

Book Reviews

John F. Balchin, David H. Field, Tremper Longman III, edd.

The Complete Bible Study Tool Kit

Downers Grove: InterVarsity

1991; 384 pp.; \$24.95

This volume describes itself as being written “for ordinary people,” in order to provide them with a “user-friendly guide to Bible study.” It seems well-suited for just that aim. The average church member would be intimidated by all of the resources available in a seminary library, and even a Christian bookstore can present a bewildering array of works on so many topics using so many approaches that one doesn’t know where to begin. Here we have a good beginning not only for high-school or college students, but for all students who want to start getting into “the Book.”

The three editors, two British and one American, are assisted by one other American and eleven Britishers to provide a book which is accessible and visually interesting. It is divided into six unequal sections, each with its own visual symbol. For example, the “welcome” introduction is symbolized by a coffee cup and is color-coded gold on a strip at the top of each page. In other sections where a topic is introduced which has been touched upon in the first section, there is a gold coffee cup cross-reference, and so on within each section. The others are: “studying the plans” (light blue with a magnifying glass), “cutting out the sections” (pink with scissors), “putting the parts together” (light green with a bolt), “key to progress” (darker green with a key) and “indexes” (gray and a pile of books).

The first section begins with a “reading programme” (note the British influence), directing you to one of a number of sections within the work depending upon what question you might have, whether it is “Where do I start?” or “How does it apply to me today?” There then follows a two-page table directing readers to the biblical locations for material they might know about but don’t know where to go to find, such as the crossing of the Jordan or Jesus’s crucifixion, or if there are particular needs, pain or temptation. There is then a three-page flow chart of readings from about 25 biblical chapters to provide a three-week bird’s eye view of basic biblical knowledge.

Part two gives brief introductions to the geography, history, culture, environment, etc. of the two testaments, as well as an introduction to hermeneutics, though it doesn’t use such technical terms within the text itself. Throughout there are useful and colorful illustrations, maps, diagrams and flow-charts easing the task of Bible knowledge acquisition. Part three explores the Bible section by section, starting with a diagram showing the various subsections within it and the pages on which each is covered in a helpful synoptic manner. The book is theologically conservative, though it does not shy away

from at least mentioning other positions, e.g. the two suggested dates for the composition of Daniel, though space limitations preclude discussing any of these issues in any depth. After all, these do go beyond the parameters which the book sets for itself.

The fourth section deals with theological issues such as the nature of Scripture, the message of the Bible and the use of Scripture in making ethical decision. The fifth section deals with Bible study hows, both methods and tools being mentioned, though a lack of specific title suggestions, while undoubtedly purposeful, and aiding in keeping the volume from being too temporally or geographically limited, might cause some frustration. It will allow the reader to approach their bookstore proprietor or seminary librarian with more intelligent questions concerning available resources.

The indexes number four. First is a glossary, not technically an index at all, but defining biblical or theological terms. Then follow subject, Scripture and map indexes.

In all, I would give this volume a "ten" rating in usefully doing what it sets out to do, that is, to make Scripture more accessible to the interested reader. It should be in all church libraries and would make a good gift for new Christians or for young people who are starting to show an interest in what the Bible is and what it says. The book could also be a helpful reader for a small group Bible study.

David W. Baker

A. S. van der Woude, ed.

The World of the Old Testament, Bible Handbook Vol. II

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans

1989; xi + 300 pp.; \$34.95 (h)/\$27.95 (p)

This work is a companion volume to *The World of the Bible* (1986), reviewed in a previous issue of this *Journal*. It is the translation from a Dutch work originally published in 1982. Though there is no preface detailing the odyssey of the work, it appears to have been updated in translation, at least as regards literature cited, which includes works as recent as 1986.

The book consists of three chapters by seven authors. The first explores Israelite history from the patriarchal period to Alexander the Great (pp. 1-95), the second: the literary genres encountered in the Old Testament, including secular and religious poetry, poetic stories, historical, prophetic and wisdom literature, and law (pp. 97-164), and the third: an introduction to the study of all the Old Testament books (pp. 165-289). These are followed by six pages of maps and a subject index. Interspersed throughout the volume are black-

and-white plates containing sixty-five illustrations ranging from the main tablet storeroom at Ebla (c. 2500 BC) to the targum on Job found at Qumran (first century B.C.).

In all, the volume is a helpful compilation of a plethora of information, usefully supplemented by bibliographies at the end of each subsection (chapters 1 and 3) or chapter (2). These include works in English, French and German, as well as Dutch. There are also three appendices providing useful information. One touches the vexing problem of the chronology of the Hebrew kings. Here the more recent schemes of Tadmor, Jepsen, Bright, Gunneweg and Herrmann are presented in parallel columns. Reference is made to Thiele, preferred by many conservative scholars (see L. McFall, *Themelios*, 17/1, 1991, 6-11). In the same appendix is included a useful list of synchronistic dates according to Kings and Chronicles, with relevant biblical references. The other two appendices concern the chronology of the Egyptian, Assyrian and Babylonian kings, and that of the Neo-Babylonian and Persian kings respectively.

The presentations generally reflect a readable summary of mainline Old Testament interpretation. While critical works receive a larger share of notice, the authors are not obscurantist, also citing more conservative authors and works. They spend great effort in debating, for example, the different theories regarding the composition of the Pentateuch, not ignoring the difficulties unanswered by the Documentary Hypothesis. This volume will thus provide a useful state-of-the-art (as it was about a decade ago) overview of the First Testament. Due to space constraints, individual books receive very short shrift, so one will soon be driven to commentaries and other sources, which are presented in the bibliographies. This is all to the good, and fulfills an apparent goal of the volume, which is not to answer all the questions, but to introduce some of them as well as places where one can go to find the answers.

While the volume will probably not satisfy most readers of this review on a number of interpretational issues, it will prove a valuable tool to see where the questions are still being asked and where conservatives still need to provide insight and understanding. The major quibble that most will probably find regards the price, which seems exceptionally steep, especially for a paperback.

David W. Baker

Ronald Youngblood, ed.

The Genesis Debate: Persistent Questions about Creation and the Flood

Grand Rapids: Baker Book House

1990 reprint of 1986 edition; 250 pages

Ronald Youngblood, Professor of Old Testament at Bethel Seminary's San

Diego campus and editor of the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* has provided a useful introduction to some of the key interpretational issues arising from Genesis 1-11. The topics, which are covered in a chapter each, are: the length of the days of creation, the chronological or non-chronological ordering of the events in the creation account, young earth or old earth, is the Trinity implicit in Genesis 1, did the lack of blood invalidate Cain's sacrifice, the existence of pre-Adamic man, the length of the pre-flood life spans, the identity of the "sons of God" in Genesis 6, the geographical extent of Noah's flood, and justification of capital punishment from Genesis 9.

The layout of each chapter has proponents of two opposing views presenting their own arguments, one view on the top half of the page and the opposing view on the bottom. Authors were allowed to read the corresponding article and to rework their submission if they so desired. What makes this volume most useful is the selection of authors to espouse a view they personally hold, rather than the too-prevalent practice of a writer setting up a "straw man" caricature of a view which she does not hold only to easily demolish it. The contributors, therefore, represent a diverse theological spectrum, though they are all males teaching in the U.S.

Teachers and preachers will find much of use, as well as much to ponder, and with which to disagree, in this volume. It would find a useful place on college and seminary library shelves, as well as in most church libraries.

David W. Baker

Dale Ralph Davis

No Falling Words: Expositions of the Book of Joshua

Expositor's Guide to the Historical Books

Grand Rapids: Baker Book House

1988; 204 pp.; \$9.95

The author of this volume was formerly a professor at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, and now is a teaching elder at a Presbyterian church. His academic background has served him well in his exegetical and historical study of the book of Joshua. His practical, homiletical skills are also evident in a work which makes this biblical portion not only more understandable, but also more interesting.

The book does not set out to be another commentary, with only the facts and controversies concerning interpretational issues. Rather it is a readable overview of the book which shows not only that the author has done his exegetical homework, but also his theological reflection. While this will not be the sole work on Joshua a pastor or student will need to consult in preparing

sermon or lesson, it is one from which both will benefit time after time. It should find a place in church libraries, pastor's studies and also in the homes and hands of reading lay people who seek to better understand God's working, not only in the past but also in the present.

David W. Baker

Terence E. Fretheim

Exodus. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching.

Louisville: John Knox Press, 1991.

pp. xii + 321. \$21.95.

The Interpretation series, as its subtitle suggests, is designed to be a resource for those who interpret the Bible within the Christian church. Each volume in the series aims to bring the meaning of Holy Scripture into dialogue with the questions and problems of contemporary life and faith. Fretheim admirably meets that objective by both explaining and applying the book of Exodus.

Fretheim believes Exodus is a "patchwork quilt" of traditions from various periods in Israel's life. Its earliest form, a relatively brief narrative, probably dates from the premonarchical period. From time to time over the centuries, the story underwent reworkings, culminating in a major revision and expansion by a redactor during the exile. Fretheim focuses on the finished product of this last major redactional stage. He only occasionally and minimally considers the historical background to the idea of a text — observably skimpy discussion concerning Passover.

The commentary interprets the book of Exodus according to its structure and language. Fretheim regards a central task of exegesis to be an examination of the text's literary features (such as irony, repetition, point of view) to see how they work together to form an organic and coherent whole. He discerns numerous structural characteristics that mark the movement of the book of Exodus: a rhythm of lament, deliverance, and praise; interconnections between liturgy and narrative as well as law and narrative; verbal and thematic links making certain narrative aspects prefigure later ones; and transitional sections.

Fretheim's remarks tend to be essay-like treatments of whole pericopes rather than annotations on excerpted phrases or words. He bases his exposition on the New Revised Standard Version Bible (in comparison with other translations). However, he knows the text in its original language and uses this knowledge as the real source for his comments. Since Fretheim finds few problems with the Hebrew text of Exodus, he rarely discusses text-critical matters. When a passage has more than one possible meaning, the commentary

does not always analyze and evaluate the various options: for instance, it does not at 3:12; it does to some extent at 4:24. The scope of the commentary often compels its author to simply select the most probable option for elaboration. The volume supplies limited bibliographic information, yet enough so a reader can do further study if desired. This documentation occurs mostly in a list of works at the end of the volume but also in scattered references throughout the book.

Pages 248-50 contain an especially insightful analysis of the continuing applicability of Exodus's legislation. On the basis of different social and historical circumstances as well as sharpened ethical sensitivities, Deut 15:12-18 reinterpreted the slavery ordinances from Exod 21:2-11, and Matt 5:21-26 extended the murder commandment in Exod 20:13. Consequently, we have an inner-biblical warrant for updating laws to fit the new life situations of our complex society. We are invited to extrapolate from the specifics of the regulations, in keeping with the goal of the original formulations: the best life for as many people as feasible.

In his introduction, Fretheim takes notice of theologians who view the exodus event as a paradigm for liberation from the experience of oppression. He insists that those who reflect on the book of Exodus must take time to listen to the interpretations which suggest that the Lord's salvific activity effects political and societal change to the external conditions of life, besides individual religious change internally. Nonetheless, Fretheim voices caution against allowing the exodus to function as a model in any direct or simple way. I would like to quote perhaps his most significant concern: "The exodus redemption finds its closest parallels in the victory announced by Second Isaiah and in the cross and resurrection of Jesus in the New Testament. It would then need to be asked whether the image of God as warrior has not in these instances been transmuted to such an extent that sociopolitical violence is now problematic in talk about the redemption that *God* works" (p. 20).

Frethiem presents richly refreshing perspectives on the character of God, particularly in the areas of divine sovereignty and foreknowledge. Yahweh's power could not override whatever obstacles might come along but had to go with what was possible, even when it was less than best. One concrete illustration of this was Yahweh's lack of success in persuading Moses to accept his calling and the resultant compromise selection of Aaron as co-leader (Exod 4:10-17). Another illustration was the necessity of Yahweh's guiding Israel toward the Promised Land on an alternate route which had less potential for difficulty (13:17-22). Likewise, Yahweh's knowledge of the future was not absolute. The utilization of conditional language with respect to both Pharaoh (8:2, 21; 9:2; 10:4) and the Israelites (15:25b-26; 16:4) implies that Yahweh did not finally know until Pharaoh and the Israelites actually responded. Moreover, words which Yahweh spoke about future human behaviors were not inevitably realized. His assurance to Moses (3:18) that the people would listen did not materialize in 6:9 (though it did in 4:30-31), and the elders never accompanied Moses before Pharaoh despite Yahweh's announcement to the contrary (3:18; note 4:29; 5:1). Matters did not progress as Yahweh thought

they would.

Only a single major unsatisfactory aspect of Fretheim's commentary surfaces — his slight preoccupation with a theology of creation, as he terms it, in the book of Exodus. He encapsulates the concept of creation theology thus: "God's work in *creation provides the basic categories and interpretive clues* for what happens in redemption and related divine activity" (p. 13). While such a statement may be true enough, the following is doubtful: "there would be no exodus *as we know it* without its interpretation having been informed by God's work as creator" (p. 40). Additionally, the alleged correspondences between Exodus and Genesis which Fretheim says demonstrate that a theology of creation is built into the very structure of Exodus seem strained and arbitrary (p. 14; compare the declared plagues-to-wilderness parallels inside Exodus and their supposed links with creation, pp. 175-76). It is disturbing that he detects creation theology almost everywhere in the book — even the parting of the Red Sea and the associated appearing of dry land become for Fretheim "*an act of creation*," a "divine creative act in the sphere of nature" (p. 159).

Overall, however, Fretheim manifests good sense and balanced judgment. I recommend this work to all persons who expound the Word of God.

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Max Bolliger

Freedom-Fighter: The Story of Moses

Translated by Christine Blackmore

Batavia, IL: Lion Publishing Corporation

96 pp., 1989, \$3.95

If you are looking for a Bible story resource to use in family devotions for children in upper grade school years, you may want to look at this book. It is one of four books published in Germany in the 1970's. The others are about Joseph, David, and Daniel. Translated into very readable English, they are now available in the United States.

Freedom-Fighter follows the key events of Moses' life in terms of his God-given task of leading Israel from Egypt to the promised land of Israel. It is faithful to the biblical account, while also incorporating historical information about the time of Moses and engaging in creative imagination to fill in gaps in the story line.

It goes beyond the content of Most Bible story books, but its focus upon Moses means it passes over much of the biblical detail found in Exodus through Deuteronomy. This abbreviation of the story enables the book to keep a child's interest. Our sons, Brian (12) and Dale (10), enjoyed the book when we used it as part of family worship.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Michael V. Fox

Character and Ideology in the Book of Esther

Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1991.

317 pp. \$34.95.

This book is the sixth in the series edited by James L. Crenshaw entitled *Studies on the Personalities of the Old Testament*. A brief introduction to the study includes the aim of Fox's work, which is guided by the question: "What are the persons in the story like?" He goes on to explain that he intends to "analyze character portrayal less for its entertainment or aesthetic values than for its role in imparting the author's ideas about realities outside the book." This introduction is followed by just over one hundred pages of commentary. This section contains nothing startling, but is thorough and solid. It offers helpful insight into historical background, literary elements and character development as well as elucidating the general logic of the narrative.

Section three is composed of a ten page discussion of the question of historicity. It is the best such discussion I have encountered for its ability to address methodological issues without recourse to polemical posturing. Students will appreciate several of Fox's clear, concise statements of methodological principles (e.g., concerning arguments from silence, p. 133 n. 7; and "could be" arguments, p. 136 n. 13). He builds a strong case against the historicity of the book, though he admits that the author of Esther intends for the reader to consider the book to be accurate and actual (138-9). Fox concludes that "Its story is an epitome of numerous occasions on which Jewish communities were delivered from threats to their existence" (139).

Section four concerns the genre of the book and again includes some very helpful methodological statements (e.g., on genre criticism, p. 142 and on fictionality, p. 149). While Fox would not see the story's original intent as being etiological, he does conclude that in the MT the story has been appropriated for use as a festival etiology. Section five treats the literary structures of the book including the major motif of feasting, and an excellent presentation of reversal as the major theme of the book.

Sections six through ten each deal with an evaluation of one of the main

characters (Vashti, Xerxes, Haman, Mordecai and Esther). These are helpful for conveying Fox's interpretation of the book. The characterizations are interested neither in psychoanalysis nor spiritualization for use as role models, but for the insight they offer into the literary artistry of the author who has molded the characters. As might be expected in this day and age, Fox does not fail to address some of the feminist issues regarding the characters in the book. Though he is sensitive to feminist concerns he is not offering a feminist reading of the book. In the course of his analysis he provides a common sense critique of feminist readings and criticisms of the book and its characters, but not at all in a chauvinistic way for he sees the women of the book as far more dignified than their laughable male counterparts (205-11).

Sections eleven through thirteen treat, respectively, the Jews, God, and the World. In these sections Fox explores issues such as the morality of the conduct of the Jews; the concept of Nationalism; and the absence of reference to God in the book. Concerning the latter he concludes, "This carefully crafted indeterminacy is best explained as an attempt to convey uncertainty about God's role in history. The author is not quite certain about God's role in these events (are *you*?) and does not conceal that uncertainty" (247). This represents a shift from Fox's earlier views concerning the Book of Esther in which he was inclined to think that "The author of Esther gives expression to his theological vision of divine control beneath the surface of events by structuring the narrative on the principle of peripety" ("The Structure of Esther" in the I. L. Seligmann Volume, Jerusalem: 1983, 303). Both perspectives could be true if one views the author of Esther as portraying God's activity as veiled behind circumstances (e.g., Fox's peripety) in such a way that the faithful will easily conclude that God has been at work while the unbeliever will only suppose that Haman has been overcome by an uncanny sequence of coincidences. It is the book's silence about God that leaves the reader to draw his own conclusions based on his own preconceived notions. In this sense one may not have to choose whether the book of Esther is "secular" or "religious" as Fox suggests (244). Rather, the author of Esther may be seen as intentionally leaving either to be believed, without himself being uncertain about the matter.

The result of Fox's conclusion concerning the author's ambiguity about the role of God is that Fox sees the book as being primarily about the Jewish people: what the world might expect from the Jewish people or what the Jews of the Diaspora ought to expect of themselves. While one cannot question the significant role played by the Jewish people in the book, I am still not persuaded that they embody the purpose of the book to the extent that Fox suggests. Is it not possible, even in the absence of explicit reference to God, that the book is inherently about God? Could it be that the book is not about what one might expect of these Jews or of the Jewish people, or about what the Jews ought to expect of themselves; but that it is about what Jewish people or any of God's people might expect of God? In more cases than not, the deliverance of God will come not through the parting of the Red Sea, but through a veiled manipulation of circumstances such that the unbeliever will be unaware that God has engineered yet another intervention on behalf of his

people.

The last section of the book is entitled *The Three Books of Esther* and summarizes what Fox had explored in detail in his SBL monograph, *The Redaction of the Books of Esther*, (1991). An appendix contains the author's philological-textual notes.

On the whole I found Fox's treatment of the Book of Esther satisfying in every way. It represents a holistic approach to the book which few commentaries are ever able to accomplish. His combination of literary, critical and exegetical analyses is masterful and provides a foundation for teaching, preaching or personal study in the book. His communication on methodological issues and balanced treatment of topics that are often exploited, both breathe a freshness into this book that any student should welcome. If someone can own only one book on Esther, this should be it.

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Iain Provan

Lamentations

New Century Bible Commentary

Marshall Pickering and William B. Eerdmans

xviii + 142 pp., 1991.

The New Century Bible Commentary Series is now appearing for the first time in paperback, with some of the volumes being revised and replaced. The goal of the series, according to the editors, is to provide a commentary "based on the Revised Standard Version, that is balanced and up-to-date in terms of both its scholarship and its reflections of the contemporary relevance of the biblical text" (back cover). Iain Provan has contributed the commentary on Lamentations for this series.

Provan begins his commentary with an introductory chapter that discusses the book of Lamentations' name and place in the canon, literary character, authorship, date and place of composition, domain of usage, theology, text and interpretation, and a brief outline. His approach is more to survey scholarship than to dogmatize; in fact, Provan says he has attempted "to be as indecisive as possible where matters of interpretation are concerned, in the hope that the reader will thereby be driven to engage with the text rather than simply with the commentary" (pp. 28-29). The introduction is a good example of this method. He concludes that the evidence is insufficient to determine the number of authors (p. 17), and leaves the matter of date open, suggesting

sometime between the sixth and second centuries B.C. (p. 19). He also leaves open the question of Lamentations' intended use, saying, "We are completely in the dark so far as this question is concerned" (p. 20). Provan sees the book's theology as involving tension between narrator and speaker (p. 23), and "reminds us in a forceful way of the challenge of suffering to faith" (p. 24).

The author's perspective for interpretation of Lamentations rests on three assumptions (pp. 25-26). First, we do not know enough about Hebrew poetry to base too much on variations in meter and genre. Second, unusual grammar or syntax does not necessarily imply a text is corrupt. Third, even if we understood all about ancient Hebrew grammar and syntax (and Provan does not concede this point), we cannot assume that every one of that day consistently applied the rules. These three assumptions naturally lead Provan to caution on many issues.

But despite the author's stated approach, he does a good job of guiding the reader to conclusions regarding much of the basic information a reader would want to know. He explains cultural expressions and obscure details, often citing cross references that aid the reader's understanding (e.g. pp. 49, 74). When Provan cites extrabiblical sources, the citation appears in the body of the text, a feature that simplifies the reader's task. He interacts with the Massoretic Text, Septuagint, and Versions, usually giving his opinion in textual questions, though sometimes leaving the decision to the reader. The author also includes a select bibliography of books and articles to guide the reader desiring further study.

Readers of various levels will appreciate Provan's work. College level readers will find answers to their basic questions while learning about new questions to ask. The more advanced reader who already knows many of the problems Lamentations poses will find a good interaction with the various views commentators on Lamentations have offered.

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John J. Collins

Daniel, First Maccabees, Second Maccabees

Old Testament Message 15

Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier

369 pp., 1989

D. S. Russell

Daniel, An Active Volcano: Reflections on the Book of Daniel

Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox
151 pp., 1989

This review is occasioned by the appearance of two popular level works on Daniel authored by two of the most eminent scholars in Daniel studies. John J. Collins has established himself through numerous publications as a leading authority on Daniel and apocalyptic literature. D. S. Russell is best known for his 1964 work on apocalypticism which is probably still the best available comprehensive treatment (*The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, Old Testament Library [Philadelphia: Westminster]).

Collins' commentary is a 1989 unaltered reprint of his 1981 volume. The series is designed to provide concise theological commentaries from a Roman Catholic perspective. The volume is not a detailed verse by verse exposition, but attempts instead to outline the basic message of these books for the non-specialist. The commentary is based on the text of the RSV.

I am ambivalent about Collins' volume. The comments themselves are not particularly illuminating, and they fall short of achieving the series objective of providing a "biblical-theological commentary." On the other hand, the author has provided a helpful, brief overview of Maccabean history and a concise introduction to 1 and 2 Maccabees which will be of value to those unfamiliar with these books. Collins has also included a useful excursus on apocalyptic literature. The latter is a less technical, lay-level version of the same material found in some of his other works (ex: *Daniel, with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, Forms of the Old Testament Literature, vol. 20 [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984]).

Collins is currently one of the most articulate proponents of the mainstream critical approach to Daniel. Readers who are looking for a concise description of the second century date for Daniel without the technical details may find help here. But in general, I doubt if this book will be widely used. My skepticism is not related to the author's late date for Daniel, although this is inconsonant with the convictions of most of the readers of this journal. We can certainly benefit from authors whose higher critical opinions differ from our own, as is the case with the second book to be discussed below. But in this case, it is simply a matter of pragmatics. Collins' volume is not well suited for use among lay people, and the commentary sections are certainly too general for use among pastors.

Finally, though this is a minor point, the binding is poorly produced. The unfortunate glue and paper binding gives the impression the book will simply fall apart in one's hands with much use at all.

Russell's book is intended for use in Bible studies among lay persons, either in a group study or for individual reading. Without claiming to be a commentary, the author has simply presented "a series of reflections on the text of Daniel" which aims to be confessional, homiletical and devotional (pp. 9-10). The book is conveniently organized into thirteen chapters (one for each chapter of Daniel plus one for introduction), making it perfect for use in a quarterly study.

One of the central themes of Russell's presentation is that faithfulness to God and obedience to his will may not necessarily lead to prosperity and security, but instead to persecution and suffering. But ultimately, God's will is going to prevail, and those who have remained faithful will participate in that final victory. This is indeed a useful summary of the content of Daniel, incorporating truths from both the historical narratives and the apocalyptic chapters.

Russell is, like Collins, clearly in the mainstream of current critical scholarship by assuming a second century date for Daniel. But he seems to downplay this position intentionally. After thoroughly chiding both the historical and futuristic approaches to Daniel, Russell emphasizes the book as part of the Christian scriptures, and attempts to present Daniel as a "paradigm, a pattern of God's dealings with people and with nations in this and in every age" (p. 15).

There are numerous quotes and illustrations from contemporary applications. For example, when discussing Nebuchadnezzar's "burning fiery furnace" (Daniel 3), the author shares the impact of his excruciating observations at Auschwitz at the close of World War II. The result is a sermonic, almost conversational presentation of the central themes of this rich biblical book. The whole is enriching, pleasurable reading, and recommended for those looking for Bible study ideas on Daniel.

Bill T. Arnold

J. J. M. Roberts

Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah: A Commentary

The Old Testament Library

Louisville: Westminster/John Knox

223 pp., 1991

Here is a volume which is refreshing to read in our age of commentary mediocrity. J.J.M. Roberts is a professor at Princeton Theological Seminary and is widely known and respected, both as a gifted Old Testament scholar and also for his contributions to ancient Near Eastern studies. This commentary combines his breadth of scholarship with a lucid writing style and genuine Christian insight. The series is one of longstanding and has produced such classic volumes as von Rad on Genesis and Childs on Exodus.

In general, the volume follows the format of other commentaries in the OTL. In a brief "General Introduction," Professor Roberts discusses the unique nature of prophetic books, the contributions of modern historical-critical scholarship to the study of the prophets and the previous scholarship on these three particular books. The volume proceeds to provide an introduction to each book, comprised of outline, date, text, and a section entitled "The Prophet

and His Message.” The body of the commentary contains the text in translation, in depth textual notes, and commentary. Like other volumes in the series, there are no indices, which is particularly unfortunate for this book because of the wealth of philological, lexical and theological information.

I particularly appreciate the author’s methodological balance. There is no preoccupation with form, rhetorical or redaction criticism, though all are used adequately and judiciously. Professor Roberts even states that a fixation on any single method too often “produces a mechanical reading that gets in the way of the actual questions a text may raise” (p. 12). The result is a traditional style, word-by-word, line-by-line commentary which in many respects serves as an example of all that a good commentary should be.

The author brings his mastery of ancient Near Eastern comparative materials to bear on Nahum’s description of Yahweh in Nahum 1:2-15. Roberts culls Babylonian and Canaanite theophanic materials along with intra-biblical parallels to expound Nahum’s portrait of Yahweh as “a jealous and avenging God” (1:2). Nahum precludes any “bogus morality” which may weaken the concept of justice by dismissing “vengeance as both inappropriate to humans and unworthy of God” (p. 49). Such theological sensitivity is apparent throughout the volume.

One of the most interesting discussions is on the crucial passage Habakkuk 2:4. Of course, this verse became the theological benchmark for New Testament authors when defining the nature of justifying faith (Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11 and Hebrews 10:38). Roberts argues that the masculine, third person, singular pronoun in the phrase “the righteous person will live by *his* faith(fulness)” refers not to the righteous person, but to the vision being given to Habakkuk (p. 107, textual note 10 and pp. 111-112). Since the pronoun refers to the vision and not to the righteous person, he translates “by its faithfulness.”

Some may see this as tantamount to striking a blow to the NT’s appropriation of Habakkuk 2:4. But Roberts is quick to make the point that the NT use of this verse is justified. Habakkuk’s meaning is that “the appropriate human response to the trustworthiness of the vision is to believe it and live in a way that reflects that faith” (p. 111). In fact, the translation “by its faithfulness” adds an eschatological dimension to faith. Living by the faithfulness of the vision of God is to walk in the light of that vision, even through the dark circumstances of this present life (Habakkuk’s confession in 3:17-18 illustrates the principle). So faithful living involves endurance of the present with assurance of the ultimate truthfulness of God’s word. This eschatological aspect was central to the author of Hebrews who quoted Habakkuk 2:4 in transition to his definition of faith as “the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1).

One final note. The philological and lexical treatments in the sections entitled “Textual Notes” are alone worth the price of this book. Roberts’ commentary will now take precedence on my shelf as the first source of reference for any textual questions on the books of Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah.

Bill T. Arnold

Robert Farrar Capon

The Parables of Grace

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.

184 pp., 1989.

Refreshing, challenging . . . might be the appropriate way to describe Robert Farrar Capon's *The Parables of Grace*. Capon is an Episcopal priest and former Dean/professor of Greek and Dogmatic Theology at the Mercer School of Theology on Long Island. Prepare yourself for a disarming perspective of grace; properly and provocatively placing the emphasis of salvation on God's effort rather than humankind.

Follow the Prodigal on his dusty path back to his former homestead. Should the emphasis be on the repentance of the lost son who changes direction and returns from the piggery in the far country? Capon insists we are going in the wrong direction if we see in this parable the admonition to repent in order to be reclaimed by God. This is not the thrust of the parable. The emphasis, says Capon, is on God's determination to *move* before we do. In short, lostness and death are the tickets we need to gain entrance to the supper of the Lamb. The emphasis is on God's work. Repentance is not the prerequisite to being found, rather repentance is the response.

A taste of Capon on the parable of the Great Banquet: "None of the people who had a right to be at a proper party came, and all the people who came had no right whatsoever to be there. Which means, therefore, that the one thing that has nothing to do with anything is rights. This parable says, that we are going to be dealt with in spite of our deservings, not according to them. Grace as portrayed here works only on the untouchable, the unpardonable, the unacceptable. It works, in short, by raising the dead, not by rewarding the living."

Father Capon is quite effective in placing each parable in both the immediate and wider biblical context. Highly recommended for sparking sermon approaches to these parables of grace. Accompanying books by Capon are *The Parables of the Kingdom* and *The Parables of Judgement*. Each are worthy purchases for the preacher's bookshelf.

Cliff Stewart
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(ATS class of 1972)

George W. Knight III.

The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text.

New International Greek Testament Commentary.

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans

Carlisle, England: Paternoster, 1992.

pp. xxxiv + 514. \$39.95.

George Knight, Professor of New Testament at Knox Theological Seminary (Florida), has produced a balanced, clear, and readable commentary on the Pastoral Epistles. The volume admirably provides for the needs of students of the Greek text, which is the goal of the International Greek Testament Commentary series.

The introduction is preceded by an extensive international bibliography (pp. xxii-xxxiv). The introduction itself contains a wealth of information addressing all of the traditional introductory issues (pp. 3-54). The self-testimony of the Pastorals is examined first. The personal references in the Pastorals make a strong claim for Pauline authorship, a position which Knight accepts in spite of its unpopularity in the New Testament field in general. The recipients, setting, and concerns are explicated as Paul's warnings and advice to his co-workers Timothy and Titus in their respective churches in Ephesus and Crete. The warnings are about false teaching, and the advice about proper Christian conduct and leadership requirements necessitated by the false teaching. The false teaching is identified as Jewish in character, rather than gnostic.

Knight rightly argues that the events reflected in the Pastorals cannot convincingly be placed in the framework of Paul's ministry as portrayed in the Book of Acts. Rather they are more logically placed after Paul's known Roman imprisonment. The uncertain charges brought against Paul by the Jews in Jerusalem and his expectations of release and future ministry even after he was arrested (as expressed in the Prison Epistles) argue for his eventual release. During this new freedom Paul could have continued his missionary enterprise, perhaps even reaching Spain as is indicated in early church tradition. Subsequently Paul was rearrested about 2 years later and suffered martyrdom under Nero. Knight thus dates 1 Timothy and Titus between A.D. 61-67 and 2 Timothy between A.D. 64-67.

The bulk of the introduction is devoted to the thorny issue of authorship. Knight rightly observes that "repudiation of the Pauline authorship of the PE [Pastoral Epistles] has become a mark of critical orthodoxy" (p. 21). He discusses standard arguments for pseudonymous authorship. These arguments are based on perceived differences from other Pauline epistles in method of communication, manner of addressing and instructing Timothy and Titus, warning against false teaching, ecclesiastical organization, theology, and vocabulary and style. Without trivializing these differences, Knight capably demonstrates that they are not as pointed as is often assumed. He argues that these differences are explained largely by the personal nature of the correspondence. Paul is writing assistants in ministry, not churches as in his other correspondence.

Knight correctly concludes, "...one should expect that the letters to apostolic assistants will be noticeably different in comparison with those to churches. In fact one should think they were not genuine if they did not have these differences" (p. 25). Knight also discusses the old theory that similarities of language and style between the Pastorals and Luke-Acts can be explained if Luke was the amanuensis or secretary of Paul. He argues that these similarities may be ascribed to Luke's extended companionship with Paul in ministry and lend support to Paul's authorship of the Pastorals.

The commentary's main portion is devoted to a detailed word-by-word analysis of the text (pp. 57-478). The text is well-written and offers sound exegetical insights about the content of the Pastorals. There is much here in lexical, grammatical, and theological study for the interpreter to utilize in exegesis. The commentary concludes with Indexes of Modern Authors, Greek Words and Phrases Discussed, and Scripture References (pp. 479-514).

In spite of its many merits, some weaknesses are readily apparent. The commentary does not situate the Pastorals fully in their Jewish and Greco-Roman literary contexts. Current advances in the study of literary genres are not utilized for interpretation. For example, 2 Timothy is interpreted without any acknowledgment of it being an example of the Testament or Farewell genre. Also, although the Pastorals contain several examples of the household codes or *haustafeln* (1 Tim 2:8-15; 5:1-2; 6:1-2; Titus 2:1-10; 3:1-7), there is no discussion of this genre to enlighten the ethical instruction in the text. Standard features of these and other genres represented in the Pastorals would be of great service in their interpretation.

Also Knight does not adequately place the Pastorals in their Greco-Roman social context. There is no discussion of ancient Ephesus to inform 1 and 2 Timothy, or ancient Crete to enlighten Titus. The situations faced by Timothy and Titus are not treated much beyond the narrative level (cf. 1 Tim 1:3-7; 4:1-5; Titus 1:10-16; 3:9-11). There is little attempt to identify the problems faced with either religious movements of the time or problems particular to each city. This is unfortunate with the many recent advances in sociological analysis of the New Testament proving so profoundly useful for exegesis.

Knight's use of secondary sources does not range the theological spectrum, resulting in a lack of representation and insight from certain streams of tradition. For example, in the current theological climate, 1 Tim 2:9-15 and its pronouncements on the place of women in the church has been thoroughly scrutinized. However, the interpreter is disappointed to find only the traditional patriarchal interpretation of the prohibition against women teaching and exercising authority in the church assembled for instruction. Knight does not dialogue with the myriad of recent interpretations on this passage, particularly those of women scholars. This same limited scholarship is brought to bear on Titus 2:3-5 where the husband-wife relationship is grounded in the analogy of the husband as head of the marriage as Christ is head of the church. In these and other instances the interpreter is not given a choice of interpretations, just the standard patriarchal arguments for which valid alternatives have

been offered.

Despite these shortcomings, which, if remedied, would have made the commentary more useful to the New Testament field in general, students of the Greek New Testament will profit by the careful interpretation of this commentary and will surely want to purchase it for their home libraries.

Duane F. Watson
Malone College

Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger

I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking I Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence.

Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992.

pp. 253.

The husband-wife author team of Richard and Catherine Kroeger offer extensive research into the problematic passage of I Timothy 2:11-15 in this work, *I Suffer Not a Woman*. The book is divided into three parts with chapter divisions.

The first part studies this text in its context. It investigates the Pastoral Epistles in terms of authorship, and location. The Kroegers target Ephesus and the situation there as the focus of the problem surrounding the passage. Particular evidence is given to the mother goddess cult and Gnosticism that flourished in Ephesus.

The Kroegers' hypothesis centers upon the possibility that false teachers, Gnostics, Proto-Gnostics, or some group resembling Gnosticism promulgated false teachings and "women were involved in telling stories which contradicted the Scriptures" (p. 66).

At the end of part one, the Kroegers, after studying I Tim 2:11 conclude the following: the command in I Tim 2:11 for women to learn in silence is given as the duty of the learner in marked contrast to the foolish women (II Tim 3:6-7) who are never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. The Kroegers contend that Paul in this passage arm women with truth so that they might stand against error (p. 76).

In part two, the authors deal directly with the prohibition I Tim 2:12. Their efforts seek to offer an insight into the lives and outlook of women to whom Paul wrote. An understanding of the context can offer a new interpretation. First, the Kroegers study both Greek grammar and vocabulary with particular focus on the verb *authentein*. Its translation is crucial to an understanding of this text. The authors tie *authentein* to *didaskein* for a clearer interpretation

of the text. They conclude that Paul's intent is thus to forbid heterodoxy or false teaching by women such as in Gnostic groups. It is a directive against women who are involved in false teaching or wrong doctrine (p. 81).

Rather, the Kroegers assert that Paul is calling women to proper responsibility in teaching correct doctrine as according to Scripture (p. 82). They look more closely at the verb, *authentein* which is traditionally translated to "have authority over" (p. 90). They offer discussion of further meaning such as "to dominate" (P. 91) and of contexts in which it refers to sex and murder (p. 95). Thus they lay out the other possibilities of the meaning of this difficult Greek verb. They allow alternative understandings of I Tim 2:12 (p. 98). The Kroegers then offer an alternative translation of the I Tim 2:12 text (p. 103). They note: "It is important for every reader to understand, however, that it is possible to translate this difficult verse in more than one way, and that the Greek construction lends itself to more than one interpretation" (p. 104).

In part three, the Kroegers focus on the prohibition's rationale in I Tim 2:13-15. They contend that these verses constitute a refutation of a widespread heresy. It is specifically directed against Gnostic or proto-Gnostic mythology glorifying Eve (p. 117). They present this thesis with research which details the history, myth, archaeology and fables from first century Greco-Roman thought and Jewish tradition. They conclude the presentation with particular focus on verse 15. They offer the idea that the "call to childbearing has something to do with repudiating false teachers" (p. 172). This perhaps refers to Gnostic ideas of salvation and procreation.

A section of Appendices follows the conclusion of part three. It offers over 60 pages of detailed research on a rich variety of topics surrounding the I Tim 2:11-15 text.

In reading the Kroeger's work, I was impressed at the depth of scholarship, thorough and detailed research and careful presentation of alternative and creative ways of interpreting this difficult I Tim 2:11-15 passage. They offer new insights into a most problematic passage. Their work is worth reading. It is up to the reader to draw his or her own conclusion.

JoAnn Ford Watson

Willi Marxsen

Jesus and Easter: Did God Raise the Historical Jesus From the Dead?

Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990

92 pages.

Did God raise the historical Jesus from the dead? This is the question Marxsen

attempts to answer in his book. One would think that in a little book of 96 pages, Marxsen's argument would be straightforward and clear. Instead the entire book dances around the question like a complicated choreographic routine that would make Astaire and Rogers green with envy. Marxsen believes that no final answer can be given to the question of Jesus' physical resurrection, since it cannot be verified historically. Such an inquiry, according to our author, is not important anyway. "What is and remains indispensable, however, is the present life of faith" (90). This means that if in a particular individual's faith walk, Jesus really seems to be alive for that person, then indeed he is alive for that person. Marxsen argues that the resurrection of Jesus is not a presupposition to faith, but a consequence of faith (80). This, it seems to me, is simply another way to say that God did not physically raise the historical Jesus from the dead, but if this faith has somehow changed the way you live, undoubtedly it must feel that he is alive to you. It is true if it's true for you; but it is true *only* for you.

I find Marxsen's book to be philosophically mistaken, and I find his logic often to be nonsensical. I disagree most sharply with his understanding of history that excludes the possibility of miracle.

Did God raise the historical Jesus from the dead? Don't expect Marxsen to provide an adequate answer to the question.

Allan R. Bevere

Michael G. Reddish, editor
Apocalyptic Literature: A Reader.
Nashville: Abingdon, 1990
352 pp., \$24.95 paper.

The scholarly study of apocalyptic literature has increased greatly since World War II, as the major works of Rowley (1944), Frost (1952), Russell (1962), Koch (1970 [Eng. 1972]), Hanson (1975/1979), Rowland (1982), and Collins (1984) will attest. An important contribution to this field came with the publication in 1983 of volume one of *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*, edited by James H. Charlesworth (Doubleday [Volume 2, *Expansions of the "Old Testament"*, was published in 1985.]). Prior to this we were largely dependent for translated texts on the two-volume edition edited by R.H. Charles (Oxford, 1913). (For the criteria of selections of texts in comparison to Charles see the introduction to Charlesworth.) One only needs to scan the respective tables of contents to note the advances made in the Charlesworth collection.

Why, then, this Reader? First, the Charlesworth volumes are bulky (over 1,000 pages each). Second, the intent of Reddish's *Reader* is different. Whereas *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* is designed for scholarly study, providing introductions and copious notes, the *Reader* supplies the texts, with brief introductions and commentary, but with almost no footnotes.

But the most appealing features of this volume are the selection of texts which it brings together and the arrangement of the material. Since it is Reddish's intention to introduce the student to this literature, he chooses to go beyond what we usually associate with Jewish apocalyptic literature (e.g., 1 Enoch, 2 Baruch, The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs) to include selections from the writings of Qumran (The Community Rule, The War Scroll, The New Jerusalem) and from early Christianity (The Apocalypse of Peter, The Shepherd of Hermas, 5 Ezra, The Apocalypse of Paul). Apocalyptic sections from the New Testament are excluded as they are readily available and adequately annotated in several study editions of modern English versions and in commentaries.

In arranging this material Reddish classifies the texts as "Apocalypses That Contain No Otherworldly Journeys," "Apocalypses that Contain Otherworldly Journeys," and "Related Works." This final category consists of "writings that have major similarities to apocalyptic literature but cannot be categorized strictly as apocalypses" (p. 14). Reddish places here The Testament of Moses, the selections from Qumran, The Apocalypse of Thomas, portions of the Sibylline Oracles and of 6 Ezra. This is a helpful arrangement; it gives beginning students a sense of the various concerns and characteristics of apocalyptic materials without excessive examples that might be overwhelming.

Teachers and those wishing to begin study of apocalyptic literature will be grateful to Professor Reddish for this volume. He provides a helpful 19-page introduction and a brief bibliography. Any who wish to understand Judaism and early Christianity cannot afford to neglect this literature. It is a significant part of the soil out of which Second Temple Judaism and Christianity grew.

Those who might balk at the cost of Charlesworth's volume(s) will appreciate the more affordable (but not modest) price of this Reader. Abingdon has produced a sturdy, sewn paperback that will prove serviceable to any student and to all who love good books.

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Archaeology and Religion Slide Set

Biblical Archaeology Society

1991, 140 slides \$119.50

We have come to expect high quality educational tools from the Biblical Archaeology Society. Those who have used their other slide sets (see Dr. Ben Witherington's review of their "NT Archaeology Slide Set" in *ATJ* 22 [1990] 87-88), and become accustomed to their useful Bible teaching tools will not be disappointed with this new offering.

This sixth set in the BAS slide series is unique in that it is devoted to artifacts relating to a single concept; that is, religion. The 140 slides are of exceptional quality and are more usable because of the well-written caption booklet by Dan P. Cole, a specialist in ancient Mediterranean archaeology. The captions provide detailed explanation of each slide and Cole does a commendable job of relating selected slides to pertinent biblical passages.

The slides and caption booklet are organized in a convenient four-point outline. The first 35 slides are entitled simply "The Gods." These are further subdivided chronologically: pre-Israelite, gods of ancient Israel and its neighbors, and gods of the late biblical periods. These slides, along with the caption booklet, illustrate beautifully the evolution of the mother goddess theme in ancient Near Eastern religion over 7000 years of history; no easy feat considering the wide diversity of geographical and cultural sources involved. There are also illustrations of Baal which are quite useful in explaining Canaanite religion (example, slide 9). A good number of Egyptian examples are included, but a few further examples from Babylonian sources would have usefully filled out the set.

The second part of the outline is on "Altars and High Places" (slides 36-49), which is further subdivided into pre-Israelite and Israelite examples. This section is most helpful for illustrating the use of altars at the famous high places of Megiddo, Gezer and Hazor. It also contains several examples of Canaanite standing stones (Hebrew *maṣṣēbāh*, or "sacred pillars") referred to frequently in the Bible.

Fortunately, the set includes a slide of the famous horned altar from Beer-Sheva (#45). Archaeologists reassembled the altar after they discovered its stones reused in a storehouse wall. This is the first large Israelite horned altar for animal sacrifice ever discovered and clearly depicts projections at each corner known in the Bible as the "horns of the altar." The altar was probably dismantled during the religious reforms of either Hezekiah or Josiah.

The third point in the organizational schema is on "Temples, Synagogues and Churches" (slides 50-98). This large collection begins with illustrations of temples which are pre-Israelite, Israelite and later non-Israelite. Selected slides in this group may be used profitably to illustrate the tripartite pattern of the Solomonic temple which was borrowed from Canaanite and Syrian prototypes (slides 51 and 54).

There is also a healthy number of slides on synagogues, Christian churches and installations for water immersion. The collection contains three slides on

Jerusalem's famed church of the Holy Sepulchre (82-84) and the matching discussion in the caption booklet is most informative. There are also several illustrations of Byzantine architecture and lavish mosaic floors in early Christian churches. This group will be welcomed by all who teach early Christian history.

The fourth and final part of the outline is "Objects used in Worship" (slides 99-140). This section is further subdivided into nine categories: incense altars and shovels, cult stands, cult vessels, standards and scepters, cult masks, objects used for divination, votives and amulets, synagogue arks and menorahs. These slides are useful as supplements to the previous slides. Fortunately, the caption booklet contains many cross-references between the various categories.

The four-part outline is convenient, though it makes for a few odd sequences. For example, the house temple altar from Arad is detailed in slide 46. But slide 55 portrays the altar in its larger context giving a view of the altar in the courtyard of the house temple. Also there are several helpful slides on the Kuntillet 'Ajrud inscriptions (comment below), but they are spread out in the set. So the slides are not best used in sequence. The caption booklet does a commendable job of cross-referencing the pertinent slides, though topic and scripture indices would have been helpful. My experience in using this slide set in the classroom is that the slides are easy to select and arrange to illustrate a specific point.

In conclusion, I should like to offer a few observations deriving from my interest in the Old Testament. I especially appreciate the helpful group of slides on the controversial Hebrew and Phoenician inscriptions found in 1974-75 at a desert crossroads town deep in the Sinai called Kuntillet 'Ajrud (40 miles south-southwest of Kadesh-Barnea, see slides 20-21, 57 and 113). This discovery has been highly controversial and will eventually impact our understanding of popular religion during the monarchic period of Israelite history. I have found it much easier to explain the complex issues of the inscriptions to my students when using these slides.

I am also most impressed with the three slides of the Jerusalem pomegranate scepter head discovered in 1979 (slides 118-120). Although the provenance and use of this small, ivory artifact (less than 2 inches high) is impossible to determine with certainty, it is probably our only archaeological find known to date that can be associated with Solomon's Temple. Its Hebrew inscription ("Belonging to the temple of Yahweh, holy to the priests," detailed on slide 120) is at least suggestive that it came from the Temple. (The caption booklet's discussion of these slides is helpful, but for more on this important and controversial inscription the reader should consult Nahman Avigad, "The Inscribed Pomegranate from the 'House of the Lord'," *Biblical Archaeologist* 53.3 [1990] 157-66.)

In short, most people who teach the Bible have little or no archaeological expertise and find themselves bewildered by audio-visual resources. This set helps meet that need! The slides are lavishly produced. The caption booklet is well written and informative. I recommend it enthusiastically to our readers.

Bill T. Arnold

John H. Walton

Ancient Israelite Literature in its Cultural Context: A Survey of Parallels Between Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Texts

Grand Rapids: Zondervan

1989; 249 pp.; \$22.99

John Walton, a graduate of Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati and faculty member at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, has prepared a work of value for those interested in studying the literary environment of the Old Testament. He does this by looking at ten broad literary genres from the ancient Near East which are also found in the Bible. These are: cosmology, personal archives and epics, legal texts, covenants and treaties, historical literature, hymns, prayers and incantations, wisdom literature, prophetic literature and apocalyptic literature.

In each of the separate chapters discussing the individual genres, Walton generally includes four sections. The first, following a brief introduction to the genre under discussion, is entitled "materials." It provides the bibliographic data for the ancient Near Eastern material studied, including a tentative composition date, a description of the manuscript data, the publication particulars for the original text as well as any translations, and a brief summary of the content. These texts come from Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Canaanite, Anatolian and Syro-Palestinian sources. The second chapter section discusses the content, theology, history, etc., of each text. This is followed by an analysis of alleged borrowing. Finally, a useful bibliography is included for those wishing to pursue any topic further. The book itself concludes with a summary chapter.

Walton has provided a great service in several ways. His collection of bibliographic sources of publication as well as of text discussions are very valuable, even though, by the nature of the discipline, as well as the tardiness of this review, the bibliography is already outdated. It does give an extremely valuable starting point for students and pastors, which they can supplement from more recent publications.

There is also material here which would usually be inaccessible. An example of this is the list, provided by Kenneth Kitchen, of 57 different treaty documents. This is necessary when analyzing earlier studies of treaty forms which are based on much sparser evidence.

Walton is generally conservative in his discussion of borrowings, for example following Millard and others that the flood parallels in Israel and Mesopotamia reflect two (or more) perspectives on one actual event. He makes the important point "that while similarities are recognized, the issue of borrowing is far from settled" (p. 40).

The book is very "user-friendly," as personal reading and classroom use has shown. It seems accessible even to the non-specialist, which is one of its goals. Walton, in his introduction, envisages three possible audiences: students of ancient literature, of biblical or ancient Near Eastern archaeology, and the religion of Israel and her neighbors. All these would benefit from the work, as would all interested in things historical and biblical.

For a book of this complexity, with different layouts for bibliography, charts, etc., the proofreading is generally well done, though there are occasional lapses in consistency in citations, and a cross-reference to the list on pp. 204-5 should be included under the "content" heading on p. 202. Also, the reader will find the second edition of D. J. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant* of more use than the first edition.

Many readers of this *Journal* will do well to read this volume. I would hope in a future edition we might expect indexes of subjects and citations, which would make a useful work even more so.

David W. Baker

Shanks, H. and Cole, D.P. eds.

Archeology and the Bible: the Best of BAR, vol. 1, Early Israel

Biblical Archaeology Society: Washington, D.C.

1990; \$18.95.

For news of recent archaeological discoveries in the Holy Land, the *Biblical Archaeology Review* has made itself one of the easiest sources to read, and, with its color photographs, one of the most attractive. Often the excavators themselves summarize their findings, and some have done so after successive seasons, enabling subscribers to appreciate how the view of a site's history is gradually put together. The nuisance with a periodical is turning through several back numbers to find previous articles on a subject. That problem is overcome to some extent by the practice of selecting some studies for reprinting in a single volume. That is what has been done in this case.

The editors have chosen twenty-three 'thought-provoking' essays published between 1979 and 1988, and grouped them in six sections, concerning Beer-Sheba and Sinai, the Judges period, Lachish and Arad, Iron and Water technology, and inscriptions. Each paper is reproduced with only minor changes, but 'After Words' at the end of the sections offer comments or point to other opinions. At two moments 'Queries and Comments' are inserted, containing letters published in reply to certain articles. Alas, color printing would have raised the cost of the book enormously, so the illustrations appear in rather dull monochrome.

Following the steps of the late Yohanan Aharoni, Z. Herzog argues that Tel Beer-Sheba was the Beer-Sheba of Abraham. After describing the Early Iron Age levels and related well, he asserts scanty remains of the 13th to 11th centuries B.C. are the only ones which could be associated with the Patriarchs, if anything is so to be associated. Aharoni proposed to set Abraham and his family there, because he found nothing older. As readers' letters quoted in the

'After Word' show, this is a quite unsatisfactory, and, indeed, question-begging stance. Such an essay read alone could be seriously misleading to the unwary reader, and the comments ought to have followed it immediately. As it is, they are separated by forty pages of Itzhaq Beit-Arieh's fascinating reports of his explorations and excavations in Sinai, with pages 50-59 discussing the route of the Exodus. After the description of an eleventh century B.C. house by the late J.A. Callaway, the second section concentrates upon two supposed 'high places.' Discussed at length is a site on Mount Ebal which the excavator, Adam Zertal, confidently claims as 'the earliest and most complete Israelite cultic center ever discovered,' and proposes to identify it with the altar of Joshua 8. Potsherds and a scarab date the rough stone structure between 1250 and 1150 B.C. Standing isolated on the shoulder of the mountain, this could be a sacred place, but other Israeli archaeologists disagree, and Aharon Kempinski's article arguing that the structure was simply a watch-tower is helpfully placed after Zertal's, with his rejoinder and a further letter from Kempinski. While the dating of the site is undisputed, another widespread assumption passed unchallenged, that such a hill site of Early Iron Age date is Israelite. This point is made by Morton Coogan in a paper summarized here. He agrees that the Mount Ebal site could have been a shrine, while rejecting as cultic a site further north where a fine bull figurine was found on a hill-top. That, he concludes, was only a farm. Its remains, described by Amihai Mazae, are very poorly preserved, and it would be hard to imagine anyone drawing a definite conclusion about its use had the bull not been found there. Of course, a cult object may not remain forever in a shrine, so its presence need not denote a place's purpose. Such discoveries fall into the illustrative category of biblical archaeology, those things which improve our knowledge of the biblical world, of life and customs in Canaan. The third and fourth sections bring more specific information for Lachis and Arad. David Ussishkin presents the results of his outstanding work at Lachish in the contexts of the Conquest — with examples of Canaanite temples — and of Sennacherib's attack. The second event, long known from the Nineveh reliefs in the British Museum, is brilliantly illumined by Ussishkin's recognition of the Assyrian siege ramp and its counterscarp, well-described here. Again there is a problem of dating, and Ussishkin's investigations seem to tip the scales firmly on one side, so that heavily burnt ruins and their contents can be seen as the remains of the town of Hezekiah's day, not from a century later. Arad is an Iron Age fort with a complex history which is set out here according to the scheme of the excavator, Y. Aharoni. Readers should be warned that this is not universally accepted. Discussion continues, too, over the status of the shrine with incense altars, standing stones, and an altar for burnt offerings, where potsherds were found bearing the names of priests such as Pashhur and Meremoth. Was this an acceptable shrine until the time of Josiah's reform? Other signs of unorthodox worship appear in graffiti scratched on the rock of tombs and scribbles on large jars and walls in an inn. They refer to 'Yahweh and his Asherah,' exemplifying the sort of pagan mixture the prophets so often condemned. These inscriptions are ex-

plained in the sixth section, along with discussions of the ostraca from Lachis and from Arad, and the pagan text about Balaam found at Tell Deir Alla in Jordan. A collection of clay tags impressed with ancient Hebrew seals brings the closest personal link with Old Testament times, for some of the owners named can probably be identified with characters in the book of Jeremiah. Ancient technology is the topic of the fifth section, J.D. Muhly synthesising knowledge of early iron working, which was spreading at the time of the Israelite conquest, and D.P. Cole explaining the structure and function of the water-supply systems in major Israelite towns.

This will be a convenient book for class-room reference, so long as the limits mentioned are recognized. Archaeology is a lively subject: new excavations bring fresh evidence which can alter previous conclusions, and new interpretations frequently challenge long-accepted theories. Disagreements and uncertainties are displayed here, and their existence has to be kept in mind; in themselves they can serve as stimuli to new research. 'Early Israel' as a title is meant geographically for, as described above, nothing here relates to the Patriarchs and their descendants in Egypt, their earlier history in Mesopotamia, or to the Exile, and this is certainly not to be treated as a handbook or compendium on archaeology and the Bible. With these conditions noted, this is a useful volume.

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Charles H. Dyer, with Angela Elwell Hunt
The Rise of Babylon: Sign of the End Time.
Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers
236 pp., 1991.

This popular book sets out two theses. First, that the ruined city of Babylon, south of the modern capital of Iraq, Baghdad, is currently being rebuilt; secondly that the Bible claims that this must happen in order for it, as the capital of a major economic world empire, to be finally destroyed prior to Armageddon in the end time (Rev. 18 — 19).

The evidence that 'the once dead city is being revived by Saddam Hussein' rests largely on quotations from Iraqi officials and the American press which outnumber references to Scripture in this book. The Iraqi President, like all his predecessors in ancient Mesopotamia, claims to be careful of a long historical heritage. Since 1977, foreign labor, 12 million dinars a year and more than 60 million bricks have been used to 'restore' a small part of Babylon.

The Sacred Procession Way with the foundations of the Ishtar Gateway, the Ninmah Temple, a museum, the Greek theater and a rest house have been rebuilt for the second time this century. The southern palace, including the throne-room once used by Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar and the Nabū-shaharê temple (not mentioned in this book) have been imposingly reconstructed, despite the qualms of some international archaeological conservationists. Half-scale models of the world-wonder "Hanging Gardens" whose location was only identified in 1982 (see the reviewer's *Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon*, 1985), of the temple-tower (ziggurat) of Babylon and a few administrative buildings are planned. Overall, this creates an archaeological or cultural 'theme park,' much enjoyed by the locals, much like those elsewhere in Iraq and in many places in western countries. The aim and scale of the work is at present limited to the eastern part of the citadel, leaving the mass of the city, apart from less than an eighth of the outer walls, untouched. The author reads too much into the Arabic word rendered '(re)built, restored, revived.' Moreover, since publication, the expulsion of foreign workers and the parlous financial state of Iraq following the Gulf War has brought work to a virtual end. No account is taken of the major flood defenses which would need to be installed to rebuild the city itself, since the water table is less than two meters below the surface due to seepage from the River Euphrates and has obliterated all but a fragment of the city of Hammurapi's day. Salination is already posing problems in the recently restored brickwork.

Dyer fairly states the claim of Saddam Hussein to follow precedents set by Hammurapi and Nebuchadnezzar, the latter renowned as the victor over Judah and Jerusalem. He well makes the biblical contrast between the City of God and the City of Man. Some claim that Saddam wishes to claim a rule over a revived 'Neo-Babylonian Empire' stretching from Egypt, Palestine and Syria to the Arabian (Persian) Gulf but this is largely media hype and hypothesis. Discreetly the author, and Iraqis, make no mention of the fact that in less than fifty years after his fleeting and passing control of this region, Nebuchadnezzar's dynasty perished and the city again reverted to dust.

This book gives a brief survey of the history of Babylon from Babel to the Exile and its fall to Cyrus in October 539 BC, but without new insights. Issue can be taken with his interpretation of all references in Isaiah and Jeremiah to the destruction of the city as still unfulfilled. He is right that the city was never 'fully destroyed.' Most scholars read the records of a number of invasions which virtually wiped out the city as described in the Old Testament. One instance, and by a contemporary of Isaiah, is Sargon II of Assyria, whose annals in 709 BC use terms reminiscent of Isaiah 13 [*Iraq* 16 (1954), pp. 173ff.], and another when the capital was transferred to Seleucia in 274 BC. It is true that a remnant still worshipped at the Temple of Bel there at least until 75 BC, according to unpublished Late Babylonian astronomical diaries. It is therefore possible that a Christian group or church could have existed there in the first century AD (I Peter 5:13). But, despite the plans of Xerxes and Alexander, the city itself was never restored. Dyer sometimes confuses

biblical references to Babylonia with Babylon.

The heart of this book is the assumption that Rev. 17-18 refers to a future destruction of a still existing physical (therefore rebuilt) Babylon. Yet others interpret these same references as a typical of a 'spiritual' and symbolically sinful city which is to be violently overthrown like 'Sodom' and Gomorah. The book of Revelation echoes the language of Isaiah and Jeremiah and does not require a search for modern equivalents such as equating the Medes to be there at its fall (Isa. 14; Jer. 51:11, 28) with the Kurds seeking vengeance! Surely there is no need to devote space to asking why there is an apparent absence of USA influence at the end-time.

All this is made the basis of a clear gospel challenge as illustrated by an incontrovertible prophecy. But prophecy can only be proven by fulfillment (Dt. 18:22) and this one is already handicapped by being only a partial presentation and interpretation of the facts so far discernible.

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Michael Roaf

Cultural Atlas of Mesopotamia and the Ancient Near East

New York: Facts on File, 1990

238 pp., 53 maps, 468 illustrations; \$45.00

Facts on File has produced a number of useful atlases which have an appeal not only to the student but also to the more casual reader. Previous efforts of interest to students of the Bible include atlases of Egypt (J. Baines and J. Malek, 1980), the Greek world (P. Levi, 1981), the Roman world (T. Cornell and J. Matthews), the Jewish world (N. de Lange, 1984), the Bible (J. Rogerson, 1984) and the Christian church (H. Chadwick and G. R. Evans, 1987).

The editor is a former director of the British School of Archaeology in Iraq (1981-85) and Associate Professor in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at UC-Berkeley, and the advisory editor, Nicholas Postgate, is Reader in Mesopotamian Studies at Cambridge and is widely published in the field. Therefore the book, while not itself being directed toward the scholarly community, shows impeccable academic credentials.

As expected in an atlas, maps abound. They run the range from physical to historical to climactic and include trade routes, archaeological sites and cultural influences. The latter reflect the real interest of the volume, as shown

in the title. Not only where did people live, but how did they live: what did they wear, who did they worship, how did they live (and die); in sum, who were these people of the time and vicinity of much of the Old Testament?

The main body of the text is divided chronologically into three main sections: villages (12,000-4000 B.C.), cities (4000-1600 B.C.) and Empire (1600-330 B.C.). Scattered throughout there are "special features" briefly highlighting such areas as archaeology, writing systems, science, technology, everyday life, and religion and ritual. There are also detailed site descriptions of twenty archaeological sites, including Jericho. As an example, the latter includes a small map showing Jericho's location in the ancient Near East, a contour map of the site showing its features in the Proto-Neolithic period, a photograph and cross-sectional drawing of the famous stone tower from the same period, a photo of an interestingly preserved skull from a period shortly thereafter, and a brief, one paragraph description of the early history of the site.

Not being a biblical atlas, references to the Old Testament are infrequent, and interpretations given (e.g. a peaceful settlement of Israel in Canaan) do not necessarily reflect the biblical account. There are indexes of places and subject, which allow one to trace discussions of Israel and Solomon, but not David, as well as a brief glossary and bibliography, both of which the reader will find helpful.

This volume, and its companions, deserve to become better known, and would find a place not only in church libraries and pastors' studies, but in the personal libraries of all with an interest in the Bible and its world.

David W. Baker

Jacques Ellul

Jesus and Marx: From Gospel to Ideology

Translated by Joyce Main Hanks

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans

187 pp., 1988, \$12.95

Before his retirement in 1980, Jacques Ellul was Professor of Law and the Sociology and History of Institutions at the University of Bordeaux (France). But he is best known among Western Christians for his numerous books and articles on religious subjects. He is considered a prophetic voice in modern Christendom, critiquing popular perversions of the gospel and the cultural compromises of the church. His critical pen slashes in every direction, refusing to be in the employ of any party in the Christian world. Yet, he has been heralded by conservative Christians, and his readership among the Anabaptist

and Evangelical families has been extensive.

If one wants to get into Ellul's writings, *Jesus and Marx* is not the place to begin. One would be better advised to read one of his books on biblical and theological themes as an introduction to his thought. *Jesus and Marx* is for those who have some prior grasp upon Ellul's work or for those who are interested in the topic of the Christian interaction with Marxism.

For several reasons the book in question is difficult for the average reader. First, it is a collection of essays published independently over several years and in different contexts. These are now arranged into a book with some additional chapters to introduce the whole subject and connect the articles around the theme. Secondly, Ellul is speaking primarily from his European setting. He is responding to authors and issues that are not familiar to most American readers. His observations and criticisms on liberation theology in general, however, would connect with many American readers. Thirdly, Ellul wrote the material for this book at the end of his career. He draws freely upon themes spelled out previously in his earlier publications. Thus one needs to know something of his previous thought to understand this book. The translator's preface is very helpful in this regard in setting the book in the context of Ellul's thought.

Once past these difficulties, however, the book is well worth the reading effort. Its central theme is the impossibility of having a Marxist Christianity. Ellul examines several attempts to blend the two and shows that in the end they are neither true Marxism nor true Christianity. For Ellul, the real problem in such an attempted synthesis is that of ideology. Once a powerful idea is turned into a popular system with a fixed agenda it binds people rather than frees them. Ideas become more important than the humans they are supposed to help. This can happen to the Christian faith as well as any other belief system, religious or political.

Ellul scores Marxism as an ideology because it suppresses the very people it aims to liberate, often becoming more brutal than the oppression from which it set out to liberate them. Attempting a Christian justification for this "liberating" agenda only complicates the problem, for it demotes Christianity to an ideology. In the process, Christianity is reduced to a subjective core established according to Marxist presuppositions. Hence, it ceases to be vital, biblical Christianity.

Ellul does not set up capitalist Christianity as the good guys to oppose the Marxist Christian bad guys. For Ellul, much of Western Christianity has also made the gospel into an ideology. This "rightest ideology" makes Christians comfortable while neglecting the social ills of the day. While the perversion might be "more Christian" in theory, it is equally an ideology in practice.

Ellul's solution is to call for Christian anarchy (chapter 7). By this he does not mean chaos in society. Rather, he wants to see a potent Christian gospel which will not allow itself to be used by any party to further non-Christian agendas. Christianity must resist all attempts to force it into an ideological mold. The gospel must be free to challenge personal preference and cultural

values and norms. Christianity, like its Lord, is ever an itinerant. It seeks no place to lay its head, for then it would be beholden to its host. Only a nonaligned Christianity can proclaim a free gospel to all.

Once more in *Jesus and Marx* we hear Ellul's prophetic voice.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Norman L. Geisler, Ronald M. Brooks
Come Let Us Reason: An Introduction to Logical Thinking
Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990.

The question of whether there is a Christian approach to academic subjects is an intriguing one, and disagreements on the issue are common. Christian schools and colleges sometimes operate on the conviction that there can be a Christian view of, say, biology or history. On the assumption that Christian views of academic subjects are possible, Christian textbooks ought also to be possible. Norman Geisler and Ronald Brooks have written *Come Let Us Reason* as a Christian textbook in logic or critical thinking. Students, faculty, and other interested readers will find the book attractive or repellant on the basis of their position on the possibility of a Christian pedagogy of logic.

It is, I think, the content rather than the form of thought that makes it Christian. Logic, however, is more concerned with the form of thought than with its specific content. In fact, logic texts often employ essentially meaningless examples to make the point that they teach the proper forms of thinking, and not the specific content of thinking. Thus, we might read an example like: "All igloos are green. This is an igloo. Therefore, this is green." Everyone knows igloos are not green, and it doesn't matter. The point is to demonstrate that terms in an argument must stand in particular relationships to one another in order for particular conclusions to be drawn in a reliable fashion, which is a formal consideration.

If logic is a study of forms of thought, then it would not be surprising if a Christian logic textbook ended up being Christian more in the content of the logical examples it employed than in the form of the logic it taught. And *Come Let Us Reason* is, in this respect, not surprising. Geisler and Brooks cover the same topics covered in other introductory logic and critical thinking texts, and adhere to the same views of the topics they cover (syllogisms, fallacies, causal reasoning, analogy) as would most other Christian or non-Christian logicians. In other words, this book is *not* an effort to invent a Christian logic which runs contrary to Aristotelian tenets on the relationships among propositions in an argument. It is an effort to provide a textbook in which

the content — largely the examples, illustrations, and exercises — is, “Christian.” It is also, for this reason, a text written specifically and probably solely for use in Christian institutions. The rationale for the text is that Christians must understand logic in order to do theology well (“the logic of God”), to reason well, and to defend Christian belief. But, again, understanding logic is more a formal than a material concern.

In its presentation of logical principles, *Come Let Us Reason* is sound. It covers accurately a large number of the topics one would reasonably wish to address in a basic logic course: syllogistic reasoning, formal and informal fallacies, induction, scientific (causal) reasoning. The presentation is as simple as the material will allow, the writing clear, and the tone familiar. A conscious, almost self-conscious effort has been made to make the book “user friendly.” For instance, after explaining a point on syllogistic relationships the authors remark, “To those who expected this to be difficult, we hate to disappoint you, but that’s it” (22). Some students, and some instructors, may find the tone condescending. Though the book is 232 pages long, the substantive discussion of logic takes only 180 pages. As a result, some topics — notably induction — get short shrift.

The book’s most striking feature is its effort to employ, as Geisler puts it, “theological and apologetic illustrations throughout” (8). The majority of examples, illustrations, and exercises in the book have some connection with the Bible, theology, or apologetic debate. Thus, the illustration of a syllogism with an illicit major term runs: “All who are trusting in Jesus are saved. Harry is not trusting in Jesus. Harry is not saved” (82). Or, this illustration of the difference between logical and literary forms is advanced: “Literary Form: Sin characterizes all human beings. Logical form: All human beings are (in the category of) sinful beings” (121). In one exercise students are asked to test this syllogism for fallacies: “If Deism is true, then the Bible cannot be true. Deism is false. So, the Bible can be true” (88). Mormons, Christian Scientists, atheists, David Hume, and evolutionists are targets of refutation in many examples. Thus, the deaths of patients at a “Christian Science maternity center in Los Angeles” illustrates the “method of difference” as a test of hypotheses, but also serves to refute a basic tenet of Christian Science (156).

True to the form and the content of the work in question, I end with three hypothetical propositions with Christian character: (1) If you teach an introductory logic or apologetics course at a Christian institution, or even if you simply want to brush up on basic logic, then *Come Let Us Reason* is worth your consideration. (2) If the idea of infusing Christian content into a college-level logic text is appealing to you, then this book is highly recommended. (3) If the whole idea strikes you as odd or contrived, then *Come Let Us Reason* will likely only confirm your suspicions.

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William W. Klein

The New Chosen People: A Corporate View of Election

Grand Rapids: Academic Books

1990, 314 pp.

In *The New Chosen People*, William Klein develops a lengthy and sometimes tedious discussion of the long-debated doctrine of election. Klein hopes to offer an approach that will help in the debate between Calvinists and Arminians. For, in Klein's words: "In spite of a long history of interpretation, no consensus about election has emerged" (p. 19). He does not, however, try to develop a doctrine of election systematically. Instead, his approach is strictly biblical. Klein's focus is an analysis of New Testament texts which speak of God's election (pp. 20-21).

Klein's basic assertion is that the understanding of election in the Bible is corporate. This notion may help the current debate between Calvinists and Arminians because "[t]he typical Calvinist and Arminian formulations focus on God's choice of individuals for salvation" (p. 21). Such formulations miss the point, maintains Klein, since "[e]lection concerns the church — the corporate body of Christians" (p. 21).

Klein begins by treating background texts to the New Testament. These texts include the Old Testament (in which Klein spends the bulk of his effort in this section), the Qumran scrolls, the Apocrypha, the Pseudepigrapha, and the rabbinic materials. Klein's analysis of these materials leads him to the conclusion that election to salvation is corporate and God's election of individuals applies to specific tasks and ministries within the covenant community. That is to say, God chose Israel as a people "to bear the name of God." Patriarchs, priests, kings, and prophets were chosen for functional tasks within the community of Israel (p. 42). Klein's analysis of the New Testament (the largest section of the book) leads him to the same conclusion, except that the chosen community is the church. Klein asserts: "I conclude, first of all, that the New Testament writers address salvific election in primarily, if not exclusively, corporate terms" (p. 257).

Wading through Klein's analysis of the pertinent Scripture passages is often tedious. His apparent desire to be thorough might be described as overkill. Some passages of Scripture are treated in brief paragraphs. At best, the analysis in the short sections is straight-forward and needs little treatment. At worst, some of the texts are addressed superficially. Some passages addressed could have been excluded without any damage to the argument Klein carefully constructs.

While Klein claims that his methodology is not systematic, but biblical (p. 20), he systematically develops the biblical texts. However, Klein is not "proof-texting." That is, Klein does not line up those texts which support his position. Rather, he makes a fair attempt to treat all the appropriate passages reinterpreted in corporate terms. One might wonder if Klein is not taking the notion of corporate solidarity and applying it to the election texts. To assert, as Klein does, that this approach offers something different to the typical Calvinist-

Arminian debate seems fair; however, I suspect that Arminians will find Klein's position more congenial than Calvinists. At times, Klein's approach strikes a Wesleyan chord when he argues for a notion that sounds like prevenient grace (pp. 156, 282). Klein continually argues for the free choice of the individual. He maintains the integrity of the election texts by applying them to the community of faith. In so doing, Klein is able to maintain the doctrine of predestination without reducing it to the notion of God's foreknowledge of individuals. Speaking in corporate terms, predestination speaks, not of God's choice of individuals for salvation, but of an eschatological goal for God's people. Arminians might find in Klein's work a source of refinement for the murky portions of their position. It would be unfair, however, to leave the discussion there. Certainly, Klein would want to invite Calvinists to consider his approach as a way to maintain the doctrine of election while making room for human free-will.

The New Chosen People is a well-planned and a well-developed work. What I find rather exciting about the book is that it is part of a renewed emphasis in theology that is decisively ecclesiological. This, it seems to me, has possibilities.

Matthew H. Bevere

Anne Borrowdale

Distorted Images: Misunderstandings Between Men and Women

Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991

152 pages; \$11.99

Sexism is evil, and Christian theologians are remiss until they say so. Not only must theologians address the evil of sexism at large, but specific attention must be given to sexism within the church. Anne Borrowdale posits that a responsible theological study of gender issues should include a careful, respectful dialogue with sociological and feminist perspectives. *Distorted Images* is a beginning, introducing the reader to several themes which integrate feminism and Christian theology. The book discusses several common feminist/Christian themes, including the vulnerability of God, masculinity and femininity in work and spirituality, masculine and feminine imagery of God, and inclusive language. The strongest and perhaps most valuable theme of the book, however, is the link between patriarchy and violence against women. Borrowdale's most convincing arguments center around the need for Christians to acknowledge the logical conclusion of patriarchalism, which is the dehumanization of and violence against women. Until theologians take this reality seriously, the church will continue to perpetrate the oppression of women (6).

Church-sanctioned sexism simultaneously denigrates and idolizes both men and women. By stressing male as norm and the "otherness" of women, the supposed inability of men and women to understand one another, and a complementarity view of gender differences, the church promotes distorted images of masculinity and femininity.

An example of such distortion is the way traditional, patriarchal Christian teachings place women on a pedestal in the home, where they are to be paragons of nurturance, love, stability, and fidelity. Women are thought to be "naturally" suited to caregiving roles. Yet those same women are irrationally shunned and excluded from larger areas of caregiving leadership in the church, for fear of female domination, and fear of women's "irresistible" sexuality (27-30). Borrowdale cites one bishop who rejected women's ordination because "women, unlike men, radiate sex, and their temperament is inappropriate in church . . . Their ordination would introduce distractions and earthiness into worship" (28).

Men are also denigrated by the traditional anti-feminist view because it contemptuously assumes that men are psychologically weak, needing to be catered to by women, and that men are incapable of relating to women as equal human beings (39). The belief that men have uncontrollable sexual urges takes away men's responsibility for their own sexual behavior. The final outcome of such thinking is to excuse sexual harassment, pornography, and sexual violence, and to blame women for their own victimization. The fact that children today are routinely taught to fear men, even close relatives, as potential abusers, is further evidence of how sexist assumptions about male sexuality harms men.

Borrowdale's strongest indictment against the church concerns sexual abuse and pornography. Even though many Christians are at the forefront of the war against pornography, the church usually fails to set pornography in its patriarchal context. It fails to ask *why* male sexuality is expressed within such a violent, woman-hating form (90). The failure to adequately address the power and gender issues that feed child sexual abuse is evident in many Christian approaches to the subject. Forgiveness of the offender and a tendency to view sexual abuse as an individual sickness rather than a societal issue, is problematic (113). Because socially sanctioned misogyny "comes out most clearly in feminist studies of pornography and rape," Christians cannot afford to ignore feminist perspectives when addressing the evils of pornography and sexual abuse (24). Borrowdale's chapter on pornography and abuse, "A Cheap Way to Buy a Woman," deserves to be read by every adult Christian in North America.

One of the fears many evangelicals have about feminism is that it might blur necessary distinctions between masculinity and femininity, leading to confused sexual identity. Some of the book's most stimulating discussion concerns the nature of masculinity and femininity. According to Borrowdale, Western dualistic thought has artificially polarized masculinity and femininity, portraying them as extreme opposites. A more realistic and humane view focuses on women's and men's common, shared humanity, without blowing gender differences out of proportion, or attributing human traits to gender.

Borrowdale rejects gender labels for personality traits that are shared by both sexes, such as gentleness, courage, passivity, and assertiveness. She questions Jung's description of the "masculine" animus and female "anima" because it places male and female as opposites (26). The commonly held view that women need to get in touch with their "masculine" side, and men with their "femininity," is also challenged, since much that passes for gender traits in that frame of reference is simply human. Individuals experience their sexuality in distinct, unique ways. To try to define masculinity or femininity according to a rigid list of personality traits is an exercise in futility, since there is a rich variance between one healthy woman or man and the next, in experiencing life in a gendered body.

How then should the church redefine masculinity and femininity? "Boys and men need to be able to establish a masculine identity which is not based on devaluing the feminine" (34). All too often, Christian books that discuss gender identity do so in ways that define masculinity as being "other than" female, or in ways that attribute to masculinity what are actually mature human traits, such as strength, courage, fidelity, and resourcefulness (35). James Dobson, for example, writes that women are inherently romantic. Women, unlike men, need romance because they need warmth and kindness. Borrowdale challenges Dobson, rightly saying that men as well as women need warmth and kindness (60).

The move toward a healthier, more biblical, post-Resurrection model of relationship between the sexes is no small challenge to the church, particularly in those traditions which continue to ban women from leadership positions. Borrowdale offers several practical steps ordinary Christians can take.

Perhaps the simplest is for men and women to spend more time together as co-workers, friends, and worshipers. Common Christian advice to men, suggesting that they cannot be friends with women without it becoming an inappropriate sexual relationship, must be challenged (70). Such thinking is based on the premise that women are a constant threat and danger to men, and that women are primarily sexual, rather than human. While acknowledging the difficulty of building healthy cross-gender friendships when there have been so few models in the church, Borrowdale is optimistic that it can and should be done.

Christians also need to inform themselves of the feminist and sociological perspectives on patriarchy. It is time for feminists and Christians to stop viewing one another as enemies, and to see how much they have in common in their efforts to uphold the dignity and worth of all persons.

In a rapidly growing body of Christian feminist writing, Anne Borrowdale's *Distorted Images* is an important voice. Her concise discussion of the link between patriarchy and violence against women is a disturbing message that many conservative Christian feminists have not articulated enough. Borrowdale, who is a Social Responsibility Officer in the Church of England, may be seen as a bit too far left of center for some conservative evangelicals. Posy Simmonds' political cartoons, which are scattered through the book, may be offensive to some readers.

Borrowdale has done her homework, drawing from a rich variety of sources and documenting her arguments. While some of her assertions and conclusions will offend some readers, she deserves a wide audience among theologians and the church at large.

Elaine Yaryan

Brian E. Daley

The Hope of the Early Church. A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology

Cambridge University Press, New York 1991

xvi, 300 pp., Bibliography, Index. \$49.50.

“Our hope is the resurrection of the dead, our faith is the resurrection of the dead. It also is our love, which the preaching of things not yet seen inflames and arouses by longing. . . . If faith in the resurrection of the dead is taken away, all Christian doctrine perishes If the dead do not rise, we have no hope of a future life; but if the dead do rise, there will be a future life.” So wrote Augustine in Sermon 241. The concern with last things, the field of study known as eschatology, is among the most important aspects of patristic theological examination. For the first time in any language a guide to patristic eschatology has been provided by Professor Brian E. Daley, S.J., an Associate Professor at the Weston School of Theology in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The strength of this book consists in the outline which is provided for the development of eschatological thought during the first seven centuries of the Christian era. More importantly, perhaps, Professor Daley has sought to ground his study in the sociological and philosophical *milieu* of the Mediterranean world during the early centuries of the expansion of the Church. Owing to this methodology the author has taken into account many of the bases for the Christian doctrine of last things which hitherto have been ignored in other more truncated studies. Especially enlightening is his ability to relate Jewish apocalyptic and eschatological thought to the development of a particularly Christian view of the end of all things in the first and second centuries of the Christian era.

The book is presented in twelve well-defined chapters which take the reader from early Semitic Christianity through Eastern Christianity, ending with John of Damascus, and Western thought through to the sixth century. Each chapter is full footnoted, with extensive and helpful references. The bibliography is also separated to match up with the various chapter headings and further subdivided to take into account each of the major figures which are presented in the varying sections. By organizing his material in this manner the author has truly provided, as the title indicates, a *handbook* of patristic eschatology.

This is a volume which would be of great use to everyone from a seminary student seeking to find out more about this important area of study to the specialist who is looking for references outside of his own immediate area of research.

Another strength of this book is the fact that Professor Daley goes beyond the traditional study of only the Greek and Latin Church Fathers and considers the very important Syriac, Coptic and Armenian traditions as well. I know of no other book which encompasses within its pages such breadth of study and depth of understanding.

The only *caveat* to be considered in reviewing this very fine volume is that, although it was published in 1991, when an examination is made of the bibliography, it is clear that most of the references date previous to the early 1980's. This means that there are more current studies over the last five or six years and the student will therefore have to turn to the *Bibliographica Patristica* or another such reference work to fill in the gaps. This, however, is a minor point when consideration is made concerning the vast number of resources which have been placed before the reader in this handbook. All in all, this is a book to be used again and again and will, most likely, stand as a landmark in patristics studies for some years to come.

Duane W. H. Arnold
New York, New York

Mitch Finley

Catholic Spiritual Classics

Kansas City, Missouri: Sheed & Ward, 1987

71 pp.; \$4.95

In an age of fast food and instant satellite transmissions, it is encouraging to see increasing numbers of Christians hungering for spiritual reading that is timeless, substantive, and deep. Mitch Finley's introduction to twelve classics of Christian spirituality is an excellent guide for those who are new to the classics. Finley's disarming sense of humor, warm familiarity with the classics of which he writes, and his ability to demystify cultural baggage in the classics, all make this book highly readable.

Protestant readers, in particular, will benefit from Finley's brief treatment of Jansenism's lasting impact upon French, Irish, and American Catholic thought. This discussion is included in his fine introductory comments concerning what makes a classic a classic, and "how to read" a classic.

The book's format is simple and clear. Each classic is introduced in its historical and literary context. Authors are brought to life by Finley's ready

wit and able scholarship. An overview of the classic is then presented, followed by suggestions for modern application.

As is often the case with a work such as this, many spiritual giants, such as Bernard of Clairvaux, have been left out. Thomas a Kempis, Julian of Norwich, *The Cloud of Unknowing*, and St. Francis of Assisi are included along with Max Picard, Caryl Houselander, and Thomas Merton. Perhaps a future edition could include more authors.

Even though Finley writes for a popular audience, particularly those who are new to the classics, he has much to offer students of devotional literature and Christian spirituality, as well. His purpose in writing this slim volume, which is to whet readers' appetites for the classics, is more than ably fulfilled.

Elaine Yaryan

John Lawson

The Wesley Hymns

Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House (Francis Asbury Press)

1987, 224 pp., \$14.95, hard cover.

One reason this book was not reviewed nearer its publication is that I was not struck with it upon first scanning its contents. Having now given it quality time, I am glad my first impression did not prevail. This is a valuable book in Wesleyan hymnology, full of historical and theological insight and brim full of inspiration.

First of all, I am truly impressed by anyone who has read all of the thirteen volumes of *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*, as Lawson has done (p. 10). Out of the more than 7,000 Wesley Hymns and devotional poems, he has selected about 140 examples arranged under 53 sections of the Christian year and areas of Christian theology. Some of these are known through their use in the hymnbooks of many denominations. Others are familiar within the Wesleyan family of churches. Some are neglected or even unknown to the Methodist congregations.

Lawson rightly laments the neglect of many fine Wesleyan hymns. He writes in his introduction:

Being the fervent utterances of prophetic souls passionately devoted to Christ, many of these hymns are spiritually more urgent and more aspiring than suits the taste of easy-going Christians. Here is one of the very reasons why they should be sung! Another reason for partial neglect is that in these days even regular Christian worshipers sometimes lack that wide knowledge of the Bible which is pre-supposed in those who would

use these hymns (p. 9).

The author's purpose therefore is to provide the scriptural citations for the various phrases of the hymns.

This aim serves several purposes. It illustrates the vast store of scriptural quotation, allusions, and general motifs in the Wesley hymns. At times John and Charles provided poetic representations of biblical texts and stories. More frequently the language of Scripture fit the natural flow of their thought and devotion. Scripture is both a conscious and unconscious feature of their hymns.

Lawson's introduction to the book and his commentary upon specific subjects and hymns indicates how a study of the hymns reflects the Wesleys' understanding of the Bible. He defends their Christological and ecclesiological interpretation of the Old Testament, even at times when it resorts to allegory to make its point. He notes that a narrow use of the historical-critical method of exegesis can reduce the Bible to an historical artifact of ancient religion. The Wesleys, he believed, profited from the whole tradition of Christian theology and devotion in seeing the consistent testimony of Scripture as that of salvation in Christ. There was literally no passage of Scripture which could not speak to them of God's grace and how it applied to the lives of contemporary Christians.

The author's most helpful comments come at those points of distinctive Wesleyan doctrinal emphases. He highlights universal grace, conviction for sin, conversion, assurance of salvation, holiness, and the means of grace (especially the Lord's Supper). Along the way one sees the evidence in the hymns of the Wesleys' "evangelical Catholicism." Contrary to the Puritan evangelicalism best represented in the hymns of Isaac Watts, the Wesley hymns are Arminian in theology and Anglican in scope. They cover the broad range of the Christian year (something Watts avoided as being too near Roman Catholicism) and emphasize the means of grace in a way foreign to most British evangelicals of the eighteenth century. Still the hymns throb with spiritual vitality resulting from a decisive encounter with saving grace and abiding communion with Christ through the Holy Spirit.

The introductory comments on each section are not meant to provide hymn stories to the Wesleyan hymns, though such comments do occur incidentally (Charles' poem to his future wife on God's providence - p. 29; the hymn some suppose the Wesleys sang on the morning of Charles' evangelical conversion - p. 76; the hymn Charles composed on the day of his conversion, and which apparently was first sung on the night of John's evangelical conversion - p. 125; and finally "O for a thousand tongues to sing" which Charles composed on the first year anniversary of his own conversion - p. 126). The intent of the comments is to point to biblical and theological themes embodied in the hymn selections and to demonstrate how they relate to the whole body of Methodist doctrine and devotion.

The book should be read by all Wesleyan pastors and musicians. Many others involved in the music of the church will find vast resources in this book. Actually, any serious Christian will find this book a devotional storehouse for

personal and corporate worship. I am glad that I finally gave the book the reading it deserves.

Luke L. Keefer, Jr.

Michael Scott Horton

Made in America: The Shaping of Modern American Evangelicalism.

Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991

198 pp.

Made in America offers a prophetic critique of the sorry state of contemporary American evangelicalism, and, like the prophecies of old to Israel, the message is not pretty. Horton is deeply disturbed at the bumper sticker Christianity that reflects rather than transforms the world, Christianity that domesticates God for its own selfish ends and turns the Lord of history into a mascot or good luck charm. Secularism, pragmatism, consumerism, self-fulfillment, subjectivism, New Ageism, relativism, and the loss of community are the plagues that scourge us. We need not blame the secular humanists, Horton insists, for we are our own worst enemies. Drunk on past successes, we think of ourselves as rich and haven't a clue about the depths of our spiritual poverty (Revelation 3:17). So far so good.

What Horton really wants to defend, however, is a particular segment of the historic church — Calvinistic Orthodoxy (24) and “the original Puritan vision” (19). In itself there is nothing wrong with that, but he casts the Arminian tradition as a “mutually exclusive point of view” (57). Incredibly, he labels Arminianism as not only unorthodox (21), but as a precursor to Arianism and Unitarian-Universalism (22), an ally of civil religion (26), deistic (26, 42, 120), antirationalistic (30), a central factor in the process of secularization (35), and a source of contemporary hedonism (75). Edwards, Whitefield, and Warfield earn high praise; Finney, Moody and Sunday take heavy hits. For Horton the difference between the two is that between “a God-centered, objective, historical faith that is for me, but outside of me, [and] a man-centered, subjective, existential faith that is almost exclusively concerned with personal experiences” (155).

It is unfortunate that, having put his finger on some important things that the American church needs to hear, Horton calls the church to a historic, apostolic faith that eschews catholicity — a fundamental sign of the true church — in favor of dogmatic Calvinism. He spoke so loudly on this issue that it was hard to hear his otherwise important message.

Daniel B. Clendenin
Moscow State University

W. David Beck, editor

Opening the American Mind: The Integration of Biblical Truth in the Curriculum of the University

Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992

231 pp.

“This book is an attempt by the faculty of Liberty University to set forth a model for accomplishing the reopening of the American mind to absolute truth, absolute values, and the Bible as God’s revelation. It is an attempt, however imperfect, to integrate our belief in God’s infallible and inerrant revelation in Scripture with the various disciplines in the university” (8). After an introductory essay by editor David Beck, ten professors from Liberty attempt to model integration in their various disciplines — philosophy, literature, the arts, social sciences, history, economics, natural sciences, mathematics, health and sports, and education.

The title of the entire book, as well as the purpose statement just quoted, point toward the American university setting in general, while the title of the introductory essay, “Designing a *Christian* University” (my emphasis), targets a more narrow audience. I was never quite sure just whom the authors were addressing. The introductory essay by Beck, arguably the most important essay for the book to succeed, was a major disappointment. Beck begins with the *non sequitur* that Christian colleges are in deep trouble today (itself an unproven and debatable point) and cannot “continue much longer on their present course.” According to Beck, the problem is that Christian colleges will not be able to obtain professors who are sufficiently orthodox and capable of integration because there is a “dearth of doctorate-granting universities where Christian faculties operate with theistic worldviews and carefully integrate biblical material with their disciplines.”

Does attending a “secular” university make one incapable of doctrinal soundness and integrative skills, or does attending a Christian university insure the same? This is really an insult to the academic skill and integrity of our Christian students. Ironically, all ten of the book’s authors received their doctorates from secular universities. Worse still, such a misunderstanding risks placing evangelical student-scholars in an intellectual ghetto, a mistake made fifty years ago and for which we are still paying. Isolating ourselves in Christian universities removes us from the very arena we wish to impact. How can we be a kingdom presence in the university world if we discourage our finest evangelical students from attending them?

Much has been written about integrating natural and special revelation in the past years, but this book adds little to the discussion. It cuts a narrow path, advances arguments that seldom delve beneath the surface, constantly repeats the cliché that all truth is God’s truth, and proposes ideas that are just wrong. Is “the very concept of a Christian university impossible” without inerrancy? Does the Bible “contribute essential data in every area of research?” Is it the job of every department, not just the theology department, to teach doctrine?

Is divine revelation really “the focal point in literary theory?” Is Jesus really the “perfect judge . . . a criminologist . . . a sociologist — a historian, and one who acknowledged those with business sense and marketing skills?” If the Bible “does not contain an explicit blueprint for economics” but instead “transcends the labels *conservative* and *liberal*,” then how do we arrive at the conclusions that a Christian worldview “demands a free market” or that Adam Smith’s idea of an “invisible hand” is “simply an elucidation of economics built from a Christian worldview?” Does grading on a curve imply that truth is relative?

On the brighter side, the essays by J. P. Moreland (philosophy), John Hugo (the arts), Robert Chasnov (natural sciences), and Glyn Wooldridge (mathematics) were well done. Christian higher education has been a wonderful blessing to the church; more careful thinking about its exact nature, purpose, and relationship to its secular counterpart will make it an even greater blessing both to God’s people and the world.

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Humberto Belli and Ronald Nash

Beyond Liberation Theology

Grand Rapids, MI: Baker

206 pp., 1992

This volume is essential reading for all pastors and Christian teachers interested in liberation theology and its impact on the church in North America and around the world. The central claims of the book are as follows. First, the older liberation theology which was so influential from 1965 to 1990 is a decaying system, currently undergoing such radical metamorphosis as to become unrecognizable. Second, these changes are praiseworthy and are to be received warmly, since the older liberation theology was mistaken from the beginning (p. 7).

These two authors, Humberto Belli and Ronald Nash, are strategically positioned for throwing down such a gauntlet. Belli is Minister of Education in democratic, post-Sandinista Nicaragua and plays a central role in steering that country toward the new liberation theology discussed in the volume. Nash is professor of theology at Reformed Theological Seminary and has devoted himself to helping people achieve liberation in Eastern Europe and the nations of the former Soviet block.

After a brief preface, the volume continues with a helpful introduction which examines liberation ideas and traces some of the important representatives of

early liberation thought. The introduction also demonstrates how out of step these ideas are with the world of the 1990s, "in which most nations that modelled the socialism liberationists desired to impose on the people of Latin American now reject it" (p. 29).

The new liberation theology which the authors desire, and which they believe is beginning to emerge, is more committed to traditional orthodox Christian doctrine, and gives higher priority to theology and spirituality. Furthermore, this newer liberation theology renounces all forms of Marxism, is more open to capitalism and has more positive attitudes toward democracy. In short, the new liberation theology "repudiates almost all that the old liberationists stood for" (p. 15). Belli and Nash claim the older liberation theology promoted harmful social theory and economics which only added to the pain of Latin America's poor. They believe the new developments will provide "the form and content of a true liberation theology" which has the ability to provide lasting liberation for the oppressed of the world (p. 10).

The book continues with an "Historical Overview" of liberation theology and a definition of a "New Liberation Theology." This is followed by chapters on liberation theology and Marxism, capitalism, the Bible, social theory and the culture of poverty. The concluding chapter ("Beyond Liberation Theology") surveys the Catholic church's criticisms of the liberationist movement over the years. This last chapter provides a useful overview of the theological impasse between the church and the liberationist movement as it pertains to christology, ecclesiology, hamartiology and anthropology.

One of the important contributions these authors have made shows the continuing impact and influence of the older liberation theology in North American Christianity, even as the movement is being redefined in third world countries. North American liberationists, the authors assert, are "intractable in their fanatical attachment to socialism" (p. 9). They go on to demonstrate that the administrative hierarchy in mainline Protestant denominations and many seminaries are probably the last vestiges of the older, now discredited liberation theology. But why, one must wonder, is this so? Belli and Nash explain: "one reason for this is the extent to which North American liberationists have made liberationism part of a broader package that includes all the causes integral to the *Zeitgeist* of the radical Left" (p. 9).

This book is extremely important for several reasons. Liberation theology is the prevalent paradigm for Christian thinking in the two-thirds world, especially in Latin America, and has tremendous impact on mission efforts there. But also, liberation theology's impact on North American Christianity has been significant. In most mainline denominations, it has become the "politically correct" position to hold, and in some cases, has threatened and even replaced normative Christian doctrines.

Their point about the entrenchment of liberation theology in mainline denominations is well taken and important to hear. I recently attended a conference sponsored by one of the major boards of my own denomination (United Methodism) where my instructor was an ardent liberationist. In this conference

I was taught that the only reason socialism did not work in the Soviet Union is because it was linked to militarism. Socialism has not been effective in Cuba or Nicaragua because of the persistent interference of the United States, which is motivated only by greed and materialistic capitalism. Furthermore, my instructor wanted to persuade me to believe that there is no absolute reality or truth, that wealth is always evil, sin is defined as oppressing the poor, and Christian conversion is simply rejecting a rich middle-class lifestyle in order to side with the poor. When I gently suggested that a fully Christian definition of these important doctrines may involve more than this, I was told that I was blinded by my privileged middle-class upbringing.

It is particularly ironic that liberation theology has gained such widespread acceptance in my denomination, because Methodism has traditionally emphasized the freedom of humankind. Men and women have the freedom to choose between right or wrong, or between any number of less morally striking options. It is precisely this freewill element of human psychology which goes hand in hand with true democratic capitalism, as Belli and Nash make clear, and as recent international political events confirm.

Belli and Nash have effectively shown us where we have travelled over the past two-and-a-half decades, and why the church is where it is today. One can only hope their optimism regarding the future of liberation theology is correct.

Bill T. Arnold

Kent R. Hill

Turbulent Times for the Soviet Church

Portland: Multnomah, 1991, 184 pp.

Philip Yancey

Praying With the KGB: A Startling Report from a Shattered Empire.

Portland: Multnomah, 1992, 106 pp.

Two popular-level books by authors who have experienced the former Soviet Union from the inside relate the cataclysmic changes, some positive and others chaotic and confusing, that have befallen the once proud empire. Through no fault of their own, but only because of the rapid pace of change, both books are outdated in some respects. But both books are fine starting points to introduce readers to the strange terrain of Russia's new geopolitical landscape.

Hill's book is a condensed version of his much longer work *The Soviet Union on the Brink* (Multnomah, 1991, 520 pp.), a book which updated his 1989 *The Puzzle of the Soviet Church*. In 1978 Hill was a Fulbright scholar at

Moscow State University working on his doctoral thesis on the Russian Jew Lev Shestov. Almost unwittingly he became embroiled in the infamous case of the Siberian Seven (1978-1983). In the fifteen years since then, Hill, now executive director of the Institute of Religion and Democracy in Washington, D.C., has distinguished himself as one of the top Christian Soviet scholars in the United States.

Turbulent Times begins with two chapters that show how and why Marxist thought is by necessity inimical to the Gospel, and how the irreconcilable differences between the two worked themselves out in Russia's church-state relations across the centuries. For those who doubt the empirical realities of history (50 million killed in 75 years), Hill examines the explicit statements on religion not only by Marx but by Lenin, Stalin, and Krushchev. In short, Marxist socialism is necessarily atheist.

Chapters 3-9 follow the trajectories of *perestroika* and *glasnost* to their consequent destruction of an entire ideology. Public opinion is now as free as in the west — unthinkable only a few years ago when an offhand remark could land one in Siberia for a decade. Newspaper and magazine editorials debunking Stalin are now commonplace. Religious activities formerly prohibited are now not only allowed but encouraged by the government (see Yancey). Of special interest here is Hill's two chapters on the impact of *glasnost* on Christian believers. Western readers euphoric over the many positive changes in the CIS must, however, hear Hill's judicious warning, that the demise of communism by no means insures the establishment of a political democracy or a market economy. The two are related but by no means as cause and effect. A final chapter examines what our Christian response to these many changes should be, including an especially helpful nine-point outline of "Advice for Western Christians" (165-171). An appendix lists the names and addresses of organizations involved in helping the former Soviet Union (repeated in Yancey's book), but people who want the full menu of western Christian groups working there now must consult the *East-West Christian Organizations* Institute for East-West Christian Studies, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, 60187) which documents nearly 1,000 such organizations.

Yancey's book documents his personal impressions of a two-week trip he made to Moscow along with 18 other American evangelical leaders (listed on pp. 93-95) in early November 1991 (Gorbachev resigned and the Soviet Union vanished with his resignation on December 25, 1991). In September of 1991 the Christian Bridge Project received a written invitation from the chairman of the Supreme Soviet (the nation's highest governing body, equivalent to the United States Congress) for Christians from the United States to visit Russia and offer their help in restoring the moral and spiritual fiber of a nation that was disintegrating. The 90 pages of text bristle with first personal accounts that startle us even long after the historic changes that followed Yancey's visit — meeting with 20 committee chairmen of the Supreme Soviet, praying with leaders of the KGB in their ornate headquarters, dialoguing with cultural leaders at the Journalists' Club of Moscow, visiting the medieval monastery at Zagorsk

and a dank prison nearby where Orthodox priests lovingly held a regular liturgy, interacting with the staff of *Pravda*, engaging members of the elitist Academy of Social Sciences (the only time in their entire trip when they encountered a diehard Communist), and, most intriguing of all, a 40-minute private session with Gorbachev (he had promised them 15 minutes). Gorbachev affirmed his personal atheism but also assured the group that he valued their support and felt a "solidarity" with their religious efforts to help Russia.

Reading these two books makes one marvel at the ways of the Lord of all history and nations. They help us to recall with gratitude the many people, Soviet and otherwise, who prayed for seven long decades, who prayed faithfully even when it seemed like nothing at all positive was happening. They illustrate for us a nation that deserves enormous credit for the political courage and candor to address its fundamental problems in a direct way. Finally, they remind us of the enormous task that lies ahead in order to insure that the recent gains do not fall prey to future tyrannies.

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Wayne E. Oates

Temptation: A Biblical and Psychological Approach

Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press

109 pp., 1991.

Wayne Oates is a name well known to pastors and pastoral counselors eager to find thoughtful writing in the area of pastoral care. In a marvelous manner, Dr. Oates juxtaposes central biblical texts dealing with temptation alongside psychological insights.

The writer is aware of the vanishing concept of temptation in the present day. We can rightly ask, "Whatever became of temptation?" in the same way Menniger asked in his book: "*Whatever Became of Sin?*" Have we become victims to a loss of consciousness and conscience about temptation? When was the last time you heard a sermon on the subject?

Using, in particular, James 1:13-15, the author zeroes in on a central focus of the book — that the source of temptation begins within ourselves. It is an easy out to lay the blame on God, or the devil, or others who influence our lives. Such self-deception is the parent evil of all temptation.

A biblical psychology of temptation is carefully developed. The author provides fresh insight from his experience. Cited and explained within this framework are numerous psychological concepts which have become present-day descriptions of temptation affecting our lives. Oates is informative as he

defines approach-avoidance behavior; addiction; the alcohol-drug abuse game; fantasy; anxiety; projection; reaction formation; and other concepts.

Jesus himself went through temptation beginning with the wilderness temptation and continuing through the garden of Gethsemane. The book cites three imperatives of Jesus about handling temptation. "Watch" so that you are alert and wise to what is surrounding you in life. Many temptations are the result of letting one's guard down and living without wise caution. "Pray" so that your attention is focused on God and away from desires. Prayer "dislodges and decentralizes attachments, fixations, and compulsions . . ." Prayer is asking for God's perspective on that which tempts. "Read the Scriptures" is a third imperative for dealing with temptation which Jesus modeled in times of testing and tempting stress. Note how Jesus laid up Scripture in his memory which was used in time of temptation.

Christian character is molded and fashioned as one deals with the decision-making process of temptation. Dr. Oates believes that temptation should be a positive time of opportunity, testing and destiny. Discover in this book a fine resource for biblical/psychological definition; and a faith-based catalyst for personal reform.

Cliff Stewart