new approaches, each of which has introduced new questions, issues, and methods.

Charting these developments, let alone selecting salient representatives, is a daunting task, but one which Robert Gordon has accomplished with astuteness and clarity. This volume, the fifth in the series initiated and overseen by Ashland Seminary's David Baker, brings together an impressive collection of literature on the prophets and provides concise introductions to guide the reader through the complexities of study in the prophetic literature. The thirty-six entries are drawn equally from journals and larger volumes and are framed by introductory and concluding essays. Among them are both comprehensive treatments of various issues and paradigmatic studies involving particular prophetic books (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Jonah, and Zephaniah).

Gordon begins with an introductory essay which excels in providing the reader with a concise and readable survey of the history of scholarship. He then divides his selections into seven main sections, each of which is prefaced by an introduction which orients the reader to the issues addressed. The first two sections contain two essays each. "Part 1: The Near Eastern Backgrounds" includes "Ancient Near Eastern Patterns in Prophetic Literature," Moshe Weinfeld and "Prophecy at Mari," by Abraham Malamat. "Part 2: The Message of the Prophets" contains "Ethics in Isaiah of Jerusalem," by John Barton and "Oracles of Salvation," by C. Westermann. The third section, "The Art of Prophecy," is by far the largest, and the essays in it are subdivided into smaller units: Symbolic Action - "The Function of Prophetic Drama," W. David Stacey; Speech Act Theory - "What Did the Prophets Think They Were Doing? Speech Acts and Prophetic Discourse in the Old Testament," Walter Houston; Prophecy and Poetry - "Were the Prophets Poets?" Stephen A. Geller, Rhetoric - "Language as Event," D. J. A. Clines; "The Rhetoric of Ezekiel's Vision of the Valley of the Bones," Michael V. Fox; Metaphor - "A Maker of Metaphors: Ezekiel's Oracles against Tyre," Carol Newsom; Dialogue - "Dialogue between Prophet and Audience as a Rhetorical Device in the Book of Jeremiah," John T. Willis; Inner-biblical Interpretation - "The Priestly Blessing and Its Aggadic Use," Michael Fishbane; "Inner-biblical Interpretation in the Prophets," John Day; Drama - "Festal Drama," J. H. Eaton; "Dialogue in Zephaniah," P.R. House; Prophetic Narrative - "Jonah from the Perspective of Its Audience," David F. Payne.

The essays in "Part 4: Prophecy and Society" are also organized into subdivisions:

Book Reviews

Were the Prophets Prophets? - "Ecstasy and Role Enactment," David L. Petersen; "Prophets through the Looking Glass: Between Writings and Moses," A. Graeme Auld; Prophetic Conflict - "Social Dimensions of Prophetic Conflict," Burke O. Long; "Interpreting Israel's Religion: An Anthropological Perspective on the Problem of False Prophecy," R. R. Wilson; Social Function of Prophecy - "Prophecy and Covenant," Ernest W. Nicholson; "Prophecy in History: The Social Reality of Intermediation," Thomas W. Overholt; Failure of Expectation - "Ancient Israelite Prophecy and Dissonance Theory," - R. P. Carroll; Community Conflict - "The 'Servants of the Lord' in Third Isaiah: Profile of a Pietistic Group in the Persian Epoch," Joseph Blenkinsopp.

"Part 5: The Developing Tradition" addresses issues of transmission and composition and contains entries under three subdivisions: Prophetic Redaction - "From Prophetic Word to Prophetic Book," Walther Zimmerli; "Prophets, Editors, and Tradition," Ronald E. Clements; "The Prophet and the Plumb-Line: A Redaction-Critical Study of Amos 7," H. G. M. Williamson; Isaiah Studies - "Isaiah 36-39: Structure and Function," P. R. Ackroyd; "Literary Criticism and Tendenz-Criticism: Methodological Reflections on the Exegesis of Isaiah," Otto Kaiser; The Prophets and the Canon - "The Canonical Shape of the Prophetic Literature," Brevard S. Childs.

The anthology concludes with two shorter sections. "Part 6: Prophecy after the Prophets" includes "The End of Prophecy: No Players without a Program," Thomas W. Overholt; "Prophetic Interpretation in the Septuagint," F. F. Bruce; "The 'Classical Prophets' in Josephus' Antiquities," "Prophecy and Interpretation," John F. A. Sawyer. "Part 7: Future Directions" comprises "Contemporary Issues," by Werner H. Schmidt and "The Prophets: Are We Heading for a Paradigm Shift?" Ferdinand E. Deist, and a concluding essay by Gordon, "Present Trends and Future Directions."

This volume will appeal to a wide readership. It will serve as a superlative text for academic courses in the prophetic literature, especially those oriented toward methodological concerns. It is also an ideal resource for the pastor or informed layperson who seeks a deeper understanding of the prophetic literature than that provided by standard introductions or who wishes to review current developments in the field. There is simply no other work on the market that engages the study of the prophets with such breadth and substance. As such, pastor, teacher, and student alike will find it to be an indispensable resource.

L. Daniel Hawk

Trevor Dennis, Sarah Laughed: Women's Voices in the Old Testament, Nashville: Abingdon, 1994, 208 pp., \$16.95.

This book provides much food for thought, from its carefully documented biblical background and information to the ways in which Trevor Dennis brings new insight and even humor into some of the stories. Included are chapters on Eve, Sarah, Hagar, Hannah, and Bathsheba, plus one chapter containing the women from the first four chapters of Exodus--Shiprah and Puah, Jochebed, Miriam, and Zipporah.

We know that Dennis is going to provoke our thinking when his first two sentences in chapter one are: "The Garden of Eden has a terrible litter problem. It is knee deep in our prejudices and preconceptions." (p.8) Ten pages later he refers back to the opening: "We began this chapter by saying the Garden of Eden was strewn with litter. We

might just as well have compared it to a minefield. We are about to enter its most dangerous patch. This is the place where so often the woman's reputation gets blown to pieces." (p.18) And in between he does an excellent piece of exegetical work as he explores deeper meanings for the words "man," "helper," "side," and "rib." Dennis, again, shows that he has researched his material carefully as he includes (throughout his book) arguments and statements from biblical scholars and theologians as varied as Augustine, von Rad, Hertzberg, Brueggemann, Tribble, and Westermann.

In Chapter Two, "Sarah: A Woman Caught Up in God's Promises," Dennis uses both wisdom and compassion as he pictures the agony Sarah must have undergone as she waited years to bear a son. In contrast to early theologians, this author paints a different picture of the woman who thought that God's promise of an heir could come through her slave Hagar, only to experience a great "turning of tables" on her dream. Hagar, "the utterly powerless foreign slave has shown what female power there is to be found in fertility, and what degradation lies in barrenness. Sarai is now far beneath her." (p.44)

In addition, Dennis forces us to face the fact of this prejudicial telling of the story in several ways, but especially in the reaction of God to the laughter of both Abraham and Sarah. Abraham laughed at the prospect of his having a son by Sarah—knowingly, in the presence of God, and God offered no rebuke. On the other hand, Sarah laughed when she overheard the "stranger" telling Abraham that she would have a child, and God offered a rebuke. Dennis reminds the reader that his disparity is a function of the closed gender society in which the storyteller lived.

Dennis' retelling of the story about the Hebrew midwives, Shiprah and Puah, is done with both cleverness and humor. He brings out the humor which the storyteller must have had when he recounted this story of only two midwives who were birthing hundreds of Hebrew babies and of a word similarity in Hebrew ("to live" and "animal-like") by which the midwives played upon the Pharaoh's prejudices against the Hebrew people

Readers of this thought-provoking, yet entertaining, book will have new ways of approaching and appreciating the stories of women in the Old Testament.

Janet S. Helme, Columbus, OH

Joel S. Kaminsky, Corporate Responsibility in the Hebrew Bible, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995, 211 pp.

The notion of corporate responsibility—that the group as a whole may appropriately suffer retribution for the sins committed by individual members—permeates the Old Testament. The concept raises troubling questions for the modern interpreter, who tends to frame responsibility in individualistic terms. Why does God respond to the sins of Korah and Achan by orchestrating the deaths of their families? Why must the firstborn of Egypt suffer the consequences of Pharaoh's stubbornness? In what sense does God visit the sins of the fathers upon generations of their descendants? The modern response to such questions either seeks to accommodate them to an individualistic framework (e.g. the members of Korah's family were, in some way, just as guilty as he was and thus got what they deserved) or to dismiss them as an expression of a primitive or obsolete ethic.

The study under review contests the modern tendency to privilege those biblical texts (and interpretations) which emphasize the individual and challenges the reader to take

seriously the corporate sensibility that underlies the Old Testament.

The book is divided into two sections, each of which is devoted to analyses of selected texts. In the first, Kaminsky argues for the pervasiveness of corporate understandings by focusing on three texts from the deuteronomistic history: texts attributing the fall of Jerusalem to the sins of Manasseh (2 Kgs. 21:1-18; 23:26-27; 23:36-24:6), the execution of Achan and his family (Joshua 7:1-26), and the impaling of Saul's descendants (2 Sam. 21:1-14). He concludes from his analysis that the expression of corporate ideas in this corpus derives from a dynamic interaction between the Sinai and Davidic covenant theologies (which are themselves corporate in nature) and reflects the incorporation of older concepts of wrath, holiness, and bloodguilt.

In the second section, the author turns to texts that have often been regarded as expressions of a shift toward individualism: Deuteronomy 24:16 and 29:15-20, Jeremiah 31:29-30, and Ezekiel 18:1-32. Rejecting the notion that these texts signal a late and radical transformation in Israel's thinking, Kaminsky argues that, in each case, transgenerational retribution is not rejected but is qualified in order to fulfill a specific purpose; each of the texts, in its own way, seeks to bring Israel to repentance by taking language from the legal sphere and applying it to the issue of divine retribution. By asserting the possibility of repentance, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, in particular, counter their contemporaries' sense of hopelessness and claims of innocence with calls to accept responsibility for their plight.

Kaminsky does not attempt a comprehensive exploration of the topic, nor does he address the more contentious theological and ethical issues which it evokes. And he devotes a good deal of attention to compositional issues that are ancillary to the central issue. These factors will no doubt limit the usefulness of the book for the pastor or teacher who seeks an introduction to the subject. The value of this work consists rather in its reopening of a much-neglected aspect of Old Testament study and its delineation of a framework within which future discussion may be undertaken.

L. Daniel Hawk

Waldemar Janzen, *Old Testament Ethics: A Paradigmatic Approach*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994, 235 pp., \$19.99.

The Old Testament has been largely neglected in studies of Christian ethics. Yet in contrast, its stories remain popular and often give us striking images of godly lives. Waldemar Janzen is Professor of Old Testament and German at the Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg, Canada. His book, *Old Testament Ethics*, presents an interesting case for how these stories can be reliably formulated into the basis of a Christian ethic. He makes a strong case for their importance in ethical discussions, and in doing so calls for a reduced emphasis on laws and abstract principles. He does not reject the laws or principles, but calls for a recognition of their limits and the importance of stories in interpreting them.

Janzen makes use of some of the findings and terminology of postmodern thinkers in his argument. The core of his argument is that the Old Testament presents five different paradigms for correct ethical behavior. He defines a paradigm as "a personally and holistically conceived image of a model (e.g., a wise person, godly king) that imprints itself immediately and nonconceptually on the characters and actions of those who hold it" (p. 27-8). His book teases out what he means by this. Basically, each paradigm provides a mental

image (usually in the form of a story) of how a model person would act in different types of situations.

Janzen finds five paradigms in the Old Testament. Most of his book explains how he developed these from biblical stories. The priestly paradigm shows how to be holy in the presence of God. The wisdom paradigm deals with making right choices within the limits of God's sovereignty. The royal paradigm demonstrates how God-given authority should be used to promote justice and righteousness. The prophetic paradigm deals with faithful service in the face of suffering. Underlying all of these, in Janzen's view, is the familial paradigm. The central components of this are the preservation of family life, the provision of land by God, and the importance of hospitality to others, including strangers. In his concluding chapter, Janzen shows how Jesus lived out all five paradigms, and extends the familial paradigm to that of life in the kingdom of God.

While developing his position, Janzen's other theme is to point out the limitations of laws and principles. What he rejects are views of an ethical principle as "a universally available and self-interpreting principle" (p. 46) and of moral laws as "self-contained and self-interpreting universal moral maxims" (p. 58). Rather, he argues, these laws and principles arose from the story that is the history of Israel. Stories must be retold in a community to teach the values underlying the paradigms and to apply them to new situations. But the stories are also of intrinsic importance. When principles are paramount, stories become merely tools to show how principles are applied. As such, any one of many storied could have been used. Rather, Janzen wants the canonical stories themselves to be seen as essential to shaping the characters of those who listen to them. The stories in the Bible are God-given illustrations that best lead to ethical formation in the listeners. Thus, to be wise we need more than an abstract understanding of wisdom, but need to know the biblical stories about wise people like Abigail (Nabal's wife) and Boaz.

Janzen's emphasis on the biblical stories is refreshing. He shows the great wealth of ethical advice contained in these, as often reflected in how adults carry images of biblical characters once learned as children. His main recommendation for Christian character formation is welcome: it will come "through immersion in the texts of the story, that is, through persistent Bible reading" (p. 210). His emphasis on the intrinsic value of biblical stories should serve as a reminder of the limitations of non-biblical stories.

However, some of his ideas have unsettling implications concerning the formation of the canon. For example, he claims that all laws come from values that are prior to them (p. 64). In this way, social customs in Israel often gave rise to laws, proverbs and possibly some of the teaching of the prophets (p. 65). Janzen does not elaborate on how this process affected the content. While Janzen himself is firmly committed to the whole canon of the Bible, these ideas raise questions about how sure we can be that what is written is the word of God. How can Janzen's perspective be reconciled with the biblical picture of God dictating the Decalogue to Moses? Given the spreading influence of postmodern ideas, some will run with Janzen's ideas and use them to claim that the Bible is not inspired. Rather, they will say, the Bible gives us another culturally determined perspective on God's revelation. As such, it is not binding on our culture. Instead, they may say, we need to allow our story to develop, selecting and emphasizing, just as the Israelites did when developing their story.

Janzen gives no suggestion he would agree with this perspective, but we must address these issues as we develop views on the role of biblical stories. Janzen has certainly

Book Reviews

provided us with a very readable, engaging book. It serves as a good reminder of the limitations of abstract philosophical thinking when approaching the Bible. His call to immerse ourselves in the biblical texts is timely. Old Testament stories stick in our minds for important reasons. We ought to recall them more often when wondering about what is right or wrong.

Dónal P. O'Mathúna

Christopher J. H. Wright, Knowing Jesus Through the Old Testament, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992, 252 pp.

Christopher Wright, who is Professor Old Testament and Principal of All Nations Christian College, in Ware, England, has been well-known in America through his influential book *An Eye for an Eye: The Place of Old Testament Ethics* (IVP). In this book he sets out to write a “book without footnotes” that traces the lines of Jesus’ ancestry through the OT. In these days of increasing specialization it is refreshing to have a book that integrates themes through both testaments. And the popular style effectively presents a prodigious amount of recent scholarship—even if it occasionally covers over some of the diversity of the OT backgrounds.

The life of Jesus is integrated first of all within the larger OT story, especially in the light of election, redemption, covenant and inheritance. Here Wright points out that reference to Christ does not evacuate the meaning it had for Israel, indeed he insists we must “clearly face up to the distinctive claims of the Hebrew scriptures if we are to get our understanding of Christ’s uniqueness straight also.” Together all the levels of meaning, he believes, issue in a “unique history... with universal effects.” Secondly, Wright argues, the OT is not only telling Jesus’ story, but declaring the promise which Jesus fulfills. In a very helpful section on OT “predictions” he shows how Matthew works back from the actual events in Jesus’ life to certain Hebrew scriptures in which he sees a “deeper significance than they could have had before.” The events, in other words, suggest the scriptures, not the reverse. This is possible he argues because these OT narratives are “saturated with promise,” and a promise is much deeper and more significant than a prediction. The promise—God’s unwavering intention to bless—though involving levels of fulfillment, always expresses the initiative of God’s grace but must at every point be accepted by faith and obedience.

The identity of Jesus as God’s son is likewise perfectly consistent with OT pictures and patterns. Indeed, Wright believes, “it was the OT which helped *Jesus* understand Jesus”: the authority of the Davidic king, servanthood, sacrifice. These are all given depth and meaning by the OT characters and by the portrayal of Israel as God’s son. Jewish expectations at the time of Jesus focused on the restoration of Israel and Jesus came to accomplish precisely that—he only differed from his contemporaries in how it was to happen: “The Messiah’s resurrection was Israel’s redemption.” He chose the title “Son of Man” so that he could “fill this term with meaning that was based on his own perception” of his mission, which was interpreted in terms of the suffering servant of Isaiah 53. His mission then included both the restoration of Israel (here Wright rejects the two covenant view, noting, “Jesus is the savior of the world because he is the Messiah of Israel”) and the blessing of the Gentile nations. Clearly, mission, Wright argues, lies at the heart of all God’s action in scripture.

Interestingly Professor Wright leaves Jesus' relation to OT values for the final chapter--the imperative of law rests on the indicative of salvation. As his testing in the wilderness shows, Jesus understands his basic orientation before God grows out of the teaching of Deuteronomy 4-11. His teaching, like the law, is based on the fact of redemption. It calls for obedience based on gratitude for what God has done, imitation of God, being different (holy), for our own good. This obedience places God first, puts people over things, and needs over rights. It was in these terms and within the context of his life as a carpenter within the Jewish and Greek political realities that he portrayed the reality of the kingdom of God and called on his people to praise God with a pure heart.

Here is a rich study of the way OT themes point in many ways toward the coming of Jesus. An excellent resource for adult Sunday school classes, study groups, or even college classes on biblical theology. William Dymess, Fuller Theological Seminary

Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament I, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994, cvi + 365 pp., \$129.75.

The appearance of this volume is a significant landmark in Hebrew and Old Testament scholarship in the English speaking world. It follows a transmission history of over forty years, with the first edition appearing in 1953 in a German-English format. The second (1957) edition (still bilingual) included a supplement volume. The third edition (1967-) appeared only in German, and is not yet completed. This English edition, which is scheduled to appear in five volumes, is based on the third edition.

In this edition, the lengthy introductory material includes, in addition to abbreviations and a thirty-eight page bibliography, the introductions to the previous editions.

The entries themselves are listed according to the basic word forms, nouns in the singular absolute, and verbs by root. The layout is thus different than BDB, and more user-friendly. Entries include etymological information, much more up-to-date and useful than BDB, and not occurring at all in D. J. A. Clines, The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew, (Sheffield Academic Press).

The layout and type is clear and easy to read. The volume will be of use to Hebrew students, but its price will keep it out of the hands of most of them. It will probably find its way mainly into seminary and college libraries, but all interested in the language should be aware of it. We look forward to the completion of the work. David W. Baker

J. A. Fitzmyer and D. J. Harrington, eds., A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts, Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1994, xix + 373 pp.

The second reprint of the 1978 original, this book contains 150 Aramaic texts and translations from 200 BC through 135 AD. There are 35 texts and fragments from the Qumran library, 33 "non-literary" texts (deeds of sale, wedding contracts, divorce writs, and a series of letters by Simeon bar Cochba), 81 funerary inscriptions, and the early rabbinic text listing days when fasting is prohibited. The collection would be useful mainly for highly specialized studies. Most of the texts are too fragmentary to provide a suitable "Aramaic reader" (the Targum of Job and Genesis Apocryphon from Qumran being notable

Book Reviews

exceptions); for the student of Qumran, the newer translations by Martinez will be much more useful. The inscriptions are usually quite short, containing little more than the name and family relation of the deceased and the recurring warning "not to be opened." Harry Leon (*The Jews of Ancient Rome*) has showed us how much can be done with evidence of this type, but, again, it is of use only to the specialist who wishes to conduct a similar study on the "Jews of Ancient Judea," pointing out the degree of Hellenization in the names, attitudes toward the dead, and so forth. The handful of readable non-literary fragments provide interesting windows into the everyday life of Judeans, particularly surrounding the expectations of marriage and practice of divorce.

After the texts and translations, the editors have provided a description of the texts, giving the locations of inscriptions, first publications, and any relevant bibliography. A collection of 56 later Jewish inscriptions (synagogal and funerary) follows, together with extensive Aramaic indices to the whole collection.

David A. deSilva

Sarah Kochav, Israel: Splendors of the Holy Land, London/New York: Thames & Hudson 1995, 292 pp., \$50.00.

This is a magnificent book and, while somewhat expensive, is good value for the money. Its large size (10 ½ x 14 ½ inches) and glossy paper allow clear, detailed photographs and diagrams which make the land of Israel come alive. Some are on double-page spreads and are truly breath-taking. One such is a well-crafted reminder of both the constancy and the change within Israel. It has a double-page photograph of modern Jerusalem which can be folded out to reveal underneath a drawing of the city from the same vantage point from the time of Herod the Great.

The book is divided into five main sections. The first traces the history of the land with timelines, maps, narrative and illustrations from the prehistoric period to Israel today. Fascinating artifacts accompany the text. A section on maps and drawings of Israel through history is followed by a number of aerial views of the land. A special section is dedicated to Jerusalem, and then there is a tour of the land, highlighting twenty sites which were prominent during some of the stages of Israel's occupation. The book concludes with a brief bibliography, illustration credits and index.

The book can profitably be used as a text in an introductory Israelite archaeology or history class and should be in every church and seminary library. It would also be a useful gift, either to a pastor or friend, or even to yourself.

David W. Baker

Wolfram von Soden, The Ancient Orient: An Introduction to the Study of the Ancient Near East, Translated by Donald G. Schely, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, English ed. 1994, xx + 262 pp.

After decades of using Wolfram von Soden's reference works, which span an entire field of Assyriological studies, it is an interesting experience for this writer to review a book written by von Soden for the general reader, now available in English. The author is also the editor of the monumental three-volume dictionary of the Akkadian language; the standard reference grammar of the Babylonian and Assyrian languages; and the basic

syllabary for cuneiform values. Thus, this work is truly, in the words of Giorgio Buccellati, "the summing-up of a lifelong career in Assyriology."

The work under review stands in the "stream of tradition" to 20th-century authors dealing with Mesopotamia and the Ancient Near East such as W. W. Hallo and W. K. Simpson's The Ancient Near East: A History (New York, 1971) and A. L. Oppenheim's Ancient Mesopotamia (revised edition edited by Erica Reiner, Chicago, 1977), to mention but two books.

The book is organized into fifteen units as follows: Definition of "Ancient Orient," The Scene, Peoples and Cultures, Writing Systems, History, State and Society, Nutrition and Agriculture, Artisanry, Trade and Commerce, Law, Science, Religion and Magic, Literature, Building, Art and Music, and Concluding Remarks.

There is a Selected Bibliography, which is spotty, an Index, which could be more comprehensive (and therefore more helpful to the reader seeking a particular term or concept), and a Map of the Near East up to the Persian Period.

An attractive feature of this volume is its common-sense approach to the communication of knowledge. The author always seems to focus upon the sensible question, "What would the reader be interested in knowing?" With this in mind, the author answers the question in a direct and articulate fashion. Several examples can be cited: What did people eat? What was the terrain like? What are the main outlines of history? What were their religious beliefs?

The book never digresses into the arcane by-ways of the Assyriological world and never leaves the reader behind. Instead, all can benefit by the orderly, well-organized manner in which the author moves from one engaging facet of the civilization to another, without losing our interest.

To whom would this volume appeal? It would appeal to the general reader, as well as the specialist, and to anyone who is interested in understanding the Hebrew Bible in its ancient Near Eastern context.

One can read the book secure in the knowledge that the latest information has been included (e.g., work on the texts from Ebla and Emar), up to about a decade ago—since the German edition appeared in 1985.

This is a fast-moving, immense field and there are not many scholars like von Soden who can claim mastery over its entirety. Yet, it seems almost as scholars write, new finds force them to modify their words! An example is a recent discovery (announced in 1989), of the sensational treasures unearthed at the palace of Aššuranaširpal II (883-859 B.C.) and Šalmaneser III (858-824 B.C.) at Nimrud, ancient Kalhu. I thought of these finds as I read the following sentences in the book under review:

"Naturally, very little has come down to us in the form of vessels or sculptures of precious metals, or with precious metal overlays, since again and again enemies and thieves carried these off and melted them down. Occasionally objects of precious metals have been preserved in graves which escaped tomb-robbers. The best example of such a find is the royal cemetery of Ur from the Early Dynastic period..." (p. 118)

The translator of the volume has taken steps to make the book more serviceable for the student of the Bible, by including occasional parenthetical remarks, authored by himself, that supply links with Hebrew Scripture.

Book Reviews

As for style, the book is well-written. Footnotes are at a minimum, though at every point, the reader can be assured that the author is in control of the data being discussed, the dearth of referencing obviously being due to the desire to keep the book as readable as possible for the generalist. However, accuracy is nowhere sacrificed, and those who wish to delve further, can do so.

The translation is very well done. The English flows smoothly though from time to time there is a rough stylistic feature or translation lapse. For example, in the section on legal documents (p. 140), D. Schley, the translator, renders "...'conversational' document" (a particular type of text in which an offer is brought by one person and another person gives an answer), from the German "Zwiesgesprächsurkunde," the technical term for which in English is "dialogue document." On p. 58, for "royal documents" read "royal inscriptions," more familiar to English-speaking scholars of the ancient Near East.

For the student and his or her advisor who are seeking a theme for research, the book is filled with statements such as "the subject still has not been treated comprehensively" (p. 102, *passim*). There is much work that still remains to be done!

In sum: this is a superb book that everyone can read with profit.

David B. Weisberg, Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati

R. A. Simkins, Creator and Creation: Nature in the Worldview of Ancient Israel, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.

The book focuses on the inter-relationship between God, humans, and the natural world. It is a prolegomena to a Christian message on ecology. An epilogue, "The Bible and the Environmental Crisis," identifies a current and legitimate concern.

Simkins, a professor of theology at Creighton University and the author of Yahweh's Activity in History and Nature in the Book of Joel, offers a corrective to the view that nature is but the stage on which the drama of history is played. That view, admittedly in its prime in the Biblical Theology Movement, overstressed history to the neglect of creation. Simkins takes issue with the views of Yehezkel Kaufman and Bernard Anderson. "The assumption that the Bible presents a god of history in contrast to the nature gods of Israel's neighbors is unsubstantiated" (p. 88).

Simkins begins by constructing an ANE worldview. He employs two complementary models, a model of worldview analysis utilizing the categories proposed by Michael Kearney (self, other, classification, relationship, causality, time and space) and the model of value orientations (a la Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck). Through cross-cultural comparison of the creation myths in Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Canaanite literature, he constructs a creation model. This model, it is claimed, is shared by Israel and underlies the Bible's creation metaphors and myths. The metaphors for creation were largely those of the birth process and those from agriculture. Here the exposition is decidedly helpful, although the reach for metaphors, fashionable in current literary readings, is prone too quickly to set aside the literal and historical readings.

Simkins helpfully delineates three evaluations of nature within the Israelite worldview: 1) humans and nature in harmony; 2) humans exercising mastery over nature, as in royal ideology, and 3) humans subjugated to nature, as in Job. In Israel there was no single all-pervading definition of the way humans and nature intersected. That conclusion

is important as an answer to those who have cited the mandate to "subdue the earth" as the culprit for modern environmental crises.

Simkins effectively marshals a large number of texts, especially from the prophetic corpus, that highlight not only the creator's concern for nature, but which repeatedly demonstrate the "casual connection between actions of people and the condition of creation" (p. 231). Even if not new, the systematic delineation of biblical texts--surprisingly large in number--is a welcome contribution. Simkin's book is the place to go for the biblical evidence on that subject.

After surveying creation in the ancient Near East, noting the creation metaphors and myths (defined in such a way as to include more than the stories in Genesis), and exposing the schema of the relation between God, humans and nature, Simkins comes in chapter 5 to deal with the opening chapters of Genesis. The last chapter is devoted to eschatological myths. There is a select bibliography (31 pages), and indexes of scripture and modern authors. The seventeen charts which visually represent the stages of the argument are a positive feature. Simkin's command of the material is impressive.

What Albrektson did in trying to show that the notion of the deity's acting in history was shared in ANE culture, Simkins tries to do for the notion of creation.

For me, problems emerge with the assumption that Israel shared completely in the ANE world view. To delineate that world view and overlay this view heuristically on Scripture produces valuable insights. But to assume that Israel bought totally into that world view is to overlook the possibility of Israel being a cultural enclave, not to mention the claim for divine revelation. Problems surface when traces of the catastrophe/new-creation myth in the Bible are championed as the basic Biblical orientation to the subject. Soon, almost everything on the topic, including Pharaoh's demise at the Sea of Reeds, and the withering of vegetation (Amos 1:2), is seen somewhat reductionalistically as the cosmogonic battle. Even Obadiah is interpreted via a "cosmogonic battle," though Simkins admits that Obadiah does not use cosmic metaphors. The desert conditions (Gen. 2) represent the threat to order which exists at the far margins. Analogies appear stretched when the statement "Let the earth put forth vegetation" (Gen. 1:11) is said to be akin to Canaanite El impregnating the maidens. The reinterpretation of Genesis 3, not as a "fall" but as acquiring cultural knowledge, and so as a rite of passage, represents an excessive use of the ANE template.

Just as the rubric of history can blind the interpreter to the importance of nature, so the zeal to highlight the natural world can blind the theologian to the historical. While Simkins is to be commended for seeking to restore the balance between the two, nature and history, his zeal to bold-face creation comes too much at the expense of the claims for divine revelation and history. However, Simkin's effort to redirect the discussion by reconfiguring the categories, utilizing other disciplines, puts the discussion of creation onto a fresh and possibly useful track. Elmer A. Martens, Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno

S. E. Porter and D. Tombs, eds., *Approaches to New Testament Study*, JSNTSS 120, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995, 392 pp., \$49.00.

Volumes of essays designed to introduce and exemplify the range of methods currently available as tools for use in New Testament study continue to flow steadily onto the market, and the volume under review is a typical example of this genre. It is the work

of a group based largely (but not exclusively) at the Roehampton Institute in London, and consists of nine contributions, each elucidating a particular critical method. The essays are, in order of appearance: C. A. Evans, "Source, Form and Redaction Criticism: The 'Traditional' Methods of Synoptic Interpretation" (pp. 17-45); T. R. Hatina, "Jewish Religious Backgrounds of the New Testament: Pharisees and Sadducees as Case Studies" (pp. 46-76); S. E. Porter, "Literary Approaches to the New Testament: From Formalism to Deconstruction and Back" (pp. 77-128); D. L. Stamps, "Rhetorical Criticism of the New Testament: Ancient and Modern Evaluations of Argumentation" (pp. 129-169); K. D. Clarke, "Canonical Criticism: An Integrated Reading of Biblical Texts for the Community of Faith" (pp. 170-221); J. T. Reed, "Modern Linguistics and the New Testament: A Basic Guide to Theory, Terminology and Literature" (pp. 222-265); P. Richter, "Social Scientific Criticism of the New Testament: An Appraisal and Extended Example" (pp. 266-309); D. Tombs, "The Hermeneutics of Liberation" (pp. 310-355); B. Clack, "Surviving Scripture: Developing a Feminist Hermeneutic of the New Testament" (pp. 356-375). These studies fall broadly into four categories: historical-critical (Evans, Hatina); literary (Porter, Stamps, Clarke); social-scientific (Reed, Richter); and liberation criticism (Tombs, Clack).

The editors' avowed aim is to address "a wide range of audiences" (p. 13) which includes "both students and scholars alike". This is no easy task, but by and large they are successful. The essays generally adopt a particular pattern: a survey of the secondary literature on the method in question, followed by an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses, and, in most cases, an application of the method to a sample biblical text or texts. All the essays are enriched by the presence of full and current bibliographical footnotes.

The temptation to include too many contributions has been wisely resisted, with the result that those who *have* been invited to contribute have been given the scope to spread their wings, and to deal with issues which might otherwise have had to be treated superficially, or not at all. Still, I wonder whether some authors have not attempted a little too much in the space available. Porter, for instance, has set himself the monumental task of introducing the vast field of literary criticism (complete with a survey of origins) in the space of a little over fifty pages, and although he strives nobly to distinguish the various methods (ever burgeoning in number) which bear the literary critical stamp, his discussion of strengths and weaknesses must inevitably have something of a homogeneous ring to it, rather than addressing the merits and demerits of each specific literary method. The preponderance, too, of weighty technical terms in such a short space (mythic/archetypal criticism, moral criticism, the New Criticism, "intentional fallacy", psychoanalytic criticism, romantic-humanistic literary criticism, structuralist-linguistic assumptions, deconstruction, post-structuralist, all occur within the space of a couple of paragraphs on pp. 92-93) might prove rather daunting for some student readers. Perhaps this essay, and one or two of the others (the Reed contribution in particular, which presents the reader with a bewildering array of weighty technical terms), would have benefited from a reduction in scope...But then, selection is always a nightmare task!

This economy of space necessarily leads to other slight problems. For instance, Hatina's contention that the "seekers of smooth things" in the Qumran literature are Pharisees, and that the recently published 4QMMT is a Sadducaic document, tends to be based on more speculation than on careful argument, and his conclusions are rather firmer than the presented evidence really allows. Again, Stamps' survey and classification of

rhetorical criticism is useful, but tends to neglect the Muilenberg school of scholarship. Joanna Dewey's important study, for instance, which is based on Muilenberg's approach, is not mentioned (but see Porter, p. 80, n. 14).

The book is virtually devoid of typographical errors, but it is worth noting that the name E. J. Pyrke on p. 61, no. 53 should, of course, read E. J. Pryke, as on p. 34, n. 35.

These niggles aside, Porter, Tombs and Co. have put together a volume which, as they claim, will serve students and scholars alike, and which is fresh enough to stake its claim in an area of scholarship which is attracting ever greater attention.

Stephen H. Smith, Tunbridge Wells, ENGLAND

Edgar V. McKnight and Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, eds., *The New Literary Criticism and the New Testament*, Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1994

This volume is a compilation of fourteen literary-critical studies in the New Testament by a group of contributors who, in the main, have become well-known in their own field of research. A brief editorial introduction is followed by a couple of studies in the more traditional areas of literary criticism: J. R. Donahue, "Redaction Criticism: Has the Hauptstrasse Become a Sackgasse?", pp. 27-57, and E. S. Malbon, "The Major Importance of the Minor Characters in Mark", pp. 58-86. Next comes a group of studies, concerned chiefly with matters of rhetorical and feminist literary-criticism, and with orality: J. A. Darr, "Watch How You Listen' (Lk. 8:18): Jesus and the Rhetoric of Perception in Luke-Acts", pp. 87-107; J. C. Anderson, "Reading Tabitha: A Feminist Reception History", pp. 108-44; J. Dewey, "The Gospel of Mark as an Oral-Aural Event: Implications for Interpretation", pp. 145-63; V. K. Robbins, "Socio-Rhetorical Criticism: Mary, Elizabeth and the Magnificat as a Test Case", pp. 164-209; and A. C. Wire, "'Since God Is One': Rhetoric as Theology and History in Paul's Romans", pp. 210-27. The remaining studies, which focus primarily - but not exclusively - upon the field of postmodern hermeneutics, are: E. A. Castelli, "Allegories of Hagar: Reading Galatians 4:21-31 with Postmodern Feminist Eyes", pp. 228-50; T. Pippin, "Peering into the Abyss: A Postmodern Reading of the Biblical Bottomless Pit", pp. 251-68; S. D. Moore, "How Jesus' Risen Body Became a Cadaver", pp. 269-82; G. A. Phillips, "The Ethics of Reading Deconstructively, or Speaking Face-to-Face: The Samaritan Woman Meets Derrida at the Well", pp. 283-325; E. V. McKnight, "A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing: An Option in Contemporary New Testament Hermeneutics", pp. 326-47; D. O. Via, "Matthew's Dark Light and the Human Condition", pp. 348-66; and W. A. Beardslee, "What Is It About? Reference in New Testament Literary Criticism", pp. 367-86. Each contribution includes a useful bibliography.

These essays provide an ample cross-section of contemporary literary-critical methods in use among New Testament critics, and demonstrate just how widely this discipline has cast its net. No longer is it confined to a small cluster of interrelated and largely text-based methods, notably rhetorical, reader-response and narrative-criticism; today there is a veritable galaxy of methods, as evidenced in the studies presented here. But perhaps this very diversity exposes a weakness in the current literary-critical trends presented in this volume. Is not this burgeoning or splintering of such methods beginning to accelerate out of control? Many scholars seem to be working in elitist constellations, having little regard for those operating in different but related fields. This, certainly, is the

impression gleaned from the volume under review. Granted, the necessarily limited scope of the contributions makes the task of drawing parallels or relationships difficult in this instance, but the editors' introduction might have benefitted from taking on a bridging role rather than simply abstracting the essays.

A few other concerns deserve comment. Several of the papers are unashamedly interdisciplinary, and, while there is nothing intrinsically wrong with this, some contributors end up juggling with so many factors that the whole enterprise simply becomes confusing. Robbins, for instance, speaks of his socio-rhetorical analysis as merging the insights of anthropologists, sociologists, and social psychologists, while Pippin's article is an essay in pure abstraction as it lurches, apparently at random, from its declared subject - the Apocalypse of John - via the Apocalypses of Peter and Paul, 1 Enoch, and the Enuma Elish epic, to Nietzsche and other Western philosophers - all painted onto an apocalyptic landscape which is said to deconstruct the text! No small feat in the space of just fourteen pages! But this reviewer, for one, was simply left bemused.

Another problem for me was the extent to which, like the New Critics of the 1930s-50s, many of the contributors felt free to interpret the text purely as text, without any reference to authorial intention. The vocabulary of contemporary literary theory, as used in this volume, is all very well, but it would have been totally foreign to the writers of the New Testament. One shudders to think what poor old "basic Greek" Mark would have made of "postliterate, postmodern, postfeminist America" (p. 228), or the "recontextualization" and "reconfiguration" of his gospel (p. 179). Too many of the scholars here seem to believe that the conclusions drawn from their own postmodern interpretations can be validated without reference to authorial intention. Strategies of this kind, surely, can lead to only one conclusion: that there are as many interpretations as there are interpreters! And, according to Beardslee (pp. 367-69), that is not what the post-modernist wishes to imply.

Finally, it is to be wondered why some of the studies were written at all. Moore's attempt to draw parallels between Gray's Anatomy of the Human Body and Culpepper's Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel, and to treat Jesus' body as a "cadaver", is intriguing - but what contribution does it make to the scholar's quest for meaning? We are told by the editors that it "must not be viewed as a random, meaningless collection of texts" (p. 23); but in the opinion of the present reviewer, that is just what it is.

This book will no doubt excite the specialist in the literary-critical field, but will do little to convert the non-committed. Hopefully, its most valuable contribution will arise inadvertently out of its very nature by suggesting to the New Testament scholar that it is high time to suspend the development of further new literary-critical methods until the existing ones have been more thoroughly examined and set in the context of New Testament criticism as a whole.

Stephen H. Smith

American Bible Society, The Visit, New York: ABS, 1995, \$39.95.

Always on the cutting edge of the science of Bible translation, the American Bible Society has encountered the silicon age full force with this multimedia translation of Luke 1:39-56 set within an intricate and imaginative CD-ROM program. Four music videos stand at the heart of the program, presenting aurally and visually the visit of Mary to Elizabeth and Mary's song of praise in a variety of culturally diverse forms. The first

presentation features the text sung in simple melody and occasional harmony over vibrant African drum rhythms, the second is a more traditional chant setting, the third is a Korean mask dance, and the fourth is a Spanish folk setting. This multicultural and multiracial approach is extended to a set of resources from the visual arts, as well as short clips from musical settings from every period and a number of different cultural backgrounds.

The program also includes a weighty compilation of background materials which the user may access all at once (a printed database) or may explore by clicking highlighted key words in the text which lead to background explanations with more highlighted key words, and so on. Some of this material draws from quite recent scholarship, for example from cultural-anthropological investigation of the New Testament world. This program offers a number of activities which may be done individually, and some which require interaction as a group, thus making it a potential resource for well-endowed youth groups (the computer hardware required is the now standard 486DX/33MHz or better, with at least 4 MB RAM, double speed CD-ROM drive, 16-bit sound card, external speakers, mouse, and an SVGA monitor with 640 x 480 display: the quality of the monitor will make a tremendous difference). There is a module for producing one's own translation, supported by six available versions keyed to key Greek terms and their meanings and leading questions regarding the context of the readers for whom one is making the translation—a sophisticated introduction to the work ABS has been about from its inception. One may produce slide presentations, selecting from the artistic resources on the disk (about twenty reproductions), and creating one's own text (e.g., through the program's module on creating poetry, which explores various forms and their evocative powers). There is even a plan for creating a video presentation, with suggestions for the delegation of roles to about six or seven group members, and detailed plans for how to proceed from conception (pardon the pun) to production.

ABS has committed an immense sum to the production of this program and all its constituent parts (as it has done for the "Father and Two Sons" parable). The result is a global presentation of Luke 1:39-56 which is an ideal resource especially for the young, computer literate, members of this global community. Church leaders would do well to explore this educational tool (as well as its companion program on Luke 15:11-32), and incorporate it into their curriculum for youth. Indeed, this will be the mode of Christian education as the church stretches itself to encounter the 21st century. David A. deSilva

L. William Countryman, *The Mystical Way In The Fourth Gospel: Crossing Over Into God*, rev. ed., Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1994, 164 pp., paper.

Countryman's book is an important contribution to both Johannine Gospel studies and hermeneutics. He utilizes literary criticism in order "to offer a reading of John's Gospel as a sustained literary whole". This reading views the Gospel as focused upon progress toward mystical union in Jesus. Countryman argues that a Christian progresses through experiential stages of mystical union with God through the person of Jesus; therefore, he sees the Gospel structured according to the experience of the believer. The Gospel is not entirely concerned with theology in the abstract intellectual sense but instead with the mystic's experience of theology.

Book Reviews

The structure of Countryman's commentary reflects a portrayal of the believer's growth through a succession of stages: conversion, baptism, Eucharist, enlightenment, new life, and union. These stages are contained in chapters 2-10 of his book. Chapters 1 and 11 serve as bookends which function respectively as an introduction to the mystical theme and then as reiteration of this theme, thus effectively binding the book together. The Epilogue defines the central controlling verb "to believe" and then shows how it functions in the previously identified stages of the believer's growth in Jesus.

This book is a revised edition of the original 1987 publication by the same title. It contains no substantial additional information and one wonders why it is a revised edition. If you have the first edition then you really do not need to purchase the revised edition. This is an excellent book because it is not only scholastically informing but it is also concerned about spiritual transformation. This book could easily be adapted for use in the ministry context. It would, for example, be an excellent text for a small group Bible study.

Kenneth J. Archer

L. Morris, The Gospel According to John, rev. ed., (The New International Commentary on the New Testament), Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, xxii + 824 pp., \$42.00.

When it was produced in 1971, after some ten years in preparation, Leon Morris' original commentary in this series soon established itself through its comprehensiveness, its exegetical detail and the positions it took on authorship and historicity, as the major evangelical commentary on John. It has now been revised and offered again to the public.

How extensive are the revisions? The preface to the second edition speaks of "many minor changes" (p.xiv). Most of these are additions to or slight updating of the footnotes, though in the Introduction there are also very brief discussions of some works that appeared since 1971. They are minor cosmetic changes. None of the more recent work on this gospel, as far as this reviewer can tell, has made enough impact to change substantially any of Morris' major views on matters of introduction, exegesis or theology.

It must be very difficult indeed for an author of a well-received commentary to resist the temptation simply to modify the footnotes and some minor exegetical details in the light of a relatively small selection of more recent works rather than to rethink radically major positions probably arrived at some thirty years ago. There is no evidence that Morris resisted this temptation or that he would want to do so, since he clearly holds that those earlier positions are still valid. Nevertheless, in the meantime scholarly approaches to the Fourth Gospel have undergone significant shifts, and literary and sociological approaches have changed the shape of some of the basic questions. Evangelical attitudes to Scripture have also undergone changes. Many evangelicals, for example, would hold that it is a by no means necessary corollary of belief in the authority and inspiration of the Fourth Gospel to hold that its narrative is a straightforward historical account. Instead they would argue that it remains to be determined as far as this is possible from an investigation of the gospel itself and from relevant comparative material what sort of mixture of historical tradition and theological interpretation it actually contains.

The approaches of Martyn and Culpepper are discussed briefly in the Introduction, the former's two-level approach only to be dismissed as "not of great importance for an understanding of the theology of the Fourth Gospel" (p.42) and the main

value of the latter being seen as support for taking the gospel as a unity (p.53). Otherwise, as one might expect from such evaluations, sociological and literary investigations do not affect the interpretation, and the contributions of writers such as O'Day, Stibbe, Wengst or Neyrey, to name but four important scholars who have written substantial books, are not even mentioned, let alone a host of others who have produced valuable articles. Not even the advancing of more traditional historical and theological investigations in the comprehensive work of Ashton finds a mention. Nor will the reader find much help with a contemporary issue such as how to deal with the apparent "anti-Judaism" or alleged "anti-Semitism" of the Fourth Gospel. The present reviewer would want to argue that a real engagement with such approaches and issues provides a depth and richness to the analysis of John's theology that is missing in Morris' rather flat approach of taking all the discourses and debates and their theological claims in the text as having a one-to-one correspondence to the ministry of the earthly Jesus.

One is left questioning whether it was really worthwhile publishing this revised edition, particularly when the same publishers have on hand the up-to-date conservative evangelical commentary by D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (1991), which has much better discussions of approaches with which it disagrees and is just as exegetically rigorous but in the light of a more comprehensive awareness of recent work on the gospel. This reviewer comes to the reluctant and regretful conclusions that, though this volume is worth consulting for its exegesis, it adds very little to the earlier work and it might well have been better to have left Morris' 1971 publication to be the monumental achievement it was in the context of the evangelical scholarship of its day.

Andrew T. Lincoln, Wycliffe College, University of Toronto

Walter L. Liefeld, *Interpreting the Book of Acts*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995, 141 pp., \$8.99.

This most recent addition to the *Guides to New Testament Exegesis* series focuses on the special considerations involved in interpreting the Acts of the Apostles. It may seem strange to treat Acts separately from Luke, its companion volume, but the outline of the series necessitated this unfortunate separation. Liefeld reminds his reader throughout, however, that Acts is part of a larger work, and is only seen in its proper light when joined to Luke's Gospel. The book is not meant to be a definitive interpretation of Acts—indeed, it is much more useful than that. It seeks to present the scope of Acts scholarship and provide methodological paradigms for the reader's own interaction with Acts. Liefeld begins with a discussion of the purpose behind Acts—an essential discussion not only for epistles, but even more so for narratives where the intent of the author for his readership is not so readily accessible. He presents methodological guidelines for determining the purpose of a narrative, focusing the student on the flow of plot (especially identifying high points) and on the relative emphasis given to certain episodes or recurrent patterns. Liefeld posits that Acts is much more than an attempt to give facts about the early church, helpfully identifying its apologetic tendency, showing that the Christian movement is neither a threat to Roman order nor a religion incompatible with the faith of Israel, and its potential evangelistic purpose. He also speaks of its theological purpose, which is particularly focused on making sense of the new body of Jews and Gentiles in the one church, anchoring the Gentile mission in the plan of God. Liefeld also presents here a view he will defend in the final

chapter, namely that Acts does not seek to provide a pattern for church organization, evangelism, and missions for the churches of succeeding generations, thus countering a tendency evident in many conservative churches.

The book continues with a chapter on ways the structure of Acts has been approached. One particularly fruitful suggestion is conspicuously absent, namely that Acts is structured theologically, anchoring the troubling course of the early church's expansion (from an internal Jewish reform movement to a predominantly Gentile movement) in the plan of God as a fulfillment of specific prophecies (cf. Amos 9:11-12 in Acts 15:16-18). In a third chapter, Liefeld presents some guidelines for reading narrative as theology, stressing the importance of reading each episode in the context of the whole, letting the movement of the larger narrative illumine what is significant about each particular scene.

A fourth chapter considers the subgenre of the speeches in Acts. These are fully formed orations (as opposed to the aggregation of sayings in the Gospels), the historicity of which have been frequently called into question by scholars. In ancient historiography, it was common practice to include appropriate speeches at critical junctures in the narrative. Thucydides' criterion for the speech was not whether it could be authenticated as a verbatim report, but whether it was fitting for the occasion and represented what would have been appropriate. He tried, wherever possible, to obtain the gist of the speech from an eyewitness, but the speeches themselves had to be re-invented. Acts scholarship has largely proceeded with this model in mind, finding in the speeches more of Luke's theology than the theology of the speaker in the narrative. Liefeld goes against this stream (together with other venerable scholars like F. F. Bruce), assigning these speeches more value as sources for the *speaker's* theology rather than the *author's*. The problem with this chapter is that it takes the opposing viewpoint too lightly, offering weak explanations for the similarities of the speeches of Peter and Paul, and not even touching at the difficulty of assigning to Peter in Acts 15 the basic argument which Paul uses *against* Peter and all Jewish believers who might view Gentile believers as still "unclean" in Galatians 2:14-21 (and, indirectly, in 3:1-5). While Liefeld's position itself is defensible, a more serious interaction with the opposing arguments is left to be desired here--the readers are, in effect, left a prey to the arguments for which they have not been prepared by Liefeld.

Liefeld turns next to a survey of the major themes in Acts: the exalted Christ, the Spirit, prayer, praise, possessions, eschatology, salvation, the sovereignty of God, the people of God, and the church and its ministry. This is a most helpful overview, providing the beginning student with an orientation to the author's thought and theological agenda so that he or she might be the better equipped to see the contributions of individual episodes within this theological matrix. The sections on God's sovereignty and the people of God are especially important, since these have been identified as major components of the author's pastoral task--giving Gentile believers "certainty" about their place in the plan of God and the people of God.

A sixth chapter provides a model for how to investigate the environment (or background) of Acts. Since this is really a staggering project (currently filling, for example, five thick volumes in the series, *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting*), Liefeld chooses Acts 16 as a sample exercise. This chapter is quite commendable in that Liefeld shows a sensitivity not only to the traditional historical, legal, geographical backgrounds, but also to cultural backgrounds like patronage, deviance theory, and honor societies. Here it must be stressed that the student will need to make ample use of Liefeld's well-chosen

bibliography at the end of this chapter in order to have what is required to begin to engage Acts within its first century environment.

The work concludes with a chapter on moving from exegesis to application. The section on exegesis is not meant to be comprehensive, but rather presents an overview of the whole project which has been the subject of the book. Turning to application, Liefeld first discusses the essential distinction of "normative vs. descriptive"--how does Acts present a model for the church in every age, and where does it seek merely to present a description of the church in the first age? Included within this is a timely and sensitive discussion of the role of women in the church, as Liefeld contrasts the description of Priscilla's teaching ministry in Acts with the instructions of 1 Tim 2:12-15.

On balance, Liefeld has provided an excellent introduction to the study of Acts for a beginning student—a good "second step" after a New Testament Introduction class. The reader will find a wealth of scholarly inquiry digested and made palatable in these pages, and most helpfully will find reliable directions for further study (as he or she advances in the investigation of this text) in the footnotes, the bibliography for the chapter on backgrounds, and the generous and up-to-date bibliography at the end of the volume.

David A. deSilva

Earl J. Richard, First and Second Thessalonians (Sacra Pagina series, v. 11), Liturgical Press, Collegeville, 1995, 465 pp. \$29.95.

Commentary series keep being launched, and individual volumes within these series continue to emerge from various publishing houses. Having welcomed the release of his commentary on the Thessalonian correspondence in July 1995 in the Believers Church Bible Commentary series, this reviewer soon realized that several other volumes on 1 and 2 Thessalonians were coming out in the same year. One was Earl J. Richard's contribution, Volume 11 in the Sacra Pagina Series. The commentaries in this series are written by an international team of Catholic biblical scholars. According to series editor, Daniel J. Harrington, S. J., "these volumes seek to open up the riches of the New Testament and to invite as many people as possible to study the 'sacred page'." (Editor's Preface, p. vii)

Richard's First and Second Thessalonians opens with an introduction in which he first supplies background information about first century Thessalonica and then depicts the traditional view of the circumstances of Paul's mission to Thessalonica, a view heavily shaped by the story line in Acts. Richard continues by proposing his own chronology of events and circumstances underlying these NT letters. He concludes that Paul's Thessalonian mission occurred in the early 40s, that 1 Thessalonians is a conflation of two letters written in the early and mid-40s, that 1 Thess. 2:14-16 is a later interpolation, and that 2 Thessalonians was written by someone else in Paul's name to confront the rampant apocalypticism which later gripped the church.

In the commentary proper, Richard begins each section by offering his own translation of the text. The "Notes" which follow consist of thorough treatments of the textual and linguistic data, frequently supplemented with extensive listings of biblical and extra-biblical parallels. Under "Interpretation" Richard provides essays on various themes within the text under discussion; the methodologies which undergird these essays feature

literary, rhetorical, and thematic analyses. Occasionally he includes an "Excursus" with a more specialized focus, such as the one on "Pauline and Non-Pauline Usage in 1 Thess. 1:9b-10" (pp. 53-58). A General Bibliography at the end of the Introduction, and brief listings of resources "For Reference and Further Study" at the conclusion of each unit give readers access to supplementary scholarship on topics of interest.

Historical, social, and political factors within Thessalonica and in the Christian community which emerged in that setting receive comparatively little attention in this commentary. For example, Paul's citation of the slogan, "Peace and security" in 1 Thess. 5:3 is not recognized for its significance within the Roman imperial propaganda which was being disseminated throughout the empire. Richard refers to the proverbial non-Pauline character of this expression and treats the synoptic and prophetic parallels but he does not explore its possible historical and political connotations within the Roman capital city of first century Macedonia. Apart from vague general references to the present struggle of believers in Thessalonica, Richard does not attempt to place their daily lives concretely within the social, political and economic matrix of the Roman empire of the first century, especially the imperial civic cult whose slogan Paul here quotes.

Richard's treatment of Second Thessalonians also utilizes mainly linguistic, philological, literary, and rhetorical methodologies. His interpretation builds on his hypothetical reconstruction of 2 Thessalonians as the work of a later Paulinist who utilizes 1 Thessalonians as a model for an anti-apocalyptic treatise. The actual historical and social circumstances of the community being addressed are not delineated.

In his interpretation of the text, Richard does not hesitate to depart from exegetical conclusions on which there appears to be scholarly consensus. His argument concerning the composite nature of 1 Thessalonians, for example, is quite persuasive. Even though such proposals are not new, and the case for this reading has not been made, Richard's analysis merits further attention.

There are many other interpretations which are quite traditional. One such traditional reading is his identification of the enigmatic "restraining force" and "restrainer" mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:6,7. Richard appears to accept the longstanding proposal that the Roman Empire and its emperor represent the entity which restrains the forces of evil and chaos, so that the Christian community has the freedom to work quietly and pursue the good. (p. 352) No serious consideration is given to the possibility that the empire itself and the emperor and his agents represent the oppressive force and the hostile personage against which the church needs to contend.

A student of the Thessalonian correspondence finds in Richard's First and Second Thessalonians a wealth of data which illuminates these epistles. This commentary will be useful for both preachers and scholars for their work of exegeting the biblical text. A resulting careful analysis of the Thessalonian correspondence will also provide ongoing basis both for extending Richard's courageous and sometimes innovative interpretations as well as for correcting them when that is warranted.

Jacob W. Elias, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, IN

Ian H. Thomson, Chiasmus in the Pauline Letters, JSNTSS 111, Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1995, 253 pp., \$45.00.

Ian Thomson's study, Chiasmus in the Pauline Letters, is an attempt to develop criteria by which 'intermediate length' chiasms may be found in the New Testament texts. His introductory chapter gives a good history of the search for chiasm in the New Testament, and suggests several areas where it has perhaps gone off track. According to Thomson, the most serious problem with previous work on chiasm in the New Testament texts, specifically in the Pauline corpus, is the search for the 'macro-chiasmus [which] is alleged to cover whole sections of a book or even a whole book.' (p. 24) He goes on to suggest three over-arching criteria by which the identification of 'intermediate length' chiasms may be governed; (1) 'The chiasmus will be present in the text as it stands, and will not require unsupported textual emendation in order to "recover" it,' (2) 'The symmetrical elements will be present in precisely inverted order,' (3) 'The chiasmus will begin and end at a reasonable point.' (pp. 28-29) The remainder of the book, barring the conclusion, is a series of five exegeses dealing with perceived chiasms in Eph. 1:3-14; Eph. 2:11-22; Gal. 5:13-6:2; Col. 2:6-19; and Rom. 5:12-21. In conclusion, Thomson deals with the question of the exegetical significance of the search for chiasms, and the possible implications that the presence of a chiasm may have for the interpretation of a given passage. He wavers between proclaiming the determinative nature of the chiasmus for exegetical work, and a mediating position where chiasmus may help with old problems of perceived weak allusions or connections within a text. He goes on to state that 'chiasmus reveals the author's movement of thought as a case is built. The chiasmic pattern portrays that movement in an objective fashion. Thus, what may be dismissed as tautological in an argument assumed to be constructed in a typical Western fashion is revealed as a repetition or recapitulation that lends body to a chiasmus' (p. 224).

There are several unfortunate things about this study. The first of these is that much of the exegesis is quite weak. Supposed chiasmic 'links' are often built upon commonly occurring words (such as the reflexive pronoun in the exegesis of Gal. 5:13-6:2 which occurs several times in other elements of the supposed chiasm), and the linking of the paired elements is not always accomplished with direct *verbal* linkage, but rather *conceptual* linkage (such as the linking of the concept of 'making' found in Eph. 2:14 with that at the end of 2:15 to connect two paired elements, even though the words for 'making' are in completely different grammatical constructions, one being an Aorist participle functioning substantivally, the other a Present participle functioning adverbially, both of which have different implied subjects and different objects.)

Another element that is somewhat frustrating in this volume is the fact that, although Thomson admits that chiasmus 'was not recognized in the manuals of ancient rhetoric' (p. 20), he still suggests that this was a rhetorical device consciously used to structure arguments, and by which recipients or hearers of chiasmically structured material would have been able to decipher the contents. If, as Thomson claims (p. 20-22), chiasmus was merely an unconscious part of the cultural rhetorical milieu, then one might expect to find argumentation in the rhetorical handbooks laid out along these lines, rather than along (to Thomson) foreign, Western logical lines.

An additional point which I wish to bring up regarding this volume is the fact that, of the five exegeses which Thomson undertakes, at least two are of portions of the

Pauline corpus which have long been thought of as 'hymnic' or 'poetic' (Eph. 1:3-14; 2:11-22; and possibly Col. 2:6-19). His discussion of this issue is very well argued, and he brings some healthy criticism into the ongoing discussion of 'hymnic' elements, especially regarding the arbitrariness with which many 'hymnic' sections are excised from the texts which surround them. His suggestion that these sections are chiasms, and the detailed structural analyses to which he subjects them only, in the end, go to reinforce the idea that these sections are pre-formed. The suggestion that these poetic sections are chiasmically structured also goes a long way toward intimating that chiasm (if it actually exists on this large of a level) is a form of *poetic* structure, rather than *rhetorical*.

The final point that must be mentioned in this analysis is the fact that, in arguments such as those within which Thomson finds chiasmic patterns, one would *expect* to find the presence of terms on a consistent basis, and should not be surprised to find them repeated. The fact that very few of the chiasmic pairs which Thomson identifies contain the two sole occurrences of the key chiasmic elements within them underlines this point. In any sustained argument, one would hope to hear the repetition of terms, concepts, and phrases--to not hear repetitions or recapitulations of previous points would suggest that the argument was very poorly constructed. What we are seeing in the legitimate linkages which Thomson and the rest of those enamored by chiasm make are the natural results of rhetorical speech and writing. We should not, then, make the rest of any given passage hostage to those elements which are legitimately connected. Perhaps the way forward for the study of these 'chiasmic' passages is to drop the idea of chiasm all together, and to continue to note those sections which *do* seem to be linked, working from these structural elements to an overall picture of the structure of a given passage. This, rather than the imposition of an imaginary rhetorical structure onto a given text (a structure of which the ancients, beyond simple ABBA-type chiasms, appear to have been totally unaware), will enable future exegeses to be based on evidence, rather than conjecture.

Brook W. R. Pearson, Roehampton Institute, London

Steve Moyise, The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation, JSNTSS 115, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995, 173 pp., \$45.00.

This new study of the allusive use of the OT in the book of Revelation (there are no formal citations) asks whether the concept of 'intertextuality' can shed light on the process. The theory is that the use of a text from another context can never give the same meaning as the original or primary use simply because the new and the old contexts are different. Hence a tension is set up and the reader has to cope creatively with hearing two or more voices simultaneously.

Moyise argues that in Rev. 1-3 the imagery is shaped more by Scripture than by the local contexts of the several churches, and that Daniel played an important part. But while Scripture is guide rather than simply 'servant' (an allusion to B. Lindars' well-known epigram) and cannot be made to mean whatever John wants it to mean, his use of it is affected by his own context. This is illustrated at some length from the use of Ezekiel. John's use of Scripture in general is not peculiar to himself; similar phenomena can be seen in the Qumran literature. All this leads to a discussion of the use of intertextuality 'to explore how the source text continues to speak through the new work and how the new

work forces new meanings from the source text' (111). What emerges is the importance of the evocative function of language. But this leads Moyise to the view that John intended a 'dialogical tension' which the reader has to resolve. In a citation from J. P. Ruiz, which must be regarded as significant since it is given in whole or part no less than five times, we are told that 'to the extent that the "interpreting subject" engages in an active reading of John's book, he or she engages in a dialogue with the text and with the texts within the text' (135).

All this is clearly presented with helpful signposts and summaries and some useful observations on the details of John's usage. Yet the discussion fails to recognize that, granted that meanings cannot be identical between a text and its citation in a second text, there can still be degrees of greater and less 'respect for context'; the problem of faithfulness to context cannot be simply set aside. Further, the view that 'the author has produced a fresh composition which invites the reader to participate and create meaning' (142) is in danger of introducing an unrestrained subjectivity; a writer may well summon readers to wrestle with the meaning of the text for themselves, but surely has some limits in mind as to what they should come up with. To over-simplify: the writer of the Ten Commandments doubtless intends readers to wrestle with the application of 'You shall not kill' to their own specific problems, and does not know what these might be (abortion, euthanasia), but does not expect freedom of interpretation to include freedom to allow activities that may be tantamount to murder. We cannot escape the significance of 'authorial intention' (though we may need sophisticated ways of expressing what is meant by it), especially in dealing with Scripture, a work which is in important ways more akin to a legal corpus or testament than to modern imaginative make-of-it-what-you-like literature. As Moyise rightly recognizes, the Old Testament cannot be made to mean whatever John wants it to mean.

I. Howard Marshall, University of Aberdeen

Neal Windham, New Testament Greek for Preachers and Teachers: Five Areas of Application, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991, 247 pp.

James A. Brooks and Carlton L. Winbery, Syntax of New Testament Greek, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1988 (1979), xiii + 204 pp.

For those who currently endure or have endured the rigors of learning Greek, these two books will help you answer that nagging question: "Why?" The Greek learned from any basic first-year textbook places the emphasis on morphology and the rudiments of syntax, aimed at enabling the student to produce the most basic translation of a Greek text. But what has the student really gained? One more step is necessary, and all who wish to make their study of Greek fruitful for ministry will welcome these books as helpful guides.

Brooks and Winbery's *Syntax* has been available for quite some time, though hidden in the catalog of a press which is not very aggressive in its advertising. This thin and rather inexpensive volume preserves, in effect, a digest of some very weighty grammars of Koinē Greek. The reader is taken first through a survey of the many possibilities of meaning for each case of the substantive (nouns, or anything which may function as a noun). Since their focus is syntax, not form, the authors have adopted the eight-case system

Book Reviews

for their discussion (nominative, genitive, ablative, dative, instrumental, locative, accusative, vocative). The student may now read, for example, the full range of possibilities for the genitive/ablative: when she turns again to the Greek text, she will enjoy greater precision translating the genitive case and will be better equipped to analyze the translational choices made by English versions. The discussion is supported by numerous examples from the New Testament itself—well over one thousand in this short book. One will at numerous places disagree with the authors concerning their designation of the syntactical nuance of a particular word in a particular verse, but this is precisely now the level to which this guide raises the student! The importance of this is, of course, not to label a particular usage correctly (and the labels themselves do multiply in an admittedly tiresome manner), but to uncover the precise nuance of meaning (or multiple meanings) enfolded in a given instance of case usage.

The book continues with a discussion of verbs, expanding on the fundamental meanings of the different tenses, moods, and voices with which one leaves the Biblical Greek I and II courses of most seminaries. The authors regrettably persist in speaking of the aorist as punctiliar (rather than as truly "undefined," or non-committal, with regard to aspect), and omit close discussion of and translational possibilities for one essential aspect of the Middle Voice in Classical Greek (and which cannot be supposed wholly to have passed out of the language by the first century CE), namely that of the subject's personal interest, benefit or advantage, but these are small flaws in an otherwise excellent discussion.

After the whirlwind introduction to the sheer mass of verb forms, this book will provide a welcome opportunity to reflect on the range of meanings of each form. Again, this is where true insight into the New Testament text is to be found—not in the wooden translations after first-year Greek, but in the growing appreciation of the nuances of the language of these Scriptures. Brooks and Winbery conclude with a section on word order, types of clauses, indirect discourse, and all the other essentials of dealing with strings of words in Greek rather than discrete words or phrases. In short, independent study of this book, and referral to it while translating a passage in preparation for proclamation of the word or private study, will redeem those countless hours spent learning forms, and turn Greek into an ever more enriching tool for your encounter with the New Testament.

Neal Windham offers a different sort of book which is nevertheless also indispensable for people who use Greek in ministry. This work takes you still one step further. You learned the forms in seminary; you have attained a richer appreciation for the nuances and full range of meanings for cases and the verb system with the help of Brooks and Winbery. You now need to reflect upon how to apply this growing facility to the task of exegesis. Windham is himself fully informed in the current discussions of linguistics, seeking through this book to bring these insights fruitfully to bear on the proclaimer's task.

He begins with two chapters on textual criticism, that highly technical yet indispensable part of reading the New Testament. Windham is very thorough in his coverage of this discipline and should enable the reader, if not to overthrow the verdicts of the professional text critics who have produced the UBS⁴ and NA²⁷, at least to have access to the variant readings and potential rationales behind these variants, to understand the criteria for the text critics' preference of one reading, and, for the more significant variants, to discuss with one's congregation why some of their Bibles include a verse or phrase or reading which is excluded or modified in another parishioner's version, and why this might be significant for our understanding of the word.

Chapter three focuses on the reader's development of a sensitivity to morphemes--the smallest unit that can carry meaning or give syntactical information (e.g., the roots *δικ, *πιζτ, *οίκ, the affix *έ*; the suffix -τηζ). Windham wisely cautions us about constructing the meaning of a word from the sum of the meanings of its morphemes (would we ever reach some deep insight about our word "understand" by adding the meaning of "under" to that of "stand"?). The real benefit of looking through a passage at the level of morphemes comes when we see how certain morphemes might dominate a given passage, or lend some sort of rhetorical structure to that passage. Using an English text, we lose sight of this internal structuring and connectedness within a passage. Scanning a Greek text (cf. οίκ in Eph. 2:19-22; παρακαλ/ παρακλη in 2 Cor. 1:3-7; συν- compounds in Rom. 8:16-32), however, these key morphemes jump out, indicating how the author has skillfully linked these words together. This becomes all the more significant as we consider that these texts were mostly composed for oral delivery, such that these sounds were actually guides to the first hearers' understanding of the arrangement of an argument, the opening and closing points of blocks of argument, and the like.

Chapter five offers a very sophisticated plan for determining the precise meaning of a word in its context. Fully aware of the dangers and abuse of the "word study," Windham offers reliable advice concerning how to conduct such a study so as to arrive nearer to the actual nuance (or intentionally multivalent sense) of a word in its context, rather than stuffing twenty possible meanings into that cramped context. Some of the best advice he gives here includes looking at contextual associations of a given Greek word in a number of occurrences (within the same author and document, if at all possible). This will give a stronger sense of how a particular author uses a word (and to what end), and is much more reliable than just picking from among the possible meanings in a lexicon (or worse, reading all the possibilities into the verse).

The author moves in every widening circles to syntactic units and finally to the level of the discourse itself. In the former, Windham looks out over the material found in Brooks and Winbery (though by no means intending thereby to produce a "Syntax of NT Greek") and explores how these insights, too, are to be brought into exegesis and proclamation. The final chapter, which really represents an innovation in books on Greek in the Pulpit (and a growing edge in the discipline of biblical studies more broadly), seeks to sensitize readers to how a larger unit is structured by looking for markers of transition between units and markers of cohesion within units (whether in narrative or argumentative texts). The first step to understanding Galatians 3-4, for example, is knowing what the blocks of argument are, and how each discrete argument is structured and where the inferential particles are meant to lead the reader. Here, Windham admittedly scratches but the surface of this discipline, and at this point the student must begin to look for a new teacher, grateful for the distance on the road to exegetical acuity Windham has brought him or her.

Each chapter of this book concludes with a section on the practical application of the preceding material to the task of the preacher/bible study leader, positive suggestions and cautions concerning presenting these insights to parishioners, practice exercises to help the reader develop the skills discussed, and a bibliography of helpful reference tools and suggestions for further reading. Together with Brooks and Winbery, this book will provide the student and interpreter of the New Testament with the means to make the Greek learned

in seminary work fruitfully in the parish, enabling the devotee to engage the text in a much richer, more rewarding manner, to the benefit of proclaimer and hearer alike.

David A. deSilva

Tord Fornberg and David Hellholm, eds., Texts and Contexts. Biblical Texts in Their Textual and Situational Contents. Essays in Honor of Lars Hartman, Oslo-Copenhagen-Stockholm-Boston: Scandinavian University Press, 1995, xxix + 1070 pp., \$98.00.

Festschriften, books of essays written in honor of distinguished scholars, are becoming longer and longer, and even spreading to several volumes. Lars Hartmann is a leading Swedish scholar whose reputation extends far beyond Scandinavia through his important works, especially on the interpretation of Mark 13 (*Prophecy Interpreted*, 1966) and on the early theology of baptism. No less than 52 scholars have combined to produce this massive volume with contributions mainly in English (38; the others in German [13] and French [1]). Together they illumine a wide range of New Testament texts. A short review of such a volume cannot even give a list of all the contributors and titles. I offer a selection of items of personal interest.

Part I of the volume deals with 'Biblical Texts in Their Textual Contexts', and is subdivided into 'Intra-Textual Relations' and 'Inter-Textual Relations'. In the former section Donald Hagner, himself of Swedish ancestry, discusses 'Imminence and the Parousia in the Gospel of Matthew', and is concerned with the different viewpoints presented in the Gospel; this is a helpful amplification of the briefer note in his recently-published commentary (Vol. II, 711-3). In the same section Ernst Baasland offers a significant study (in German) of Acts 15:13-21 in its rhetorical context which leads to the conclusion that the 'apostolic decree' is not a decree but a criticism of pagan idolatry. In the second sub-section James Dunn compares Paul's understanding of the law in two different letters, Galatians and Romans, and finds that (contrary to some scholars) he has a coherent theology with distinctive features in each of the letters. Wiard Popkes examines 'James and Paraenesis, Reconsidered', and offers an alternative to the influential interpretation by M. Dibelius: James presupposes earlier paraenesis and is more of a corrective, pastoral letter to specific recipients who were in danger of going astray.

Part II deals with 'Biblical Texts in Their Situational Contexts' and is subdivided into 'Biblical Texts and Their Historical Background' and 'History of Interpretation and Present-Day Hermeneutics'. In the section on historical background Joseph A. Fitzmyer discusses 'The Palestinian Background of "Son of God" as a Title for Jesus' in a typically cautious manner; the use of the phrase in the Qumran text 4Q246 is reassessed and regarded as evidence for the possibility that the title could also have been used by Jewish Christians for Jesus. Abraham J. Malherbe argues that Paul's term 'self-sufficient' in Philippians 4:11 is not to be understood against a Stoic background but in the context of ancient ideas of friendship. Birger Olsson poses some critical questions regarding social-scientific criticism of the New Testament with special reference to J. H. Elliott's work on 1 Peter. Finally, in the second sub-section Harald Riesenfeld asks briefly and pointedly whether it does not make better sense to find the origins of the early Christian understanding of Jesus in a set of 'Son of man' sayings which were pronounced by Jesus

himself; sadly the essay is too brief to do more than adumbrate this challenge to the modern tendency to ascribe everything to 'hypothetical processes in anonymous congregations'.

I have mentioned less than one sixth of the interesting material in this volume, but I hope that my selection has whetted appetites. The book will doubtless be beyond the purses of individuals: it is a mandatory purchase for every self-respecting theological library. A worthy tribute to a fine scholar, it is equally a fine contribution in its own right to the exegesis of the New Testament.

I. Howard Marshall, University of Aberdeen

A. K. A. Adam, What Is Postmodern Biblical Criticism?, Guides to Biblical Scholarship, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995, xiv + 81 pp., \$10.00.

For most readers of this journal, the question which constitutes the title of this book will evoke two other questions: What is postmodernism? And why should I acquaint myself with it? All three questions are addressed with remarkable clarity in this highly readable introduction. In four concise chapters (plus an introduction and concluding "prelude") the author synthesizes an impressive array of approaches and carefully guides the reader toward an understanding of their commonalities, procedures, limitations, and potential.

The first chapter presents an overview of postmodernism which excels most others in enabling the reader to get a sense of what postmodernism *is* (a task which the author admits is problematic). Adam begins with a description of modernism and its tenets and proceeds to explain postmodernism as a movement of resistance, manifested by challenges to a number of modernist verities and agendas: 1) the possibility of establishing unshakable, undoubtable foundations for theoretical claims; 2) the assertion of universal theories and unified systems of knowledge; 3) the appeal to reason in the determination of truth and not truth; 4) the division of inquiry into specialized spheres of discourse; 5) the possibility of objectivity in observation and interpretation; 6) a reliance on metanarratives as warrants for agendas; 7) an emphasis on the autonomy of the text, and 8) a belief in progress and a fascination with novelty.

The rest of the book elaborates the operational dimensions of postmodern thought. The second chapter elaborates Deconstruction, a complex of approaches which subvert conventional notions of meaning, texts, identity, and communication. This is followed by a chapter devoted to the various interpretive strategies that have called attention, in diverse ways, to the ideological dimensions of the composition, interpretation, and application of biblical texts. Here Adam (w)rightly describes approaches more often discussed separately (the New Historicism, feminist criticism, "ideological"/Marxist criticism, African-American criticism) and presents them, like spokes on a wheel (reviewer's analogy), with attention both to their particularities and to their common center and periphery. The final chapter deals with "transgressive" interpretations, those which blur discursive boundaries and/or flout discursive rules.

As the author notes in the book's introduction, the real barrier to comprehending postmodern theory is not the complexities of the various approaches but simply their unfamiliarity. Adam has done much to dismantle this barrier; his guide is characterized by readable explanations, unencumbered by excessive jargon, and by excellent bibliographies

Book Reviews

for those who wish to do more exploring. Those seeking a way into these domains will likely find no better starting point.

L. Daniel Hawk

Millard J. Erickson, Where is Theology Going? Issues and Perspectives on the Future of Theology, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994, 230 pp.

Any new book by Millard Erickson is welcome these days in evangelical circles. Author of many works in philosophy and theology and formerly professor at Bethel Seminary, Erickson is now a research professor at Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He is best known for his magnum opus, Christian Theology (3 vols., 1983-85). Nearly 1300 pages long, dubbed "the green monster" by some students, it has established itself as the text of choice in a large number of evangelical seminaries. The dedications of its three volumes reflect the breadth and depth of Erickson's training as he acknowledges his debt to Bernard Ramm (American Baptist), William Hordern (Canadian Methodist), and Wolfhart Pannenberg (German Lutheran), all of whom have guided his studies.

Where Is Theology Going? is thus the work of a broadly prepared, respected scholar as he surveys the present scene and makes some educated guesses about the immediate future. In four opening chapters Erickson looks at how we can tell where theology is headed, major trends in culture and religion, the role of non-theological academic disciplines, and general trends within the field of theology. He then turns to his own specialty, surveying the doctrines of scripture, God, humanity, sin, Christ, and salvation. The book concludes with a chapter on influencing the direction of theology.

The above summary reveals that several major doctrines do not receive chapter-length treatment: pneumatology, ecclesiology, and eschatology. All have been so important in 20th-century thought for the church at large and evangelicals in particular that one can only wonder why Dr. Erickson chose not to write on them. He notes that the choice of topics is rather arbitrary, the intention is to be illustrative rather than exhaustive, and the missing areas are touched on in passing (p. 9). But one can still wish for treatment of these doctrines similar to that accorded to other loci of theology.

The book is written by an evangelical for evangelicals and concerns itself largely with North American evangelical thought at the close of the 20th century. Secularism, subjectivism, and sensationalism come in for their share of deserved critique. Such cultural factors as these have, in Erickson's opinion, affected evangelical practice and theology in negative fashion. A weakening is under way, partially noted in major generational differences, and this weakening can be expected to continue until leaders influenced by it see it for what it really is and prophetically call for repentant change.

Erickson's analysis makes frequent use of sociological studies by George Gallup, James Davison Hunter, and the Barna Group. He critiques some churches' nearly exclusive use of praise choruses which are one-sided in their emphasis on human individualism, divine goodness, and abundant grace. He is concerned about marketing and management techniques that can turn a congregation into a business with little place for prayer or the Holy Spirit. He is wary lest the church become culturally captive to the world at the end of its second millennium.

At the same time, Erickson remains ever hopeful and optimistic. His basic motif is the swing of the pendulum, and he is eager to point out signs of recovery wherever he sees them. As mentioned, he believes that present trends will continue until significant leaders within them courageously protest and call for change. But he fails to note one such scholar who has done just that. For about two decades Thomas C. Oden of Drew University followed nearly every theological, philosophical, and psychological fad until he saw the barrenness of modernity and postmodernity. With his 1979 Agenda for Theology (rev. ed.: After Modernity...What?, 1990) he called a halt to such foolishness and set a course toward a larger, deeper, truer vision of Christian faith. Dr. Erickson unfortunately fails to observe Oden's radical change as an example of what he is writing about.

Erickson's always clear style will commend the book to anyone who reads it. And its basic hopefulness may balance the melancholy of other recent assessments (e.g., David Wells). All are to be commended for looking carefully at the church in today's world, and all deserve to be read while we ask, "Lord, is it I?"

Jerry R. Flora

Stanley Grenz, Revisoning Evangelical Theology: A Fresh Agenda for the 21st Century, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993, 208 pp.

Stanley Grenz believes that late twentieth century evangelicalism is having an identity crisis. He places that crisis in the context of a larger "cultural shift" from modernity to postmodernity. Grenz believes that evangelicalism has been heavily influenced by the modernist (Enlightenment) emphases on reason, optimism, and individualism (particularly the latter) and is not well-equipped to handle the present cultural transition. He intends his book to contribute to the resolution of the evangelical identity crisis and the attempt to move evangelicalism into the postmodern age.

To do this, Grenz engages in what he calls "revisoning," rethinking the bases of evangelical identity and theology. He discusses evangelical identity, evangelical spirituality, the theological task, the sources of theology, biblical authority, theology's integrative motif, and the church. His discussion in this book prepared the way for the systematic theology he published the following year (Theology for the Community of God, Broadman and Holman, 1994).

In his chapter on evangelical identity, Grenz takes issue with the common assumption that evangelicalism is defined primarily by a set of doctrines; his example for this approach is Donald Bloesch's Essentials of Evangelical Theology. Grenz tries to shift the basis of evangelical identity from doctrine to experience: "[Central] to evangelicalism is a common vision of the faith that arises out of a common religious experience couched within a common interpretive framework consisting in theological beliefs we gain from the Scriptures" (34). This common experience is founded on the experience of conversion, which we understand in biblical categories. Grenz argues that our theologizing arises out of our piety: Evangelicalism is "an experiential piety cradled in a theology" (35).

He describes modern evangelicalism as a descendant of three movements: the Protestant Reformation, Puritanism and Pietism, and postfundamentalist "card carrying evangelicalism" (the movement that developed in the 1940's and following). He believes that the present changes in evangelicalism may be a return to forms of evangelical faith that predated the modern postfundamentalist variety. In fact, he calls evangelical theologians

to move away from a sole focus on abstract doctrine in order to "recapture the practical emphasis characteristic of the earlier, more pietistically inclined era in the broader history of our movement" (57).

In his historical discussion, his concern to define evangelicalism experientially leads him to neglect the important role of Protestant Scholasticism in shaping modern evangelicalism, but he takes up this point in his chapter on the theological task. In that chapter, he critiques evangelical propositionalism, an approach derived from Reformed Scholasticism by way of the Princeton theologians, which finds its most famous modern exponent in Carl F. H. Henry. Grenz acknowledges the cognitive dimension of revelation, but he believes that evangelical theology has been the "captive" of an individualistic epistemology that is currently being debunked by sociologists. It is this sociological understanding of the corporate foundation of knowledge and religious identity that Grenz wants to use as the basis of theologizing in the postmodern world.

Theology, Grenz argues, is an activity that originates and ends in corporate experience: it is "the faith community's reflecting on the faith experience of those who have encountered God through the divine activity in history and therefore now seek to live as the people of God in the contemporary world" (76). Theology must be contextual: "Rather than merely amplifying, refining, defending and handing on a timeless, fixed orthodoxy, theologians, speaking from within the community of faith, seek to describe the act of faith, the One toward whom faith is directed and the implications of our faith commitment in, for and to a specific historical and cultural context" (83).

Grenz describes three "pillars" for theology: the biblical message, the history of doctrine, and the contemporary context of the church. These three pillars serve as norms for evaluating theologies. Grenz argues against an overemphasis on any of the three. He also argues against the so-called "Wesleyan quadrilateral" of Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience on the grounds that experience is not a source of theology but rather the focus of the theological task (91).

His discussion of biblical authority calls for the recognition of the Holy Spirit's ongoing role in the illumination of Scripture. Grenz believes that most evangelical bibliologies have concentrated on inspiration to the detriment of illumination. In fact, he argues, the Spirit's illumination of believing communities led to the production and canonization of the biblical documents: "Our bibliology, therefore, must develop a deepened appreciation for the role of the community in the process that led to the composition, compilation, and canonization of the Bible" (122). The Spirit's work in all of these tasks means that the authority of the Bible is the authority of the Holy Spirit who speaks through it. Grenz calls for a "Spirit-focused rather than text-focused" approach to biblical authority (124). He believes that the doctrine of Scripture should be subsumed under the doctrine of the Holy Spirit (as he does in his systematic theology).

Consistent with his corporate emphasis, Grenz proposes community as the integrative motif of theology (a proposal he adopts in his own theology). He believes this approach is justified by two of the "pillars" of theology: the biblical message itself (for example, Jesus' emphasis on the Kingdom of God) and the contemporary context (the conclusions of modern sociology). In his concluding chapter, Grenz calls for a revisioning of the doctrine of the church as a community of love that both reflects and participates in the community of love that is the Trinity.

Stanley Grenz addresses timely issues that evangelical theologians and lay people must deal with as we attempt to express God's revelation in terms relevant to contemporary culture. He deals with such issues as biblical authority and the sources of theology with refreshing candor and openness. His critique of the propositional approach to theology is thought-provoking. His emphasis on community is a welcome (and biblical) answer to the excessive individualism and privatism of American evangelicalism. Similarly, his call for the reunion of theology and ethics corrects a traditional evangelical divorce. Evangelicals who are rediscovering spiritual formation will welcome his contention that the Scriptures must never be separated from the Spirit.

His acceptance of the current "cultural shift" from modernity to postmodernity seems too indiscriminating, however. Evangelicals must certainly speak to their culture, but they must always evaluate that culture carefully and choose which elements to appropriate. Not all evangelicals will appreciate the choices Grenz makes. For example, he embraces the shift from doctrine to experience that other evangelicals, such as David Wells, have been decrying. He also shows a great (and uncritical) dependence on sociology, especially the work of Robert Bellah.

I question his use of modern culture as a theological norm equal to Scripture. I prefer the more nuanced approach of Thomas N. Finger in his Christian Theology: An Eschatological Approach (Herald Press 1985, 1989), who describes Scripture as the norm of the truth of theology and contemporary culture as the norm of its intelligibility.

Revisioning Evangelical Theology is a timely and intelligent treatment of theological presuppositions and method. It makes a useful contribution to the ongoing dialogue between evangelical theology and modern culture (and for that matter, between evangelical theologians on the best way to interact with culture). It also serves as an accessible introduction to the underpinnings of Grenz's larger systematic theology. Brenda Colijn

R.C. Sproul, Faith Alone: The Evangelical Doctrine of Justification, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1995, 224 pp., \$15.99.

Many Protestants who have never studied Latin will nonetheless recognize the following phrases: *sola scriptura*, *sola gratia*, *sola fidei*. They are, of course, the great rallying cries of the Protestant Reformation: the Bible alone, grace alone, faith alone. It is the latter of these slogans which provides R.C. Sproul with the theme of the book under consideration, and in Sproul's understanding this cry of the Reformers needs to be taken up afresh by contemporary evangelicals, lest it be silenced to the peril of the gospel itself.

Sproul makes it clear from the beginning that the occasion of his writing this book is the publication (in March, 1994) of the document Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium (hereafter ECT). That document was the result of an unofficial consultation of Roman Catholic and evangelical Protestant church leaders. Although the document acknowledges that there are very real differences in the teachings of these two traditions, it nonetheless maintains that the beliefs held in common by the two are such that it may be affirmed that "Evangelicals and Catholics are brothers and sisters in Christ." It is here that Sproul begs to differ, for he insists that at at least one crucial point the differences between Roman Catholicism and Evangelical Protestantism are huge and irreconcilable, namely the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Sproul's book is an

attempt to show that so long as the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church denies the doctrine of *sola fide*, it denies an essential element of the gospel, and therefore may not be considered a legitimate Christian body. Thus Sproul warns that the ECT document itself "seriously betrays the gospel" (43).

Sproul's strong point is his survey of the historical differences between the dogmatic proclamations of Trent and the teachings of the Reformers (particularly Luther and Calvin). This historical survey takes up most of the book, and in it Sproul shows that while Trent does affirm the place of grace and faith in salvation, there still are significant differences separating Roman Catholicism from Protestantism on the issue of justification. Sproul moves back and forth between the canons of Trent and the Reformers illustrating the content of these differences, and in so doing provides the reader with a useful overview of this important issue.

The problem with Sproul's book is that there is very little interaction with the Bible itself (which is, of course, problematic for someone carrying the Reformation banner *sola scriptura*). Near the end of his work Sproul writes: "My loyalty to the Reformers, however, cannot justify my opposition to ECT if it is correct in affirming a unified faith. No church tradition can bind the conscience. But the Word of God must bind the conscience and take precedence over any and all other loyalties" (191). But this is exactly the problem, in that Sproul does not provide his readers with the biblical material necessary to come to the conclusions he advocates. He writes, "The biblical gospel stands or falls with the concept of imputation" (106), however Sproul provides no study of the relevant biblical material. Instead, Sproul merely cites the argument of the 17th century writer Francis Turretin that "as often as the scriptures speak professedly about our justification, it always must be explained as a forensic term" (100). Thus, while imputation may be the true way of describing biblical justification, Sproul insists upon the point rather than demonstrating it exegetically.

More problematic is Sproul's insistence on *sola fide* as an "essential" of the gospel. It is one thing to argue that it is the correct way to understand salvation, but it is quite another to suggest that only those who so understand salvation can in fact be saved. Sproul writes, "I am convinced, as were the Reformers, that justification by faith alone is essential to the gospel..." (30). Again, however, Sproul asserts the necessity of the doctrine without actually demonstrating this exegetically. In Chapter Nine Sproul discusses at length the first chapter of Galatians, and one would expect at last a sustained exegesis which demonstrates a parallelism between the "other gospel" which Paul anathematizes and the Catholic understanding of justification. Unfortunately, Sproul merely asserts that a parallel exists, and then expounds on Paul's warnings against leaving the gospel to follow heresy. For Sproul the Roman Catholic denial of *sola fide* is just as damning a heresy as the Mormon denial of the person of Christ, in that both sects deny an essential of the Christian gospel (37-40). Thus, while Sproul affirms that there may be many actual Christians within Roman Catholicism, he insists that they are believers because they "embrace *sola fide*" in spite of their church's teachings (46). Sproul rejects Roman Catholicism as a false church in light of its false gospel. Again, however, the lack of sustained biblical argument ultimately undercuts Sproul's conclusions: he has shown that the Roman Church is not Protestant, but he has not demonstrated that that body is not Christian.

In one sense Sproul has done a service to the cause of evangelical-catholic dialogue, for such dialogue cannot progress until each side understands the beliefs of the other. Sproul does much to reject popular myths (e.g., that Catholics deny grace or faith), while underscoring that nonetheless theological differences remain (something both sides readily admit). Sproul's intent, however, is to disable that dialogue, and one suspects that this work and others like it will have a large audience, and will make participation in such dialogue a "litmus test" issue within the evangelical community. Sproul may, of course, be right in doing so. He simply has not justified such a stand in this work. David M. King

Paul C. McGlasson, Another Gospel: A Confrontation with Liberation Theology, Forward by Brevard S. Childs, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994, 94 pp.

This book was written for the ordinary faithful Christians who have become confused by the "liberation theologies" which have infiltrated the mainline churches of North America, says Brevard Childs in his favorable forward to this book. Childs goes on to say that some will be deeply offended (by McGlasson's attack on Liberation Theology) but many will be strengthened and given new resolve for the sake of Christ.

McGlasson writes with a pastoral passion utilizing a sermonic style replete with rhetorical questions. His passionate cry flows from his strong belief that the mainline churches in general, and the Presbyterian church in particular, have become so infected by liberation theologies that the church's life, mission, message, and good order have become perverted and thus they have abandoned the gospel of Jesus Christ. McGlasson's book is an attempt to call the people and professors of mainline churches (but in particular the Presbyterian church) back to the gospel of Jesus Christ as understood from the Reformed tradition.

The contents of *Another Gospel* reveal the author's firm Reformed position and adamant rejection of all liberation theologies as heretical. The seven chapters cover the following seven theological themes: Jesus Christ, Salvation, the Church, Holy Scripture, the identity of God, Faith, and False Doctrine. The conclusion reiterates his main concern for a proper understanding of salvation which is through Christ alone and by faith alone.

McGlasson does not differentiate between the various liberation theologies (even though he acknowledges that there are a variety of them) when he discusses their position on the above-mentioned seven themes. He believes that all liberation theologies are in basic agreement with his presentation of how they understand theological themes. Therefore, one does not find a detailed historical overview of liberation theologies nor does one find any documentation of liberation works in any of the seven chapters. One will, however, find a select bibliography which does list the more influential liberation works and camps. The select bibliography is a good source for those who desire to read further about liberation theology.

As mentioned above, each chapter deals with one dominant theological theme. McGlasson presents what liberationists say and then discusses his own position, which he claims to be based upon Scripture alone. Scripture is to be interpreted within a canonical context by means of the historical critical methodology. The reformed themes of *Sola Fide*

(faith alone), *Sola Gratia* (grace alone), *Sola Christi* (Christ alone), and *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone) are reiterated throughout this book.

In general, McGlasson's argument is that liberation theology is the counterfeit gospel of the civil rights movement, with its messianic leader Martin Luther King, Jr. rather than that of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. The civil rights movement embraced the liberal agenda of the previous generation and proclaimed an egalitarian ideology. Thus Reformed confessional theology has been replaced with a Gnostic natural theology.

McGlasson argues that Karl Barth's later theological works in general and his *Bundesgeschichte* hermeneutic in particular led the Presbyterian church into the wholesale corruption of liberation theology as reflected in the Barmen Declaration. Thus, McGlasson views liberation theology as articulating the basic ideology of the civil rights movement which is an egalitarian ideology rooted in the Enlightenment. Liberation theology is the gospel of self-fulfillment.

McGlasson's book has some major weaknesses. He offers no documentation by the conventional means of footnotes or endnotes for his work. He offers no corrective model or advice on how a Christian is to deal with the evil injustices of society. For example, he states, "The biblical view, that the structure of society is God's check on the evil of human sin (Rom. 13:1-7) is twisted and turned around by liberation theologies" (74). But he never explains what structure of society is the biblical model. He does not offer a biblical view of Church and state relationship or how Christians should influence government. One is left with the impression that he views egalitarian ideology as heretical, but he never explains his position concerning the relationship of the genders or the importance of racial equality. He clearly explains what he believes is wrong but he does not offer a corrective view. By not offering his corrective model, specifically concerning societal structure, the reader is left to assume that his/her view is acceptable as long as it is not the liberationist view. Thus an evangelical hierarchical ideology (male over female) wed to a Christian reconstructionist governmental structure (no separation of Church and state, and Christian rule in the state) is as acceptable as an evangelical biblical equality ideology articulated within an Anabaptist understanding of the separation of Church and state.

The strength of the book rests in its ability to articulate the traditional Reformed position on central theological concerns. Those in the Evangelical community will appreciate his emphasis upon salvation through Christ alone and his emphasis upon Scripture as the authoritative guide for faith and practice. However, even though I have sympathies with McGlasson's concerns about liberation theologians' understanding of the themes he addresses, I would not recommend this book to anyone desiring a thorough understanding of liberation theology.

Kenneth J. Archer

R. C. Sproul, Not a Chance: The Myth of Chance in Modern Science and Cosmology, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994, 234 pp., \$15.99.

In the preface to his book R. C. Sproul writes that "this book is an effort to explore and critique the role chance has been given in recent cosmology. It may be viewed as a diatribe against chance...Diatribes may represent the unbridled ravings of fools. They may also represent the serious protest of the learned. I hope this work proves to be more of the latter than the former." Sproul, of course, is a learned person, not a fool, but I wonder just

how helpful his book will be in the arena of secular thought that he hopes to influence. As an apologetic, like so many evangelical apologetics, it seems to be aimed at believers rather than unbelievers. As for influencing the unbeliever, the book has at least two problems. First, its polemical and even hostile tone hurt his cause. The people he hopes to engage are at times described as foolish, irrational, desperate, mixed in their motives, and arrogant (16, 33, 49). Are generalizations like these helpful? Are they really true? Even if they are true, do they truly advance his argument? Second, Sproul does not interact at any length or depth with the substantial, contemporary scientific literature on his topic of cosmology. Even if this book has as its goal the important task of reaching a popular audience, it needs to do so more irenicly and with greater attention to the relevant literature. As for influencing the believer, I found that complex topics were not adequately explained for the uninitiated, and that they were made to appear more simple than many if not most scholars have found them (e.g., quantum mechanics). Because of his learning, my expectations were high; I was expecting a more "serious protest" from one of our most acclaimed apologists.

Phillip E. Johnson, Reason in the Balance: The Case Against Naturalism in Science, Law and Education, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995, 192 pp., \$19.99.

Having tried and found wanting Darwinian evolution, Berkeley law professor Phillip Johnson now turns his sights toward the broader manifestations of naturalism in contemporary culture. What we have here is a contrast between the practical ramifications of the theistic and naturalistic worldviews. "If God really does exist, then to lead a rational life a person has to take account to God and his purposes." But if naturalism is true, then we have to deal with a whole different set of destructive ramifications that undermine most of what Christians believe. This naturalism, so entrenched among the academy and popular culture, might best be thought of as a metaphysical worldview. Johnson shows the disastrous consequences of opting for naturalism rather than theism.

Daniel B. Clendenin, Palo Alto, CA

David J. Atkinson and David H. Field, eds., New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995, 918 pp., \$39.99.

In combining the fields of ethics and pastoral theology, the editors hoped to provide a "major resource for pastors, social workers, doctors and counselors working in a Christian context, as well as for clergy, ordinands, teachers, religious-studies students and interested lay people." The entire project presupposes that pastoral care needs a theological base and that practical situations have some formative influence upon theology.

The articles of the dictionary are fairly distributed between ethical subjects and pastoral care topics. Significant people in both areas are featured, as are methodologies, institutions, and contemporary issues. Articles are written by a large number of specialists, primarily from the English-speaking world.

Since the book is published by the InterVarsity Press in both United States and the United Kingdom, it reflects a broad evangelical tradition. Most articles are descriptive, leaving value decisions to the reader, though some writers indicated critiques of the

Book Reviews

positions taken by various spokespersons. This relative even-handedness will be welcomed by some users and deplored by others, depending upon their theological perspective and/or their degree of familiarity with the subject being addressed.

Part One is composed of eighteen "keynote" articles which seek to establish the theological, historical, and practical themes which provide an orientation for the alphabetized articles in Part Two. The editors felt this would commend the work as a possible textbook, since these articles could be treated as an introductory approach to the general fields of ethics and pastoral care. To this end, one suspects, selected "big names" were employed for some of the articles: N. P. Wolterstorff, "Justice and Peace"; A. E. McGrath, "Sin and Salvation"; and J. E. Hare, "History of Christian Ethics." While these eighteen articles have merit in and of themselves, they do not cohere enough to make textbook use a likely option.

The keynote article "Practical and Pastoral Theology" by D. J. Tidball gets at the central issue upon which one's evaluation of the dictionary might depend. He notes that pastoral theology has shifted in the twentieth century from the application of doctrine to life (the traditional view) to the interaction between the living situation and theological reflection (the contemporary paradigm). A significant factor in this shift is the influence of the social sciences. Though he does not express it in these terms, one might designate the shift as being "from pastoral theology to pastoral care."

The dictionary fits solidly in the contemporary mode of practical theology. Such traditional subjects of pastoral theology as preaching, worship, administration of the sacraments, and visitation are noticeably absent from the volume (though Pastoral Theology is part of the book's title). Instead, numerous subjects appear on counseling, psychotherapy, human development, and the care of people and their problems. The book could be more honestly represented by a title "Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral (or Christian) Care."

On the one hand, the dictionary's orientation might make it more accessible to Christians whose vocation is not the pastorate. On the other hand, it raises the question of its full value for pastors. The debate over pastoral functions is both crucial and on-going. It is premature to restrict pastoral theology to the more narrow focus of counseling or care. One does not dispute the addition of counseling to the traditional functions of the pastoral office. What is questioned, both on biblical and practical grounds, is this reduction of the shepherding task.

In spite of my major objection to the philosophical orientation of the dictionary, the individual articles are well written, informative, and beneficial. I know no other volume that combines so much ready help on topics both in the field of ethics and pastoral care. These articles in both parts of the dictionary constitute its greatest merit. And it all comes at a very reasonable price.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

David Dawson, *Literary Theory*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1995, 150 pp., \$11.00.

In this slim volume, David Dawson undertakes a sizable task; his clearly stated approach and objective are his most effective tools in accomplishing it. Dawson's book is one in the *Guides to Theological Inquiry* series, edited by Kathryn Tanner, of the

University of Chicago, and Paul Lakeland, Fairfield University.* The series' explicit intention is "to introduce theologians, scholars, students, and clergy to those academic methods, disciplines, and movements that are most germane to contemporary theology." As the series' description indicates, *Literary Theory* is not a "simple survey."

Its author intends "to probe ways in which literary theory might foster Christian insight, and ways in which theology might do the same for theory." Toward that end, Dawson examines the works of Harold Bloom, Paul de Man, and Mikhail Bakhtin, each representing a major development in twentieth-century literary theory. His concise examination effectively demonstrates how these literary theories interrelate, how each reveals its own theological basis, and how they, individually and collectively, relate to what Dawson calls "classical Christian theology."

The body of the book is organized around Dawson's idea that the concepts of *spirit*, *text*, and *body* are "bridges" on which literary theory and theology can meet. For example, the discussion of Bloom's theories concludes that Bloom, a contemporary poetic theorist, is a "hyperspiritualist" who views the physical world as a realm to be escaped through the spirit. His apparent theology is essentially anti-incarnational, kin to the Docetic view that Christ is really only spirit. For Bloom, meaning in literature exists only beyond physical details and imagery, in the striving of creative spirits.

On the other hand, Dawson labels Paul de Man a "hypertextual" post-structuralist, one for whom meaning is not to be found in text or anywhere else. De Man, a theorist active from the 1960's until his death in 1983, was also anti-incarnational in the sense that, if one regards the human being as *text* and meaning as *logos*, his theology resembles that of the Ebionites: Christ is merely human and nothing more.

Finally, however, as if to demonstrate that modern literary theory and theology can co-exist, Dawson explores the ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin, a theist whose work spans the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Unlike Bloom and de Man, Bakhtin re-positions the search for "meaning" away from spirit and text, onto the plane of *embodiment*. There meaning is found where the human being is incarnated and fully consummated by some "other" (an author, a creator, a god). For Bakhtin, meaning exists in relationships and especially in the ultimate wholeness bequeathed only by god.

For the theologian at least acquainted with the general currents in literary theory, this book provokes thought and suggests other connections and conclusions. However, both literary theory and theology are fields more inclined to abstractions than specifics, and *Literary Theory* is not an introduction to the field. David Dawson accomplishes his objective, but his book would prove a daunting initiation for the novice.

Beverly Self, Mt. Vernon Nazarene College

*An additional title already available in this series is *Nonfoundationalism*, by John E. Thiel; forthcoming titles are to include *Hermeneutics*, Francis Schussler Fiorenza; *Feminist Theory*, Serene Jones; *Critical Social Theory*, Gary M. Simpson; *Theories of Culture*, Kathryn Tanner, and *Postmodernity*, by Paul Lakeland.

Kitty Ferguson, The Fire in the Equations: Science, Religion and the Search for God, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, 320 pp., \$25.00.

During the last 15 years or so there has been quite a rash of books by scientists, mainly physicists or cosmologists, which claim to explore the "ultimate questions" about the origin, meaning and purpose of the universe and of life. Many of them suffer from what Prof. Mary Midgely as has called "the final chapter syndrome". Most of the book is taken up with a careful and more-or-less lucid exposition of current scientific ideas about the origin and nature of the universe and life. However, in the last chapter the careful, logical thought that has marked the preceding chapters is thrown aside and metaphysical speculation runs riot, with exaggerated and poorly thought-through claims being made for the implications of the science that has been expounded.

Thankfully, Kitty Ferguson's book does not confirm to this pattern. To begin with, she is not a professional scientist but a musician who has developed an interest in, and made a careful study of, science. Perhaps because of her non-scientific background she is able to explain quite complex scientific ideas in a way that non-specialists can understand and enjoy reading. Secondly, she is concerned with the "ultimate questions" from the beginning of the book, and applies the same rigor and clarity of thought when discussing philosophy and theology as she does when discussing science.

The book is a blend of science, philosophy and theology. The first three chapters discuss the nature and limits of scientific truth. Too few people, including many scientists, ignore the fact that scientists have "spectacles behind the eyes" which, while they sharpen one's focus on natural phenomena, also limit and color one's vision. Also, the doing of science rests on certain faith commitments that are unprovable scientifically. All this invalidates the claim that science provides the truth, and the whole truth, about life, the universe and everything.

Chapter 4 surveys current cosmological theories and shows that they neither prove nor disprove the need for a Creator. In fact we are left with three equally plausible "ultimate realities" - God, Mathematical and Logical consistency, or the Universe. Chapter 5 discusses the status of the argument from design in the light of modern biology and cosmology. Ferguson seems less at home in biology than in physics. The only biologist whose writings she discusses is Richard Dawkins. The work of Stephen Gould, whose interpretation of evolution differs from Dawkins', would also be worth discussing. The conclusion reached is that there are aspects of the world which might point to the existence of a Designer, but that the evidence falls short of demanding such a conclusion.

Ferguson then turns her attention to the question of how God, if there is a God, might interact with the universe which science reveals to us. A range of views is considered, from those who deny that God, having created a law-abiding universe, would "intervene" and "break" the laws, to those who are quite happy to accept the reality of "miracles" which "contravene" natural laws. Along the way there is discussion of chaos and complexity theory and of the suggestions that God works through "loading the dice" and so determining the outcome of events which we can only predict in terms of probabilities. Ferguson makes the important point that talk of God as a "law-breaker" ignores the question of how wide a frame of reference we need in order to understand the consistency of God's actions. The physical universe is too narrow a frame.

The book ends with a consideration of the role played by personal experience in both science and religion. In science the experience of individuals has to be "processed" and become publicly demonstrable. This limits what is admissible as evidence, and ignores what, for most people, is some of the strongest evidence for God's existence—their personal experience of the transforming power of God.

The one aspect of the book which I found unsatisfactory are the brief references to the Bible, to literal or non-literal interpretations of it and to the historicity or otherwise of the events it records. Possibly because of the brevity of such references Ferguson seems not be aware of the subtlety of hermeneutical issues.

Overall the book does a good job of arguing the case that, in the light of modern science, "God, though perhaps not ruled in, is certainly not ruled out". It does a good job because of the carefulness of the argument and because of its readability.

Ernest C. Lucas, Bristol Baptist College, Bristol, England

Harry J. Leon, The Jews of Ancient Rome (updated ed.), Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995 (1960), xviii + 394 pp., \$24.99.

Hendrickson has devoted itself not only to providing new scholarly resources but also to preserving some time-honored classics at rather attractive prices. Leon's standard work on the Jewish communities of ancient Rome has been reprinted in its original form, and "updated" by means of a new introduction by Carolyn Osiek, an appendix of relevant inscriptions found in the Jewish catacombs since the publication of Leon's book (most of which have been previously published by Father Umberto Fasola), and an additional bibliography of major works on Jews in the Roman world.

Leon's text has been subjected to review and criticism for thirty-five years now, yet since this text will be unfamiliar to most non-specialists some notice of its contribution seems to be in order. Leon seeks to construct a reliable picture of the composition and character of the Jews who inhabited Rome during the first centuries of our era. He first surveys the literary evidence, presenting the relevant data from Tacitus, Suetonius, Josephus, Philo, Plutarch, Juvenal, Seneca, and others, and engaging with the then-current scholarship on how to reconstruct the life of the Jewish community from this evidence. Some of his observations, such as the lack of reliable evidence for a Domitianic persecution of Christians, have run decades ahead of scholarly consensus in biblical studies. His familiarity with inscriptions and epitaphs comes fruitfully to bear on whether the riot among Jews in Rome under Claudius was due to some "Chrestus" or in fact to the proclamation of the Christ. He also provides important insights into the reasons for Roman hostility toward Jews and especially proselytes—a social tension of high significance for looking into the early Christian communities' relationship with the society.

The bulk of Leon's work focuses on another body of evidence, namely the epigraphic evidence from three large Jewish burial sites. He studies the language of these epitaphs (Greek, Latin, Hebrew) as well as the symbols inscribed on the monuments or used to decorate the walls of the catacombs in an attempt to determine how deeply influenced these Jews were by the Roman culture which surrounded them. One burial site (Appia) showed a remarkable degree of assimilation to Roman culture, having a large number of Latin inscriptions, Latin names, and symbols taken from pagan mythology (e.g., figures of Victory

and Fortune, animals, nude human figures, pegasi, hippocampi, dolphins, and the like) in addition to Jewish cultic symbols (the menorah, lulab, etrog, wine flask, and Ark of the Torah with scrolls). Another burial site (Nomentana) showed a preference for Greek or Hebrew and strictly Jewish symbols. Such attempts to read the degree of cultural assimilation from the burial sites is perhaps the most intriguing, but also the most controverted, aspect of this work.

From the quality of inscription (painted vs. carved, correctly spelled vs. incorrectly), Leon further deduces that most members of the Jewish community were poor (though none appear to have been slaves), with only a few prosperous members; similarly, there was a low level of literacy. Greek was the most common language, a small portion knew Latin, and very few had any acquaintance with Hebrew. Prominent cultural values are often affirmed in connection with funerals: here, devotion to Torah, family, and the Jewish community were most frequently emphasized.

Leon collects information regarding the synagogues of Rome and the officials within this unit of community organization. He posits from the evidence the existence of eleven congregations (not all co-existing in the same time period), finding in the synagogue names information about benefactors, or places of the origin of the community's founders, or striking characteristics of the synagogue community (e.g., the "Native Romans" or the "Hebrews" = Palestinians). He finds evidence for many offices known to us from elsewhere in the Diaspora (e.g., *archisynagogus*, *archōn*, gerousiarch, *grammateus*, etc.), and discusses what can be known for certain about the functions of each office. The last thirty years of research have brought new light into this discussion: for example, we have gone beyond Leon in our growing awareness of patronage as the chief social institution of the ancient Mediterranean, which clarifies the meaning of the *pater* or *mater synagogae* as the primary patron of a Jewish congregation (cf. *pater patriae* and *paterfamilias*). This accords well with the discovery of the low economic level of most Jews in Rome, who would therefore require a rich patron or group of patrons to keep community life going. This also accords with the inscription speaking of a wealthy Roman woman who becomes a *mater synagogae* – not one relegated to the supporting role of looking after widows and orphans, but in fact the patroness of the community. Leon argues against the notion of a central council for these various Jewish congregations, having found only two titles which might refer to an office beyond the sphere of the local community (*archōn pasēs timēs* and *archon altis ordinis*).

The new material adds little to Leon's original work, serving to demonstrate that his observations have not been overturned by the new evidence. A new congregational office—the *psalmodos*—is attested (inscription #4), as well as an additional appearance of the essential value *philonomos* ("lover of the Torah"). An inscription attesting to the office of *archigerousiarch* adds one more piece of evidence, *contra* Leon, for a central council for all Jewish communities in Rome (#15). An astounding example of syncretism, already well-documented by Leon but now taken to a new pitch, is manifested in an inscription which begins *dis manibus*, "to the divine spirits," a phrase from traditional Roman religion and standard for pagan Roman burial inscription (#16). Alongside this is another attestation of the traditional Jewish concept of sleeping "with the holy ones" (#37).

On balance, Leon's work is still highly informative for our understanding of the Jewish communities of ancient Rome. For sheer bulk of evidence and solid interpretation

of the evidence alone, this book is worth the reading for all students of the first century world.

David A. deSilva

G. W. Bowersock, *Martyrdom and Rome*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, xii + 106 pp., \$29.95.

The title of the book does little to inform the reader of the specific nature of the contents. A helpful abstract of the volume at the outset of the book includes the following: 'This book examines the historical context of the earliest Christian martyrs, and anchors their grisly and often wilful self-sacrifice to the everyday life and outlook of the cities of the Roman empire.'

The short monograph consists of the four 1993 Wiles Lectures delivered by Professor Bowersock (an Ancient Historian at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton) at Queen's University, Belfast, to a general audience. These lectures are then followed by four appendixes.

The first chapter ('The making of martyrdom') outlines the development of the concept of martyrdom. Bowersock explains how the legal term *μάρτυς* originally meant no more than witness, with no implication of death (as is the case, Bowersock argues, throughout the New Testament). By the mid-second century, the meaning 'to die for a cause' gradually came to the fore and in time the sense of *μάρτυς* as 'witness' completely disappeared. Bowersock argues that the concept of martyrdom, before this time, was 'alien to both the Greeks and the Jews'. It was, rather, a concept which was shaped by the Christians between about 50 and 150 A.D. By the time of the late second century there was an extraordinary willingness on the part of Christians to confess their faith and then offer themselves for voluntary martyrdom. This concept of martyrdom was then developed further still by the Muslims.

The second chapter ('The written record') describes how so many accounts of martyrology and hagiography from the 'golden age' of martyrdom (before the fourth century when the Roman empire became ostensibly Christian) were destroyed. The surviving texts can for the most part be described as historical fiction where the line between fact and fiction is clearly hazy. After examining a number of texts, Bowersock firmly places Christian martyrology against a Graeco-Roman background, rather than a Jewish tradition.

The third chapter ('The civic role of martyrs') explains how the setting for the early martyrdoms was significantly the major cities of the Roman Empire, rather than quiet, less-populated areas. It is suggested that the principal reason for this is a desire on the part of the church and the designated martyr to exploit the situation to achieve the greatest publicity. The presiding Roman magistrate, for his part, also desired a high profile event for purposes of civic entertainment. Martyrdom, thus, became a significant part of general civic life. Bowersock highlights here a distinction between the Christian and Jewish communities: where the Jews sought separation, the Christians had a 'vigorous participation in the civic life and intellectual traditions of the Graeco-Roman world that grounded their martyrdoms in the life of their great cities.'

The final chapter ('Martyrdom and suicide') explains that the widespread enthusiasm for death by would-be martyrs comes close to a desire to commit suicide, albeit actioned by another agent. Bowersock draws attention to the debate in the early church (*cf.* especially

Clement of Alexandria in the third century) over the distinction between voluntary death and martyrdom. It was not until Augustine, however, that a clear case against suicide for the Christian was made.

These four lectures are then supplemented by 4 appendixes which look at: the description of Stephen as the first martyr, a comparison of the language of Ignatius and 4 Maccabees; the term 'Great Sabbath' used in connection with both Polycarp's and Pionios' martyrdoms; and the authenticity of the *Martyrium* of Lyon.

Although the book is intentionally general in appeal it covers the material at a useful introductory level and does clearly direct the interested reader to other relevant scholarship.

Andrew D. Clarke, University of Aberdeen

David Potter, Prophets and Emperors: Human and Divine Authority from Augustus to Theodosius (Revealing Antiquity 7), Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1994, viii + 281 pp., \$45.00.

Potter describes the book as an exploration into 'the role that prophecy played in the power structure of the Roman empire during the first four centuries of the Christian era'.

The first chapter, 'Prophecy and Cult', provides an introduction to the relationship between prophetic knowledge and the world of the cults. Prophecy was more concerned with interpreting current events, and was rarely concerned with the future; it was connected with power and differed in many ways from the 'Christian' understanding of prophecy derived from Biblical models. Potter describes at length the considerable importance placed upon cult worship by the ancient Roman community. The cults were central to the whole of family and civic life. However, with such a competitive 'industry' of sources of prophetic insight, the cults also occasionally aroused social disorder.

Potter then describes two classes of prophetic insight: inductive knowledge was obtained by careful study of past events, of which the principal exponents were the astrologers and the interpreters of dreams; subjective divination was centered more around specific inspiration by the gods, where the principal exponents were oracles and prophets. He then outlines some of the more skeptical reactions, particularly from Christians, to the practice of prophetic inspiration.

In the chapter entitled 'Scholars, Poets, and Sibyls', Potter assesses the ways in which these three different groups interpreted prophetic texts. Where scholars studied the accuracy and dating of past prophecies to establish whether these texts had any ongoing significance for the future, the poets absorbed prophetic tradition into epic poetry for an educated audience. Potter also discusses both the growth and expansion of the sibylline tradition. The evidence cited demonstrates the considerable importance of the oracular for the Roman establishment.

'Prophecy and the Informed Public' is an elaboration on the many different media which were available to the emperor by which he could communicate with his populace: imperial letters, imperial edicts, coins, buildings, the commemoration of historical events, the imperial cult, ceremonies, speeches, games and festivals. With these powerful means of communication all at the disposal of one man, the question of the dubious veracity of the imperial historical record is then assessed. Prophetic texts frequently offered a different gloss on the events; a factor which those in power were all too aware of.

Potter describes in 'Prophecy and Personal Power in the Roman Empire' the two principal bodies charged with advising the governing authorities on their relations with the gods: the *quindecimviri* and the augurs. In time *haruspices* and astrologers were additionally appointed for consultation on significant events. The widespread reliance on prophetic insight throughout society was pragmatically paralleled by imperial practice. To demonstrate by prognostication that the gods favoured a particular person or action provided valuable authentication.

'Eastern Wisdom in Roman Prophetic Books' looks at the far from straight-forward (and continually changing) relationship between eastern mystical and wisdom traditions and the prophetic practices and insights considered earlier in the book.

Potter addresses a very broad topic spanning an extensive period. He succeeds, however, in demonstrating the extraordinary significance placed upon prophecy during the Roman Empire. It was both a powerful tool which could be used to ensure political stability and support and also a lethal weapon to instigate the overthrow of a government. Although a strange admixture to the Western mind, Potter argues that the prophetic was part of the very fabric of civilized society.

Andrew D. Clarke, Aberdeen, Scotland

Harold D. Buckwalter and Mary K. Shoaff, Guide to the Reference Systems for the Works of Flavius Josephus (ETSMS 3), Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns (distributor), 1995, x + 42 pp., \$8.00.

For all who have been frustrated trying to find a passage in Josephus because the edition used by their dialogue partner differs from their own, this index should provide welcome relief. Most people interested in using this important first-century figure's writings in their study of the New Testament environment and backgrounds have at their disposal the Whiston edition, now made readily accessible and affordable by Hendrickson Publishers. Many scholarly authors, however, will refer to Josephus using the Loeb Classical Library reference system, not always cross-referencing this with Whiston. For Josephus' *Jewish War*, an additional four editions are in common use. With the help of this guide, those who have only the Penguin Classics edition of the *Jewish War*, or Paul Maier's condensation of the *War* and *Antiquities* (*Josephus: The Essential Writings*), will be able to find the appropriate passages being discussed in commentaries or articles in their edition.

David A. deSilva

Manlio Simonetti, Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church: An Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis, Translated by John A. Hughes; edited by Anders Bergquist and Markus Bockmuehl, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994, 154 pp., \$35.95

Professor Simonetti of the University of Rome has provided an historical overview of the exegetical methods of the early church fathers. This type of overview has been missing from the literature. In general, he traces the conflict between literal exegesis and allegory up to the 6th century. He defines allegory as any method of which "a meaning other than the literal or immediate sense is perceived from the given text" (p. 12).

He begins his survey examining the NT's use of OT passages. He sees this as allegorical since the christological meanings given to the OT were not apparent in the original texts. He sees little difference between allegory and typology. Many scholars distinguish typology since it has a historical basis. Simonetti prefers to see typology as a form of allegory, and for the most part treats the terms synonymously. Because of this, he does not distinguish between appropriate typology in the NT, and excessive allegory in later exegeses.

In the century after the New Testament was written, the same writers often interpreted Scripture both literally and allegorically. For example, Gnostics interpreted the New Testament allegorically to develop their doctrines, but interpreted the Old Testament literalistically. Thus, they found the descriptions of God in the OT absurd and rejected its authority. In response, Christians used the allegorical method more. In showing these developments, Simonetti explained his terms very concisely and gave some examples.

Simonetti devotes a chapter to the Alexandrian School of exegesis. Under the influence of Origen, this school became synonymous with the allegorical method. Yet ironically, Origen "is also the same person who gave much more weight than ever before to the literal sense" (p. 44). Throughout his book, Simonetti shows that most authors used both allegorical and literal methods, but gave differing weights to their importance. Thus, Origen saw the literal sense as of "modest value," but only as a point of departure into the spiritual sense.

The next chapter traces the Antiochene reaction to excessive allegorization. This return to more literal exegesis was also in response to the apologetic needs of the day. Pagans were not quickly convinced by highly allegorized interpretations! Ironically, it was also Origen's respect for the literal text and philology that gave methodological consistency to this school (p. 60). They also used typology in ways similar to the NT.

His next chapter focuses on exegetical activity in the West, primarily influenced by the Alexandrian School. Simonetti notes that some authors (Jerome and Augustine) moved away from allegory in their later years. However, exegetical activity became less important at the end of the 4th and start of the 5th centuries, primarily due to intolerance and division brought about by various doctrinal debates (p. 111). It is at this low point in biblical exegesis that Simonetti concludes his overview.

Simonetti shows how early exegetes used many of the principles associated with modern grammatico-historical exegesis. Irenaeus interpreted obscure texts in light of the clear (p. 23). Clement held to the idea of progressive revelation, and emphasized the unity of the Bible (p. 37). Origen emphasized the importance of understanding the words of a passage in their original language and context (p. 40).

Simonetti also shows the problems which arise when exegesis is not done according to an accepted set of principles or standards. Arbitrary interpretations abound, with no way to judge between them. This is revealed clearly in an appendix on how Scripture was used in the theological controversies of the patristic era. Many examples show how factors other than exegetical principles dictated how passages were interpreted. While Simonetti shows the problems with this, it would have helped if he had developed his view of authentic exegesis. He makes reference to it a number of times, but never describes it.

Simonetti has given those interested in patristic history a very useful and concise resource. Those interested in exegesis will find this of particular interest. However, this book is not light reading. The frequent citations sometimes make it difficult to follow the

author's train of thought. Yet the reader willing to invest time in this book will find a wealth of information.

Dónal P. O'Mathúna

E. Glenn Hinson, The Early Church: Origins to the Dawn of the Middle Ages, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996, pp. 365, \$18.95.

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

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

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

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

Book Reviews

which severely limits the attractiveness of this volume as a work to be turned to for future reference.

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

David M. King, William Tyndale College

Alvyn Pettersen, Athanasius, Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Pub., 1995, 202 pp., \$16.95.

Patristic scholar Johannes Quasten has commented that the history of dogma in the fourth century is identical with the history of the life of Athanasius. In light of Athanasius' vigorous defense and explication of Nicea in spite of stiff theological and political opposition (indeed, Harnak has argued that without Athanasius the church would have fallen to the Arians), it is difficult to overstate his importance to the development of the theology of the church. Therefore the new introduction to Athanasius by Alvyn Pettersen may be seen as a most welcome addition to the literature.

Pettersen begins with an Introduction to Athanasius' "Life and Times". This is less a biographical sketch than an overview of the theological and political situation during the life of Athanasius, and it provides a very useful backdrop to what follows.

Athanasius is, of course, known primarily for his christological teachings. Pettersen's study is helpful in that it approaches Athanasius' theology as a whole, thereby setting Athanasius' christology into the larger context of his thought. Pettersen therefore begins not with incarnation but with creation and God's providential work in that created world. From here Pettersen moves to consider Athanasius' understanding of revelation, and of humanity's resistance to revelation. Pettersen's third chapter considers God's self-revelation in the incarnation of the Logos as the only remedy for the human dilemma. Pettersen emphasizes that, for Athanasius, christology is closely bound to soteriology. The Logos who revealed the Father could not merely have a creaturely knowledge of God, but must in fact be God: "For Athanasius, that people could look upon the face of God in Christ was the basis of much human hope" (71). Pettersen then discusses Athanasius' understanding of salvation as not merely a restoration to a prelapsarian state, but rather as a participation of humanity in the divine nature through the divine humanity of Christ: "Salvation thus delivers people from sin to 'participation' in God, to deification. For the Logos 'became man that we might be deified'" (105, citing *De Incarnatione* 54).

The last half of the book considers the Incarnation and Trinity. In chapter five, Pettersen again emphasizes the soteriological implications of Athanasius' christology. Thus, Athanasius stands equally against docetism, Arianism, and adoptionism in that each system imperils human salvation:

The passions are, for Athanasius, an integral part of the Incarnation, which was undertaken for our salvation. Hence, Christ's passions must be real passions: otherwise people's real passions will not be met. The divinity of the Logos must be genuine: otherwise he will not be a sufficient healer of the real passions he meets. There must be a real union of the Healer with the passible humanity needing healing, and not

simply the Healer's coming upon a passible person: otherwise the salvation will not be secured. (123)

Chapter six examines the trinitarian implications of Athanasius' terminology, considering his use of "form", "like", "proper", "*homoousios*", and "*hypostasis*" in discussing the relationship of the Father and the Son. Chapter seven sketches the relationship of Father, Son, and Spirit, and shows Athanasius' attempt to describe the Godhead in ways which show distinction but not division of the Persons.

Pettersen has written a very good introduction to the thought of one of the church's most significant theologians. His writing style is clear, although there is an economy to his writing which condenses his thought and which therefore may make the book a bit of a struggle to the "general readers" at whom the publisher states (back cover) the book is in part aimed. For those who are interested in early church history or christology, however, this book is well worth the effort.

David M. King

Aloys Grillmeier, S.J. with Theresia Hainthaler, (Pauline Allen and John Cawte, trans.) Christ in Christian Tradition, Vol. 2 From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590-604), Part Two The Church of Constantinople in the Sixth Century, Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995, 565 pp., \$50.00.

For many who are aware of the christological controversies of the early centuries of the Christian church, the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon (451), with its famous "Definition", represents a culmination of orthodoxy's deliberations regarding the person of Jesus Christ. If we are unfamiliar of the christological nature of the Fifth and Sixth Ecumenical Councils (II Constantinople in 553 and III Constantinople in 680), and if we are surprised that over five hundred pages can be written on 6th century Byzantine christology, it is perhaps because we trace our own theological heritage through the Western (Latin) tradition, which definitively acknowledged Chalcedon. In the (Greek) Eastern church, however, there was a strong anti-Chalcedonian faction which embroiled the region in theological (and often political) controversy. It is this controversy in the Eastern church, which was centered in the imperial capital and which resulted in the Second Council of Constantinople, which is the subject of Professor Grillmeier's book.

Grillmeier's work is divided into four parts. He begins with a detailed study of the anti-Chalcedonian Patriarch Severus of Antioch and his opponents. Part Two considers the writings of the proponents of Chalcedon, particularly Leontius of Byzantium and Leontius of Jerusalem. Part Three looks at the (moderately) neo-Chalcedonian influence of the Emperor Justinian I, who was no mean theologian himself and whose influence was strongly felt at Second Constantinople, which is also here considered. In a brief concluding section Grillmeier provides a consideration of the later influences of Justinian, as well as an overall appraisal of the sixth century.

As Grillmeier writes, "The post-Chalcedonian period in Byzantium to the year 600 was not an era of theological awakening or breakthrough, but rather of a tenacious wrestling with a responsible transmission of faith in Jesus Christ" (504). This wrestling was a response to the language of Chalcedon, which to many in the East was nothing more than a return to the Nestorian heresy. On the other hand, those who rejected Chalcedon were seen by many as embracing Apollinarian or even docetist christologies. Much of this ado

Book Reviews

involved terminology, and Grillmeier carefully chronicles the development of such terms as **hypostasis**, **physis**, and **ousia** through the major writers of the era in question. Grillmeier's knowledge of primary and secondary sources (the latter through the late 1980s, albeit primarily of European works) is exemplary. Indexes of biblical references, Greek and Latin terms, persons (ancient and modern indexed separately), and subjects are very helpful. Best of all, Grillmeier writes in a surprisingly (for such a narrowly technical subject) clear and lively style (for which credit must also be given to his translators). While the physical presentation of the book was slightly bothersome (e.g., there is an annoying tendency to print block sections in a font which is indistinguishable from the footnotes, and which for this reader not only seemed painfully small but also occasionally blurred where text ended and notes began), this is a small criticism in light of the positive contribution this volume makes in providing what shall undoubtedly stand for some time as a definitive treatment.

In all, this is an outstanding volume which is recommended heartily, albeit with a recognition that it is to a small audience (those who aren't put off by the subject may well be by the cost!). This is not the book to begin a study, however for those who are interested in digging more deeply into the development of the orthodox understanding of Jesus Christ this volume will reward the effort of a careful consideration. One would expect that Grillmeier's exhaustive study of the development of early christology presented in this and in its companion volumes (Westminster John Knox currently offers Volume One and Volume Two, Parts One, Two, and Four) will be generally accepted as the "magisterial" standard reference on christology from the apostolic age through the seventh century.

David M. King

Carolyn DeArmond Blevins, ed., Women in Church History: A Bibliography, Macon: Mercer, 1995, 200 pp., \$30.00.

An outstanding resource for the church library, this annotated bibliography lists books, articles, and other writings by six categories: General Reference, Historical Periods, Ethnic and/or National Groups, Denominations and/or Sects, Hymn Writers, and Social Reform/Social Work. An index by name is also included.

In addition, some of the general categories become quite specific, i.e., under "Historical Periods" are four listings for America: General History, Colonial Period, Nineteenth Century, and Twentieth Century.

In the preface, Blevins admitted that only the books which she examined personally were included. Because some volumes were difficult to locate and could not be perused, she did not include them. The editor's criteria in this matter should prove helpful to the user, especially if the editor was unable to locate particular books or writings.

Some of the more unusual books which this reviewer came across were the following:

Davis, Elizabeth Gould. *The First Sex*. NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1971. 382 pp.

Johnson, Suzan D., Ed. *Wise Women Bearing Gifts: Joys and Struggles of Their Faith*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1988. 92 pp. "The stories of fifteen women ministers, clergy and lay. African-American, Puerto Rican, Native American, and caucasian women are included." (p.10)

Kaplan, Justin. *With Malice toward Women: A Handbook for Women-Haters Drawn from the Best Minds of All Times*. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1952. 255 pp. "Includes the writings of Jerome, Tertullian, John Knox, Nietzsche, and a section of writings on witches. 'The most formidable of all the organized campaigns against women was the one conducted by the church for nearly a thousand years. For celibacy to be glorified, woman had to be damned.'" (p.11)

Tucker, Ruth A. *First Ladies of the Parish: Historical Portraits of Pastors' Wives*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988. 204 pp. Brief biographical sketches include such famous wives as Katie Luther, Katherine Zell, Susanna Wesley, Sarah Edwards, Emma Moody, and Ruth Peale.

Torjesen, Karen J. *When Women Were Priests: Women's Leadership in the Early Church and the Scandal of Their Subordination in the Rise of Christianity*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1993. 278 pp.

DeBerg, Betty A. *Ungodly Women: Gender and the First Wave of American Fundamentalism*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990. 165 pp. "Reactions of fundamentalism to women in church and society."

Hardesty, Nancy A. *Women Called to Witness: Evangelical Feminism in the 19th Century*. Abingdon Press, 1984. 176 pp. "Traces the roots of American feminism from women's early missions and charity organizations . . . through evangelical revivalism . . ."

In the category, "Denominations and/or Sects," twenty-five separate groups are listed from the more mainline Methodist, Presbyterian, Disciples of Christ, and Church of the Brethren, to the more sect-like groups of Oneida Community, Shakers, and Jehovah's Witness.

This book would be especially useful in at least the following ways:

- 1) Sermon research in the areas of women's contribution to religion or the blocking thereof;
- 2) Preparation of women's studies materials and suggested bibliography of additional reading at both the parish and the collegiate/seminary levels;
- 3) Research for authors doing additional writing on women in the various religious movements throughout history;
- 4) Self-study to broaden one's knowledge and outlook in any of the six listed categories.

Janet S. Helme

David K. Clark and Robert V. Rakestraw, eds., Readings in Christian Ethics: Volume 1: Theory and Method, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994, 328 pp., \$17.99.

Christians focus too quickly on answering ethical questions before considering *how* to answer them. The editors of *Readings in Christian Ethics: Volume 1: Theory and Method* "believe this is a serious error for which the church of Jesus Christ pays dearly in the form of sloppy ethical thinking" (p. 9). David K. Clark and Robert V. Rakestraw have reprinted a number of important essays as a first step in overcoming this problem. The editors are both Professors of Theology at Bethel Theological Seminary in St. Paul,

Book Reviews

Minnesota. The essays are not limited to biblical approaches, but deal with a variety of theological approaches. While written for the evangelical community, the book also contains essays by non-evangelical authors. The editors plan a second volume which will deal with the application of these methods to specific moral issues.

The book is divided into four parts. Part 1 deals with major approaches to ethics. These essays describe Christian perspectives on the approaches used by secular authors, such as relativism, utilitarianism, deontology and narrative ethics. Also included are articles dealing with specifically Christian approaches such as divine command ethics, creation ethics and natural law.

Part 2 deals with various ways ethical dilemmas are resolved by Christians. A variety of ways are given on how to respond when moral norms conflict. One approach to this has led to situational ethics, where every situation is viewed as ethically unique. A number of essays struggle with how situational and cultural differences should impact ethical decisions. This struggle continues in the essays in Part 3 dealing with interpretation of the Bible. Recent scholarship has noted the complexity of using Scripture in ethics, with the disturbing consensus being that less emphasis should be placed on its use. However, the essays given here provide useful guidance for the faithful application of Scripture to ethical issues.

Essays developing biblical views of love and justice provide examples of how biblical themes can be generated and applied. Part 4 reflects recent trends in ethics dealing with virtue and character issues. Many of these essays are written from a narrative ethics perspective. The book concludes with some practical decision-making essays.

This book provides a very useful survey of recent trends in theological ethics. While many essays interact with Scripture frequently, some are mostly philosophical. This collection would be very useful for those particularly interested in Christian ethics, or as a textbook for a course in contemporary Christian ethics.

Additional features at the start of each chapter make it a very useful textbook. An overview of the chapter includes concise definitions of the technical terms used in the essays. While this sometimes became little more than a brief summary of the essays, it usually compared and contrasted the different opinions of the authors in useful ways. A small number of case studies were included at the end of each chapter for further reflection. These were very current and perplexing, and would lead to much classroom discussion. Also included here was a glossary for each chapter, and an annotated bibliography. Adding these features to the many important essays makes this book an important resource.

Dónal P. O'Mathúna

Norman L. Geisler, Thomas Aquinas: An Evangelical Appraisal, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991, 195 pp., \$12.99.

The book is a credit to the author, as the author is to the book. It is one indication that the author has matured as a Christian philosopher. One suspects that twenty years ago he would have had little interest in publishing on this subject. Along the way, he has come to genuinely appreciate many aspects of Aquinas' work which have continuing relevance to issues raised in philosophy today.

It is a very good introduction to Aquinas' life and thought. Seven of the chapters focus on key aspects of his philosophy and indicate its relevance to issues of our time.

Anyone who has worked with Aquinas firsthand will appreciate the labor that has gone into this book. It is not easy to summarize Aquinas for a popular audience. Geisler has done it well and merits our commendation.

The book works well as a text in introductory philosophy courses. It is most helpful as a reference for students who are seeking a door into Aquinas. For Protestants who know little about this medieval philosopher and theologian, the book can be of great service.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Alister E. McGrath, *A Life of John Calvin: A Study in the Shaping of Western Culture*, Oxford/Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993, v-xv + 332 pp.

A well-known author on the Reformation, Alister E. McGrath, has produced an excellent study of the life of John Calvin and his immense impact upon Western culture. This recent work, *A Life of John Calvin*, joins his other excellent companion works on the history and thought of the Reformation, *Reformation Thought: An Introduction* (second edition 1993) and *The Intellectual Origins of the European Reformation* (1987).

In his extensive research on Calvin, McGrath begins with the formation of the life and mind of Calvin in Paris and his early years of wanderings in Orleans. McGrath seeks to shape the life of Calvin as a reformer beginning first with his conversion. McGrath then focuses on the reform in Geneva. He discusses Calvin's first arrival in Geneva, his exile to Strasbourg, 1538-41, and his subsequent return to Geneva.

McGrath describes Calvin's development of the power structure in Geneva and gives insight into the accounting for Calvin's success there. McGrath examines Calvin's writing of *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, and the structure of his thought found in *The Institutes*. McGrath further offers an overview of the 1559 *Institutes*.

A major contribution of this book lies in the latter half, which deals with the growth of Calvin's influence. McGrath discusses Calvin's influence in France and the political dimensions and social profile of French Calvinism. McGrath then proceeds into a detailed discussion of the expansion of Calvin's influence in the move to Calvinism as a religious system. Out of this research, McGrath focuses on the development of the Calvinist work ethic and of capitalism, especially on the early Genevan capitalism and capitalism in France.

Another significant contribution is the author's development of the understanding of Calvin's impact and influence on the shaping of modern Western culture. He deals with such topics as religious legitimization of economic activism, Calvin and the natural sciences, the phenomenon of American civil religion, and Calvinism and natural human rights.

McGrath's work is an outstanding contribution to the research on Calvin, especially his emphasis upon Calvin and the shaping of the Calvinist work ethic, capitalism, and subsequent Western culture.

The work is well-written, and well-organized. It offers detailed research with complete development of topics. The Calvin scholar or students interested in the Reformation will find it readable.

The work is comprised of 12 chapters with excellent graphs, pictures, appendices, glossary, notes, select bibliography and index. The book is highly recommended for anyone seriously interested in pursuing current study on the history and thought of the Reformation particularly on Calvin.

Book Reviews

McGrath's, A Life of John Calvin, is a valuable resource with excellent new insights and extensive research. McGrath's focus on Calvin's impact and influence on the Reformation and subsequent Western culture is very significant. JoAnn Ford Watson

Devereux Jarratt, The Life of the Reverend Devereux Jarratt, Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press 1995, 138 pp., \$12.95.

Devereux Jarratt (1733-1801) has long fascinated American church historians because of his unique role as a Church of England minister in Virginia during the First Great Awakening. His Life was recorded in a series of letters to his clergyman friend, John Coleman, who published them in 1806, five years after Jarratt's death. This reprint edition makes Jarratt's Life available again to those who are interested in colonial American religion.

Jarratt is helpful in reconstructing the events of the pre-revolutionary revival in Virginia and the painful transition of the Church of England to the Episcopal Church in America. He comments upon other Christian groups active in Virginia during his ministry, namely, the Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians. He considers himself to be a charitable man, intent upon Christian unity, but most of his comments regarding these groups are negative. This is not too surprising, for his attitude toward his ministerial colleagues in the Episcopal Church is equally critical. His comments reveal himself as much as, if not more than, the people and movements he critiques.

One of the merits of this edition is the forward by David L. Homes of the College of William and Mary. He provides details on Jarratt's life and times which provide a context for interpreting Jarratt and the views he expresses. Though I felt he was a bit severe with Jarratt's account at some points, his discussion rightly cautions us against too literal a reading of this personal account.

This book is a credit to the William Bradford Collection of Pilgrim Press. The series is edited by Barbara Brown Zikmund and seeks to reprint important books in American religion. As a colonial autobiography it well fits the series goal. Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

R. George Eli, Social Holiness: John Wesley's Thinking on Christian Community, and its Relationship to the Social Order, New York: Peter Lang, 1994, 133 pp. \$38.95.

Dr. R. George Eli believes that studies of John Wesley's thought, when conducted by Western scholars, have failed to take adequate account of Wesley's understanding of social holiness. Because Western scholars work in cultures which stress individual above social ethics, they have tended to focus on sanctification as a personal experience while failing to fully appreciate the implications Wesley's doctrines have for communities. In his book, Eli purposes to correct this deficiency.

Eli begins by tracing and evaluating the influence of Puritan, Arminian, and especially Moravian interpretations of salvation and sanctification on Wesley's early development, then shows how Wesley used the insights he gained from these traditions to forge a theological position uniquely his own. Eli also demonstrates how, in Wesley's mind, prevenient grace, justification, and sanctification have corporate as well as individual

dimensions, and how Wesley envisioned them leading within the context of Christian community to the moral restoration of society. Against this background, Eli explains how in Wesley's thinking prevenient grace, because of its universal nature, provides the theological rationale for the church's mission.

Insofar as he has done this, Eli demonstrates a competent grasp of Wesley's thought. The problem is that he makes no effort to arrive at any understanding of why individual sanctification triumphed over social holiness in the West when the West had in the person of John Wesley such an articulate and influential champion of the ideal. It is as though a modern Lutheran were criticizing the dominance of existential motifs in contemporary Lutheran theology and urging a return to the systematic tradition pioneered by Philip Melancthon in the sixteenth century while taking no account of how Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* at the end of the eighteenth century changed everything. Because he has not discussed the rise and fall of the social gospel or of postmillennialism, Eli almost seems to be suggesting that, through some profound flaw in Western culture, Westerners simply failed to grasp the social side of Wesley's thinking.

It is also unfortunate, given Eli's initial discussion of the political situation in Singapore, that he makes no effort to interpret Singaporan affairs from a Wesleyan perspective. As it is, the introduction promises more than the author in the end delivers, and chapter one, the chapter on Singapore, seems not to relate to anything else which follows. Rather than closing by comparing Wesley's positions with those of John Howard Yoder and Jürgen Moltmann, Eli might have been better advised to return to the political theorizing of Chan Hong Chee, Liam Chong Yah, Pang Eng Fong, and Walter Woon, and relate Wesley to their concerns.

There also seems to be an unresolved tension between Eli's criticism of Confucianism for suppressing individualism and Western culture for fostering it. One gets the impression that Eli believes the two traditions have much to teach one another and that Wesley somehow holds an important key for encouraging fruitful dialogue between East and West, but Eli never explains how he envisions this dialogue shaping up.

Nevertheless, given the resurgent interest in Christian community around the globe, Eli's book is timely and, despite its omissions, very informative. It certainly stimulated my thinking and left me hoping that the author might be planning a companion volume in which he will address some of the issues he did not discuss in this book.

Ben M. Carter, Irving, Texas

Allen C. Guelzo, For the Union of Evangelical Christendom: The Irony of the Reformed Episcopalians, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993, \$14.95.

Diana Hochstedt Butler, Standing Against the Whirlwind: Evangelical Episcopalians in Nineteenth-Century America, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, \$45.00.

The Episcopal Church in 1800 seemed a tattered remnant on the way to extinction; the General Convention of 1811 included a mere two bishops and twenty-five clergymen. By 1830, the fortunes of the Episcopal Church had been dramatically altered with hopes even that it might be the vessel of a pan-Protestant revival. By 1870, the Evangelical Episcopal movement had run its course, beset by liberalism and ritualism. The purists

departed to form the Reformed Episcopal Church in 1873, and the remaining Evangelical churches and seminaries surrendered to liberalism. By 1900, the Episcopal scene was set for its main twentieth century options: high-church and low-church modernism in a Reformation Prayer Book wrapper.

The fascinating, and to a large extent unknown, story of the nineteenth-century Evangelical Episcopalians is told in these two new books. Both books offer a survey of the whole period, but Butler's book focuses on the remarkable career of Bishop Charles Pettit McIlvaine of Ohio, who presided over the growth of the movement in the 1820's and 30's and who also foresaw the danger of the Oxford Movement as a Romantic carrier of the liberal germ.

One curiosity of the current Episcopal Church is its official name, "the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church." This name goes back to Bishop McIlvaine. After an unsuccessful attempt to solicit subscriptions to a voluntary society like the English Church Missionary Society, McIlvaine proposed that "the Church is a Missionary Society, in its grand design, in the spirit and object of its Divine Founder, in the primitive commission of its ministry..." McIlvaine's vision of the whole Church as a missionary society was approved by the General Convention in 1835. In an ironic political compromise at the same Convention, the Evangelicals ceded missionary rights to the West to the High Church party, while taking overseas missions as their domain.

Guelzo's book is also in part a biography of George David Cummins, the obscure bishop of Kentucky who led the Reformed Episcopalians into schism. Cummins intended to preserve Anglicanism as an ecumenical Church, much in the spirit of the famous Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1888. The irony of the Reformed Episcopalians, according to Guelzo, is that the RE's, after an initial period of growth, became another small Protestant denomination, dominated by fundamentalist theology and episcopal personalities, down to this day.

Both books are written by Anglican Evangelicals who know the inner logic and language of evangelicalism. Thus the books fill an important corrective to most denominational histories, which have been written by the victors. Both books represent the best postmodern historical scholarship, sensitive to the larger cultural history but not embarrassed to admire the heroes and blame the villains of the story. Guelzo's book, in particular, is written with a partisan verve that might be labeled "prophetic" if it came from a liberal point of view.

For indeed, there is a prophetic exemplum in the story of the Evangelical Episcopalians. A century later, the Evangelicals re-entered Episcopal history through the renewal movements of the 1960's and 70's. My own seminary was founded in 1976 out of this movement, much as Kenyon College, Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts (!), and Virginia Theological Seminary served the nineteenth century Evangelicals.

As I write this, the Episcopal Church prepares for an historic trial of a bishop who intentionally ordained a practicing homosexual in 1990, contrary to Church teaching. As a similar ecclesiastical trial in 1871 was the prelude to division within the Church, this trial seems destined to lead to some sort of formal drawing of lines within the Church or to outright schism (who is schisming from whom, of course, depends on who writes the epitaph). This time, however, if the Episcopal Church loses its Evangelicals, it will hardly be content to live within traditional Anglican formularies, and the Episcopal Church of the

twenty-first century will in this eventuality become unrecognizable as a classic Protestant or even Christian Church. Stephen F. Noll, Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry

Norris Magnuson, Salvation in the Slums: Evangelical Social Work, 1865-1920, reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990, 299 pp.

London's 100,000 pubs in the 1850's, laid end to end, would have stretched a full thirty miles. Most pubs kept special steps to help children obtain the featured penny cup of gin. London alone had 80,000 prostitutes. Almost 370 sewers flushed sewage into the Thames. Cholera had struck three times in two decades. In July 1865, this city of three million people numbered more than 100,000 paupers.

Dr. Norris Magnuson, in his book Salvation in the Slums: Evangelical Social Work, 1865-1920, has provided us with a guide to the humanitarian aid of the era. Activities of the Salvation Army, the Volunteers of America, the Christian Missionary Alliance, and the Florence Crittenton homes for "fallen women" are discussed. These "slum workers", while busy "saving souls", also found them busy with obtaining shelter, food, health, employment and a wide range of social benefits. They also worked with racial minorities and prisoners and prostitutes. It is interesting to note that these "slum workers" managed to overcome race and class prejudice, and also supported feminism.

The War Cry commented in 1885, "If...[Negroes] lack in any particular the intellect and culture...of the white men, it is not their fault, but their misfortune, caused by the great and wicked selfishness of those who unjustly withhold from what they abuse them for lacking." The Salvation Army, it continued, intended to lead the way in fighting that kind of evil. The acceptance and openness toward blacks was distinctive in an era of "Jim Crow."

Unknown to many is the extensive role played by these gospel welfare organizations during World War I. When Americans chose patriotism over pacifism, the Christian Herald and the Salvation Army mounted large-scale relief efforts. By Thanksgiving of 1914 the Herald reported the first relief was on its way. Food shortages developed as the war continued, and the Herald called for readers to pledge \$3.00 a month to feed a hungry person overseas.

The Salvation Army in the fall of 1914 began to collect used linen for military hospitals, which was then sterilized and shipped overseas. The Salvation Army was soon overseas and hosting 300,000 men in more than 400 facilities in Britain and France. Salvationists wrote letters, sewed, and served doughnuts and pie, often while under enemy fire.

Dr. Magnuson points out that there has been little historical attention paid to the social contributions of gospel welfare organizations, probably because of the unavailability of their publications for scholars. Very few libraries ever received, or bothered to save, copies of the Christian Herald, the War Cry, and the Volunteers' Gazette. No other library can boast large collections with the exception of the Library of Congress. This is the reason why this particular book is and will continue to be of exceptional value. Much of the research that would be needed concerning this period has already been completed.

Extensive annotated notes occupy the remaining portion of the book, as well as bibliographical essay, and index. We can learn, for example, that the Salvation Army publication, the War Cry, is available beginning in 1881 on microfilm. Grant Smart

Book Reviews

Amy Oden, ed., In Her Words: Women's Writings in the History of Christian Thought, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994, 347 pp., \$18.95.

Church history has long seemed like a male enterprise. Two reasons for this were the lack of female historians of the church and the paucity of texts by or about Christian women. Amy Oden's book is another indication that both situations are being addressed positively.

She has selected thirty-six samples of writings of Christian women from the second century to Georgia Harkness in our own time. The selections are grouped according to four periods: 100-600 (seven authors), 600-1500 (fourteen authors), 1500-1800 (seven authors), and 1800-1947 (nine authors). Included are known women like Perpetua, Catherine of Siena, Susanna Wesley, and Hannah Whitall Smith; lesser known heroines are also well represented, like Blandina, Dhuoda, Juana Ines de la Cruz, and Jarena Lee. Her women represent honored martyrs, monastics, mystics, "heretics", "doctors of the church", and social crusaders.

For the periods since the Protestant Reformation, both Catholic and Protestant women are included. Protestant representatives come from several traditions, mostly drawn from America. African-American women are represented by Jarena Lee and Amanda Berry Smith. Pandita Ramabai, a native of India, is the sole non-Western voice in the entire collection.

Oden's intention is to let the women speak for themselves rather than using them to further a particular agenda. They represent their own views and the issues of their times and places in history. Consequently they lend color to familiar topics and introduce perspectives contrary to the perceived thought of the period. Her brief introductions to each selection provide biographical details and set the context for the writings.

Overall the book is a solid contribution to the story of the Church. The faults are minor ones and could easily be addressed if the book should make it to a second edition. There may be a few too many selections from the mystical tradition and not enough from the non-Western world in the modern era. A bit more analysis of theological issues in her introductions, particularly in the more obscure examples, would help students understand the writings.

The book works well as a supplementary text for Church History or Historical Theology. Obviously it could be a helpful book in a study of women in the church. The five pages of bibliography at the end of the book are a good historical resource for those wanting to research the place of women in the church.

Amy Oden has taken her place with the contemporary women scholars who are making the story of the church more realistic, by showing that at least half of Christianity's membership has neither been silent nor insignificant.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Paul R. Spicard, Kevin M. Cragg, et al, God's Peoples: A Social History of Christians, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994, 486 pp., \$24.99.

The authors present a church history in one volume which reflects not only current scholarship but also the story line that would interest contemporary readers. They call it a "social history" because they aim to focus upon ordinary Christians over the centuries rather

than be preoccupied with the “who’s who” lists of the Church. The book seeks to present the different contexts in which Christians have lived and how that affected their understanding of the faith. These themes prevail over developments in theology or institutional formulations of the church.

However, the book does manage to cover the important events of the church, and the really notable contributors to the story get their space. Consequently the book can serve well as a church history text in a survey course.

The strength of the book is its attention to the non-western peoples who have for centuries been part of the church’s story and who today are emerging with dynamic force in the life of the universal body. The missionary thrust of the church is dealt with sympathetically but with candor. More effort is expended than in traditional church histories on the interaction of politics and culture with the church in all areas of the church’s existence. Minority voices get more space than their lot has been in previous histories of the church.

The book makes good use of sidebars throughout the chapters to highlight individuals, events, and documents that are crucial to the story. There is a judicious use of photographs throughout the book. Each of the seventeen chapters concludes with suggested readings for more information, lists replete with recent publications along with standard sources.

Students have found the book to be interesting reading, enticing those for whom history formerly had little appeal. To Spickard and Cragg and those who worked with them (G. William Carlson, Michael W. Holmes, James E. Johnson, Cornelis H. Lettinja, and Roger Olson), our praise and thanks for a well-crafted piece of work. Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Ted R. Spivey, *Flannery O’Connor: the Woman, the Thinker, the Visionary*, Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1995, 178 pp., \$25.00.

Even before her death in 1964, at the age of thirty-nine, Flannery O’Connor evidenced promise of becoming a major figure in American literature. However, O’Connor did not earn her reputation because of the magnitude of her work. She authored only two novels—*Wise Blood* and *The Violent Bear It Away*—and two collections of short stories—*A Good Man is Hard to Find* and *Everything That Rises Must Converge*, as well as a few uncollected stories, some occasional prose, and her letters, published posthumously. Rather than for the quantity of her work, Flannery O’Connor achieved her status because of its essential quality: her masterful depiction of the vision of “a secularized, power-oriented world that needs healing.”

As Ted Spivey’s title indicates, he focuses on three interrelated aspects of the writer. Drawing from his personal relationship with her, as well as a thorough knowledge of her work, he reaches some useful and well-defended conclusions about her contributions to literature and Christianity. Along the way, Spivey identifies O’Connor’s mentors and influences—spiritual, philosophical, and literary—and seeks to explain how she fits into the Vanderbilt Agrarian movement of Southern writers of her day.

Perhaps most significant among Spivey’s contributions to O’Connor criticism, however, is his attempt to reconcile her theological and socio-political views. He seeks to

Book Reviews

account for her vision of the meeting between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of this world at the crux of sin and grace.

In her works, O'Connor tells stories of individuals who flee from God, only to be brought into violent, but redemptive confrontation with his Holy Spirit, often through demonic intervention in their lives. O'Connor's characters live in a "blighted" modern world, increasingly plagued by evil and peopled by those who are blind to the spiritual forces around them. It is O'Connor's vision that redemption and rebirth—for the individual and for his society—can be brought about only by an act of the human will which admits its own sin and accepts the grace of God.

For Spivey, O'Connor's power is in her role as prophet of individual and social renewal. However, he regards the "dominant" imagery of evil in her vision as problematic. Despite the fact that he acknowledges the necessity of diabolically-provoked suffering for the spiritual growth of O'Connor's characters and, in fact, compares her to Sophocles, Dante, and Shakespeare in her ability to reveal that connection, Spivey nevertheless considers O'Connor's work excessively dark. He suggests that O'Connor was imbued with too strong a sense of the destructive force of sin, and that she failed to incorporate sufficient images of "creativity and hope," even in her most profound work.

Spivey's discomfort with O'Connor's orthodox Roman Catholic sense of sin no doubt sprang from their essential differences about the role of spirituality in the individual life. The book is punctuated with accounts of their on-going disagreements about religion and philosophy. Nevertheless, Spivey lauds O'Connor's realization of her vision—one which depicts simultaneously the inevitable end of the world and the possibility of its new birth.

This book is a valuable contribution to the scholarship surrounding O'Connor's work and would, thus, be a useful addition to the library of any student of literature. For readers not familiar with O'Connor's writing, Spivey's carefully articulated approach could well serve to whet the appetite for great stories which "give Christianity meaning in artistic terms."

Beverly Self

Clark Pinnock, Richard Rice, John Sanders, William Hasker, David Basinger, The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994, 202 pp.

The Openness of God is subtitled A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God. Authors Clark Pinnock, Richard Rice, John Sanders, William Hasker, and David Basinger argue that classical theism has been so influenced by Greek philosophy that it has distorted the biblical view of God. In particular, they believe that the idea of an omniscient, immutable God who exhaustively determines all that happens is inconsistent with the biblical picture of God, with our personal experience of God, and with other dimensions of our theology and practice. They develop an alternative view of God as One who is genuinely responsive to his creatures, allowing them to participate in shaping the future, yet who is "endlessly resourceful and competent in working toward his ultimate goals" (7). They call their approach "the open model of God" or "free will theism," and they attempt to distinguish it from both classical theism and process theology. Their aim is to

produce "a theology that is biblically faithful and intellectually consistent, and that reinforces, rather than makes problematic, our relational experience with God" (7-8).

They approach their task from several angles. Richard Rice opens with a review of the biblical data. John Sanders discusses the development of classical theism, particularly in the patristic period. Clark Pinnock deals with systematic theology. William Hasker discusses philosophical considerations, and David Basinger concludes with an examination of the practical implications of their view for Christian life.

The starting point for their discussion is a conviction about God's love: "love is the most important quality we attribute to God, and love is more than care and commitment; it involves being sensitive and responsive as well. These convictions lead the contributors to this book to think of God's relation to the world in dynamic rather than static terms" (15). I appreciate this starting point, but I think the foundation of their discussion would be stronger if they began by developing a biblical definition of God's love rather than starting with their own *a priori* definition.

Richard Rice provides a convincing review of the biblical material, demonstrating that the Bible teaches God's constancy and faithfulness, but not his immutability as classically understood. He observes, "God's existence, God's nature and God's character are just as changeless as he could possibly be. . . . God is dynamic with respect to his experience of the creaturely world, his response to what happens in the world, his decisions about what to do in the world and his actions within the world. He is deeply affected by what happens to his creatures" (48). Rice examines God's interactions with humanity, including God's emotions, intentions, repentance, and actions. He deals with prophecy and with the "problem passages" used to support God's immutability. This chapter is very helpful in rounding out the view of God's nature that is sometimes flattened in traditional discussions.

Sanders' overview of the development of the biblical-classical synthesis is also illuminating. He devotes much more time to the early centuries than to the Reformation and later periods. Clark Pinnock discusses the place of the doctrine of God in systematic theology and compares the "open" model with the more static model of classical theism. He explores the implications of God as a social Trinity, a community of relationship in one Godhead, who extends to the creator-creature relationship a measure of the responsiveness and mutuality that exists in the divine being. Pinnock presents a balanced view of God as multiplicity in unity, free sovereignty which yet desires relationship, self-sufficiency which is yet open in love toward creation. In discussing divine sovereignty, he argues that God freely limits the exercise of his power in order to make room for the free decisions of his creatures.

Hasker's chapter on philosophical considerations is clear, fascinating, and challenging, but actually quite accessible. I found it the most interesting chapter of the book. He focuses on the issues of divine power, divine knowledge, and providential governance. In the process, he argues against theological determinism (Calvinism), middle knowledge (Molinism), and simple foreknowledge, in favor of the open view. For instance, he argues that God knows everything that can logically be known—but that the future decisions of free beings cannot be logically known with certainty. Thus God's lack of knowledge of these actions does not limit his omniscience, just as his inability to do logically impossible things does not limit his omnipotence.

Hasker's delineation of various models of knowledge and freedom is very helpful. I would have liked to see a fuller discussion of the middle knowledge option, if it could be

detached from the strong doctrine of divine providence associated with it by Luis de Molina in the sixteenth century. I would also like to see the authors address the concept, proposed by John Scotus Erigena in the ninth century, that God sees all of time simultaneously, so that he does not actually foreknow or foreordain but rather knows and wills. The authors prefer to see God as involved in temporal progression (although not limited to it), such that he experiences the passage of time as we do. These two models (middle knowledge and simultaneous knowledge) might offer ways of affirming God's transcendence without determinism and without having to posit some of the limitations on God that the open view requires.

Oddly, the chapter by David Basinger on the practical implications of the open view of God is the least satisfying chapter. I say oddly because the authors believe that one of the greatest strengths of their view is its consistency with our practical experience of Christian living. For example, Basinger states that they find "the status of petitionary prayer within this model to be one of its most attractive features" (162). Basinger discusses the open view in relation to petitionary prayer, divine guidance, human suffering, social responsibility, and evangelistic responsibility.

The value of the open view in understanding human suffering is a theme throughout the book. Unlike proponents of specific sovereignty (Calvinism), those who hold the open view can attribute evil to misuse of human freedom or "the outworking of the natural order" and need not argue that all evils are part of God's plan or serve some greater good (170). In this area, as well as in the area of social responsibility, the open view proves helpful.

The discussion of prayer is less satisfying. Basinger argues that the open view provides a basis for the assumption of most Christians that petitionary prayer actually changes things. He makes a convincing case that the open view is more logically compatible with petitionary prayer than either specific sovereignty or process theology. It is so because it holds both that God does intervene in the world and that God respects the free will of his creatures enough to sometimes refrain from acting unless requested to do so.

However, the practical examples are less compelling. The principle that God respects creaturely freedom leads Basinger himself to the conclusion that petitionary prayer for God's influence in the lives of others is problematic (161). Since God would act lovingly toward them in any event, and since he would not override their freedom even for their benefit, nothing remains for us to request on their behalf. Believers who are concerned for family or friends would not find this very comforting. Basinger acknowledges in a note that co-authors Hasker and Sanders do not share his conclusions on this point (200n16).

Moreover, the efficacy of petitions for ourselves is likely to be limited by God's desire that we become "morally mature individuals" and therefore his disinclination to "relieve us of the responsibility of doing or discovering what we can do or discover for ourselves" (162). Thus, while the open model is more logically satisfying as a basis for petitionary prayer, it may still result in a very narrow scope for such prayer. In the area of divine guidance, the open view is both freeing and limiting. Because they do not believe that God has a preordained plan for each person's life, proponents of this view do not believe that Christians must continually worry about whether they are in God's perfect will according to that plan. God knows what is best for us at any given moment and is willing to communicate that to us; we do not have to worry about decisions that forever leave us with "second best" (164).

However, the God of the open view does not know the future exhaustively, either with simple foreknowledge (what will actually happen) or with middle knowledge (what would happen in every possible future). God has only "present knowledge" (163). So the guidance God can offer is limited. Even what God believes to be the best course of action may not work out as God anticipates (165). Furthermore, since God does not override human free will, we might miss the guidance he desires to give us (167). As Basinger notes, "we must be quite proactive in our attempts to discern God's will" (168). This approach seems to leave the believer with greater uncertainty than the traditional approaches.

I am puzzled that proponents of the open view, who so stress creaturely freedom, would still maintain the view that God has a specific will for each individual in every situation. Basinger acknowledges that Sanders holds that God's primary concern in many instances may be that we make godly decisions rather than specific decisions (201n25). Sanders' approach seems more consistent than Basinger's.

Basinger's discussion of evangelism is equivocal. He believes that the open view motivates believers to share their faith because it holds that people become rightly related to God only if they freely respond to his offer of relationship. Our efforts might be critical in their choice. However, he acknowledges that not all proponents of the open view believe that people will spend eternity separated from God if they have not heard the gospel. He must fall back on the weaker position that "some may fail to relate properly to God at least in this life because of our failure to share the 'good news' with them" (175). The motivation that comes from the potential lostness of the lost is vitiated.

Despite these reservations, The Openness of God is an excellent contribution to the doctrine of God that takes seriously both the biblical data and our religious experience. The contributors have attempted to deal with all dimensions of the subject in a thoughtful way. They are to be commended for their integrity, courtesy, and courage. They have also done evangelical theology a service by exploring the implications of the incarnation for our understanding of God's nature. Calvinists will find this approach to the doctrine of God unsatisfactory, to say the least. Arminians will have no objection to most of the book's assertions, although they may wish to argue with the contributors' dismissal of simple divine foreknowledge as incompatible with human freedom.

The authors say that they "welcome the discussion [they] hope [the book] will generate" (10). This book deserves a close reading, and this issue deserves an extended discussion. May such a discussion be carried on with the same seriousness, and in the same irenic spirit, as this book has shown.

Brenda B. Colijn

Robert W. Pazmino, By What Authority Do We Teach?, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994, 160 pp.

This book is the third in a trilogy for Christian education by Pazmino and published by Baker Books. The first, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, explored the biblical, theological, philosophical, historical, sociological, psychological, and curricular foundations of the discipline. The second, *Principles and Practices of Christian Education*, considered guidelines for the practice of Christian education. The intention of

the second book was to draw upon evangelical theology to devise an approach in identifying forms and principles underlying the field. The current work focuses on the question of authority in Christian education. The author sees this last issue as foundational for the church today.

Robert Pazmino is a professor of religious education at Andover-Newton Theological School. He identifies strongly with his Puerto Rican heritage and what he calls an ecumenical evangelical theological stance. He draws from evangelical theology to which he has commitment, but is open to ecumenical sources and the wider dialogue they provide. The book is quite reflective of this background.

The basic answer to the question posed in the title of the book is that Christians are in partnership with God the Father, Son, and Spirit, and the Christian community if authoritative and transformative teaching is to be practiced. In addition, others from a variety of traditions may make important contributions to our teaching ministry. Pazmino affirms that "...final, ultimate, and fontal authority belongs to God revealed...in Jesus Christ, the master teacher." By what authority, for the Christian, becomes by whose authority?

The book's first chapter stresses authority of God and God's call. God uses human vessels to continue the ministry begun at creation and reaffirmed in the new creation in Jesus Christ. Teachers are called by God, commissioned by Christ, and enabled by the Holy Spirit. The next chapter considers the context within which Christian teaching is exercised; the faith community. It provides ethos and structure to the service of others in teaching. Pazmino finds unity amid diversity in God's mission that links proclamation, community formation, service, witness, advocacy, and worship. This is part of the partnership with God that he finds so important.

Chapter three considers the authority of one's gifts and person. The author seeks to analyze teaching authority in light of the distinctives of Christian spirituality. Giftedness is viewed in terms of a person's availability to be used by God and willingness to become a disciple of Jesus. Authority of the experience of God's grace through faith is the issue for chapter four. Such experience is thought to bring life to teaching. Guidelines are suggested for consultation with Scripture and the church are discussed. Teachers are encouraged to pay attention to the intersection of their "faith experiences of feeling, thought, and commitment."

The final chapter is probably the most unique part of the book. It takes on the contemporary issue of how to affirm Christian identity while entering into dialogue with a religiously pluralistic world. To shy away from this task is to risk the results of cultural isolation and "ghettoization." Professor Pazmino shares his own journey of discovery through academic study of the world religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Judaism, Islam, the Christian traditions of Roman Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Protestantism, and the secular faiths of Communism, Scientific Humanism, Psychologism, Existentialism, and Personalism. The author begins this chapter affirming his own strongly held Christian position. He feels that a certain openness to those of other faiths and to their teachings is necessary for Christian teachers to remind themselves of God's directive to love all others and because of the opportunity to learn some truth from other religious perspectives. He quotes such diverse Christian writers on this issue as Frank E. Gaebelien, Reinhold Niebuhr, Constance J. Tarasar, and C.S. Lewis. He concludes that if God can be known through the *logos* (John 1), the creation (Col. 1), the reflection of glory (Heb. 1), and the "first and last living one (Rev. 1)," Christians can discern truths from a variety of sources. He further uses

Acts 17, Luke 16, and John 17 for support. He finally advocates a position of affirmation of Christian identity for the teacher and a sense of openness to learn from other resources.

This is not a long book, less than 150 pages, nor is it exhaustive. But, especially if read along with the other volumes in the trilogy, it helps Christian educators face the authority to teach issue well. It is very much in keeping with Pazmino's concern for strong foundations upon which to build substantial Christian education. College and seminary professors as well as parish ministers of education would do well to read this book and wrestle with its content.

Eugene S. Gibbs

James C. Wilhoit and John M. Dettoni, eds., Nurture that is Christian: Developmental Perspectives on Christian Education, Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1995, 312 pp., \$17.99.

The theories and empirical findings of developmentalism, in its physical, intellectual, emotional, social, moral, and faith facets, have come to the increasing attention of Christian educators. Over the past twenty years, useful correlations between biblical/theological reflection and the discipleship/nurturing in the church have been found in the growing literature of developmentalism. Many in the university and seminary community have come to see this interest as giving attention to "general revelation." They, as this book, ask the question "How has God created people to grow?" Further they assert that it is reasonable to believe that educators would do well to work with God in the growth task, rather than to work against or oblivious to God.

In many ways this book brings much of the concern for developmentalism together. The first major section reviews the work of several major developmentalists. Jean Piaget in cognitive development, Lawrence Kohlberg in moral-decision making, James Fowler in faith development, Erik Erikson in psychosocial development, William Perry in intellectual and ethical development and M. Belenky in woman's way of knowing, and Lev Vygotsky in individual cognitive development and the social context are given review by experienced Christian educators and/or psychologists. In each case some integration is attempted as well as application to Christian education concerns. These chapters are prefaced with a very strong Foreword by Ted Ward. Ward helps to set the scene for these first several chapters. Ward himself has been an intellectual leader in the consideration of developmental links to sound biblical Christian education, first at Michigan State University and now at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. The perspective of all the authors of this book is clearly evangelical.

The second section of the book is a series of chapters applying developmentalism to the needs and concerns of varying age groups. Children, adolescents, adults, and families are addressed. Experienced professors write these chapters. Their material includes good and bad examples of teaching the particular age group. Also included are sample approaches with church-related applications and sound ways to use Scripture. Some general principles derived from developmentalism and age-group characteristics are discussed. In just about every case the attempt is made to integrate the various aspects of developmentalism into educational perspectives that are appropriate for the church.

The book's concluding section has five chapters that apply developmentalism to nurture by presenting it in the form of teaching methods. Discussion, lecturing, mentoring, group work, and the developmental teacher form the foci of these chapters. It is with these

chapters that some readers will experience disappointment, that is, if they expected detailed techniques to be set forth and explained. Rather the authors, again experienced professors, present principles and pictures of what developmental lecture or discussion looks like. They are more concerned, especially in the final chapter, with the teacher him/herself. Transformation of the teacher is necessary for that teacher to educate from a developmental stance.

This book is exceptional in its evenness of content. From the strong beginning by Ted Ward to the last chapter on the teacher by John Dettoni the book is well written. The research is sound and the applications ring true. This is probably because the authors are all experienced, well prepared teachers themselves. They also are persons with much church and Christian education experience. The book is quite suitable for use as a text in graduate school or seminary. It might seem a bit too theoretical for some undergraduates.

Eugene S. Gibbs

Donald K. McKim, The Bible in Theology and Preaching: How Preachers Use Scripture, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994, 250 pp.

The Bible in Theology and Preaching is a revision of the author's earlier work, What Christians Believe About the Bible, which was published in 1985. The new edition, like the old, attempts to explain "the basics of the various contemporary views about the nature of the Bible" (11). It begins with an overview of the view of Scripture in several major ecclesiastical traditions (Roman Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran, and Anabaptist). It then examines the role of the Bible within various theological positions: liberal theology, fundamentalist theology, scholastic theology (the Old Princeton school), neo-orthodox theology, neo-evangelical theology, existential theology, process theology, narrative theology, Latin American liberation theology, Black theology, Asian theology, and feminist and womanist theologies. The last four chapters have been added or revised for this edition.

The new edition also expands the bibliographical information on the existing chapters and provides an afterword discussing important recent books on the relationship between Scripture and theology. Most significantly, this edition adds sermons illustrating each of the theological perspectives discussed. The sermons enrich the presentation of each perspective and provide a good practical demonstration of the author's contention that our view of Scripture gives shape to our Biblical interpretation and our theologizing.

The book aims to be both comprehensive and concise. Each chapter gives a brief overview of the historical background of a particular tradition and its major theological emphases. It then focuses on the view of Scripture in that tradition, including such issues as revelation, inspiration, and authority. The various positions are fairly presented; each is allowed to speak, as far as possible, in its own words. Critical evaluation is kept to a minimum. The ample notes to each chapter provide resources for further study.

As a shorthand guide to the various traditions, the author has developed a tag or "bumper sticker" for each tradition to capture what he sees as the essence of its approach. For example, the chapter on liberal theology is subtitled "Scripture as Experience," and that on fundamentalist theology is subtitled "Scripture as Proposition." These shorthand tags are on target and would be useful for students new to the topic.

The overview of the various ecclesiastical traditions and theological positions is well done. The author effectively outlines the basics of each viewpoint and shows how its doctrine of Scripture is consistent with its overall theology. The grid of ecclesiastical tradition and theological position is an effective way to locate views of Scripture, since theological views cross denominational boundaries and ecclesiastical traditions influence theological positions. I would wish that the ecclesiastical overview had included the Eastern Orthodox tradition; the book as a whole has a Western and American emphasis.

The subtitle (*How Preachers Use Scripture*) is somewhat misleading. The expository sections of the chapters have not been revised since the first edition, which contained no sermons. The sermons do serve as effective illustrations of the approach to Scripture discussed in their respective chapters. However, except for a brief introductory statement in each chapter introducing the sermon, the book does not explicitly discuss the connection between bibliography and preaching. The book really explores the use of the Bible in theology and illustrates this with preaching.

The Bible in Theology & Preaching is a clear and concise introduction to the doctrine of Scripture from various ecclesiastical and theological traditions. It would be useful for pastors, seminary students, and all those interested in how our view of Scripture colors our theology and our preaching. It might be especially helpful for evangelicals who think there is only one Christian view of Scripture. The snapshot introductions to the various theologies are helpful in themselves, and the book could serve as a text for classes in theology or hermeneutics. The unique focus of this book is especially suited to helping readers clarify their own approaches to the Bible and making them more sensitive to the way bibliography shapes both doctrine and ministry. Brenda B. Colijn

Jim and Janice Walton, *Sent to the River God Forgot*, Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1995, 180 pp., \$9.99.

Sometimes in the celebration of missionary victory the tedium and struggle are minimized, but Jim and Janice Walton do not glamorize their work in this account of eighteen years spent as Wycliffe Bible translators with the Muinane people in Colombia. The writing style is refreshing in this simple, honest, and humble account of what occurred as two missionaries did what they believed God wanted them to do. A special plus are the constant ties of lessons the Waltons were learning with similar lessons the reader may be needing to learn as well. An example of one such lesson is the discovery of the need for an "in-between faith." Many people have starting faith and many help to celebrate a victorious faith, but what is needed is faith to go on and on in the face of every obstacle.

Not expecting miracles, the Waltons describe their wonder as they saw God providentially bring together events to provide the message of the scriptures for this isolated people. Their theology was challenged and their cultural presuppositions were upended. Their understanding of God was enlarged as they listened and learned, worked and waited.

The Walton's clarification of their goals as they worked is enlightening. They believed that as both linguists and missionaries they were benefitting the Muinane people, the nation of Colombia, and the international academic community. They clearly illustrate that what destroys cultures is not missions but the relentless invasion of the "civilized" world.

Book Reviews

Many questions about missionary life are answered for the reader. One can see that the personal battles were intense at times, whether the missionary was on the air strip shouting at God, "I want to go home," or was startled awake at night with a persistent voice demanding, "Who are you?" The question of the effect on one's family is answered in the positive responses of the grown children as they look back on their experiences. The question as to whether or not it was worth the struggle is answered in the glimpses of grateful responses from the Muinane as they began to trust Christ and experience release from their binding fears.

The concluding chapter is the most powerful in that it does not describe a glorious celebration when the printed New Testaments are delivered. Rather, the disappointment is intense as the expected excitement is replaced by guarded acceptance of the books by individuals one by one. The drug lords have invaded the area, and the people are being bribed with food and cassette players, or intimidated by other means. Only faith—a gift to missionaries and to all of us—could end such a story with the words, "but this is not the end." God did not and will not forget the river where the Muinanes live.

Missionary candidates, church workers, and supporters alike will profit from reading this book.

Grace Holland

Marge Jones with E. Grant Jones, Psychology of Missionary Adjustment, Springfield, MO: Logion Press, 1995, 173 pp., \$12.95.

From the title, one might expect a heavy technical book. Instead, this book is highly readable and intensely practical. The premise is that missionary work is truly difficult—not a new thought, but one which is easy to forget as we set goals and go forth to conquer the world for Christ. The number of missionaries having to leave the place of service prematurely indicates that this "may be the most difficult challenge a person can live."

Jones shows that the cost of adjustment is high and missionaries need help to make the grade. The journey is filled with surprising hazards. Though the pedestal on which one is placed while in preparation may help create perseverance to get to the field, a continuing attitude that one is special may be detrimental when learning to live with nationals. A passive accommodating candidate may create less conflict in training, but may be less successful in coping overseas. Being made aware of facts such as these can help missionaries with adjustment. They can learn to develop alternatives to attitudes of competition, pressure and the "tin cup" image, for example.

Concepts from psychology help with understanding the rupture that occurs when missionaries transfer to new cultures. Drawing on the seasoned insights of other missionary writers, Jones lists the causes of stress, the stages of culture shock or adjustment, and issues that affect one's ability to form new patterns, drawing her own helpful conclusions. The "language grind" is thoroughly discussed from the struggle with the missionary's "feeling like an idiot" to the listing of reasons why mission boards need to have a flexible approach to language study.

Jones is not afraid to tackle controversial and complicated issues such as bonding. Not ignoring the wholesome contributions to understanding such paradigms have brought, she cautions against a blind commitment to the infant bonding and incarnational models, calling for balance, honesty, and the deep underlying attitudes of a servanthood.

Other important issues dealt with are that of unrealized expectations and the long term view, the "goldfish" lifestyle and how mission boards can help, struggles with guilt of various kinds, and the constant threat of conflict with the home office, other missionaries, family members, and national church leadership. Not forgotten are the process of reentry and the satisfaction of perseverance, maturity, and achievement.

It is hard to fault a book so compact and practical, balanced and specific. Had it been written some years ago, a missionary I know would have avoided many pitfalls.

Grace Holland

Jason D. Baker, Christian Cyberspace Companion: A Guide to the Internet and Christian Online Resources, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1995, 210 pp., \$15.99.

Quentin J. Schultze, Internet for Christians: Everything You Need to Know to start Cruising the Net Today, Muskegon: Gospel Film, 1995, 160 pp., \$12.95.

The Internet is an interconnected network of computers. It is a powerful tool for interchanging information. The Net is itself value neutral, being simply a tool which, like nuclear power or the car, can be used for good or ill, and the two books under review seek to show how to use it to advantage. They introduce the Net, explain how to use it profitably, and indicate places of Christian interest on it.

Baker's volume is the most useful for the novice who wants to actually start using the Net. An initial tour introduces many of the topics covered in greater depth later in the volume, including the necessary computer equipment and some of the various features and services available on-line, such as the ability to send messages instantly to individuals or groups around the world (e-mail); to have access to other people's computers (telnet); receive and send documents (ftp); and explore the universe through text, sound and pictures (World Wide Web). Each of these topics, plus many more, is readably presented along with useful examples, including reproductions of actual computer screens which might be encountered in one's journey through cyberspace.

Schultze is also useful, but for different reasons. He introduces many of the same topics, but addresses less the technical questions of 'how do I do such and such' and more those pertaining to how the Internet can be useful to the individual and the Kingdom of God- how can one use this valuable resource for ministry. He does have a very helpful chapter, for the more experienced, on building a WWW home-page.

Both authors provide a real service to the Christian community by listing Internet addresses which might be of interest. These range topically from abortion to women, with numerous stops in between. Using them is at times frustrating, because the constantly changing face of the Net has made some of these obsolete before the book was even off the press. In order to accommodate the rapidly changing scene, Schultze has an on-line newsletter, and Baker is also available electronically.

Both authors warn that there are bad things available out there on Cyberspace, just as there is on tv or in print. It is also a medium through which ministry can usefully be received and given, so Christians need to be actively involved in it, claiming the Net for the Kingdom.

David W. Baker (dbaker@ashland.edu)

Kathleen Fischer, Autumn Gospel: Women in the Second Half of Life, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1995, 208 pp., \$12.95.

In a society that has made an idol of youth and youthfulness, Autumn Gospel: Women in the Second Half of Life by Kathleen Fischer provides a wonderfully sensitive, yet realistic, contrast. Fischer approaches her subject by first giving psychological background for the reasons that older women have been both neglected and derided in recent times—people do not want to get close to, or have empathy for, those who appear to be vulnerable, mortal, useless, and powerless. Too often older women, themselves, fear the aging process because there are so few known role models of successful, self-fulfilled older women. Particularly if a woman's identity has been tied to her physical beauty, the aging process can be devastating.

Using the gospel and the teachings of Jesus Christ, Fischer stresses the unique gifts of individuals, the all-accepting love of God, and the spiritual insights and wisdom of those who age in the faith community. Each chapter includes ample scripture references, illustrative stories and quotations from unnamed women at various stages in their life cycles, quotations from and listings of many related literary works, and a section, "For Prayer and Reflection," which would stimulate much interaction in a group situation.

Several chapters stand out as being particularly helpful to women in the middle and later years of life.

Chapter 2, "Grace in Transition," offers gentle advice on ways to approach and accept those changes in our lives which are inevitable with the aging process. Fischer compares making transitions with entering another country: "At the border we stand between receding landscapes and as yet unexplored territory. It is a spaceless, undefined place, sometimes called 'a neutral zone.' One woman calls this period 'supervising the chaos'" (p. 33).

In Chapter 3, "Tending the Inner Life," the author encourages women to create a space of their own so that a quiet meeting place with God can emerge, and to keep some sort of journal into which the recorded patterns and turning points of one's life can lead to deeper intimacy with God. Writing about dreams, she says, "In the Bible, dreams are a way of listening to the divine. When we fail to make room for our dreams, we lose touch with our interior lives and with richly creative parts of ourselves. We ignore the voices emerging from the depths of our being. This contributes to the emptiness and lack of meaning we experience" (p. 54). Fischer concludes by suggesting that group experience can enrich even further a woman's solitary spiritual journey through the motivation and support of one another.

One of the most helpful chapters, "Remembrance and Redemption," emphasizes looking at memories through "a new lens" in order to turn that memory into an experience of God's grace. This is especially important when a woman's past is recalled as a series of failures or tragedies. Fischer's use of the gospel portrayals of Jesus' encounters with women provides considerable insight into ways he helped them reshape their present and past through the compassionate grace of God.

This book would provide a tremendous study for women as they approach, or as they are already in, their second half of life. All pastors would benefit highly from reading this book, especially those who serve congregations with older membership. Janet S. Helme