

BOOK REVIEWS

Das Wunder: Das theologische Wunderverständnis im Horizont des neuzeitlichen Natur- und Geschichtsbegriffs. By Bernhard Bron. Göttinger theologische Arbeiten 2. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1975, 346 pp., DM 44.--.

As the subtitle suggests, this volume is an account of how modern theologians have understood miracles against the backdrop of modern ideas of nature and history. After sketching the history of the idea of miracle from Augustine to Schleiermacher, the author delineates the problems raised by modern natural and historical science with a view to discussing the concept of miracle in twentieth-century theology. The book ends with an attempt to restate the Biblical idea of miracle (cf. pp. 13, 246-248).

If for no other reason, the book is valuable for all the historical data contained in the text (pp. 13-248), not to mention the extensive notes (pp. 249-309) and bibliography (pp. 310-346). On the negative side of the ledger, as far as the historical discussion is concerned one should mention the following liabilities: First, the book has no index, though there is a detailed table of contents. Second, the field covered is so great that, from the nature of the case, the account of a particular thinker's point of view is often very sketchy. For instance, David Hume is disposed of on one page, Max Planck on a page and a half, and Walter Kühneth on half a page. Third, the thinkers selected are with very few exceptions all German-speaking. In fact there are no exceptions among those discussed from the German Enlightenment to the present. Even though it cannot be denied that philosophical and theological thought in the last two hundred years has been dominated by those writing in German, a balanced discussion would have to take others into account. Fourth, the author seems to present each thinker's views haphazardly rather than in terms of well-thought-out categories of interpretation. Fifth, there is, at the expense of careful analysis, too much dependence on secondary sources and too many quotations from both primary and secondary sources. Finally, the author sometimes seems to stray from his subject, as suggested by a seven-page discussion of Gerhard Ebeling's theology with little reference to his notion of miracle (pp. 143-149).

With respect to matters of form, this paperbound book suffers from being a photomechanically-reproduced typescript, containing typographical errors and inconsistencies in punctuation, abbreviation, and enumeration (e.g., on p. 205 where five announced points are only enumerated as far as points 1 and 2). The work also suffers from the lack of footnotes, all references and notes coming at the end. This is maddening, especially when one has to search in the notes for the authors of anonymous quotations in the text.

According to the author's analysis there are three basic positions taken against the background of modern historical and scientific developments. The first doggedly holds to the universally inviolate and closed character of the mechanistic order of natural law. The second holds to the physical and cosmic nature of Biblical miracles and thus seeks regular dialogue with natural science. The third holds to the physical character of miracle but seeks to derive its concept of miracle exclusively from the reality of revelation (*Offenbarungsgeschehen*)—that is, independent of culturally-conditioned ideas of the world, nature and history. Twentieth-century theology reflects these three positions. The first is espoused by liberal and existential theology, represented by such figures as Harnack and Bultmann; the second, by apologists seeking harmony with scientific and historical data and stressing the relativity of natural law, such as Karl Heim and Emil Brunner; the third, by theologians attempting to avoid apologetics by starting and ending with the revelatory events of the Bible, such as Martin Kähler and Karl Barth. For his own part, Bron concludes (1) that a proper theological understanding of miracle is only possible independent of the theories of

natural and historical science; and (2) that the physical reality (*leibliche Dimension*) and empirical objectivity (*sinnliche Gegenständlichkeit*) of miracle must be maintained (pp. 246-248).

In the opinion of this reviewer, the author is to be commended for upholding the physical reality of Biblical miracles and for rejecting Kantian dualism and the consequent subjectivism of theological liberalism and existentialism (cf. pp. 13, 81, 149, 159). In this respect his book is a welcome reaction to a dominant trend in German theology—indeed, modern theology in general—and a reaffirmation of an essential element of historic Christianity. Nevertheless, one wonders whether Bron is consistent, whether he himself escapes the modern subjectivism he allegedly rejects when he concludes that Biblical miracles are “not elements of objective and verifiable reality but the acts of God, only knowable by faith, which relativize the limits and laws of time and space” (p. 239). As such, miraculous events in the Bible are equivocal; miracle is “an occurrence in itself ambiguous” (*ein in sich zweideutiges Geschehen*, p. 247).

Now it is conceivable that one could hold to the physical reality and empirical objectivity of miracle without holding to empirical objectivity in the strict scientific sense of being able to demonstrate, conclusively to all and within the framework of natural and historical science, either physical reality or divine causation. But on Bron's own terms our theological understanding of miracle is to come from revelation alone, from God's view of reality and not that of autonomous science. Moreover, according to Scripture miracles are revelatory signs that are in no way ambiguous in God's view of things. If Biblical miracles are equivocal, then they are not objective reality in any ultimate (i.e., divine) sense. It seems that Bron, by inconsistently trying to pay deference to modern scientific method, does not escape the subjectivism in which modern autonomous man has quagmired himself. A Biblical metaphysic would seem to demand a Biblical epistemology, a truly theological understanding of reality (including miraculous reality), and a theonomous scientific method.

This leads to the question of theological method. Bron claims to hold to a theonomous method—that is, to the autonomy of theology, to a distinctively theological understanding of reality as over against that of modern science. But as indicated above, whether in actuality this is the case is questionable. However, even if one holds to the autonomy of theology with respect to basic presuppositions—meaning in this instance that a theological understanding of miracle is to be determined by Biblical presuppositions, not those of modern science—does this have to mean that there should be no dialogue with science, or that theology has nothing to learn from scientists? Even if the consistent Christian rejects the theoretical ultimacy of modern scientific methodology with its autonomous inductivism and atheism (Francis Bacon's *Deum semper excipimus*), he may still employ inductive principles practically in his quest for truth (e.g., in the theological interpretation of the Bible itself). Moreover, even if he rejects some of the dogmatic hypotheses of modern natural and historical science he may still utilize the hard data produced by scientific research. Furthermore, the Biblical doctrine of natural revelation does not preclude—indeed it necessitates—taking account of such data, of course within the framework of the special revelation of the Bible. This necessitates dialogue, interaction rather than isolation, for the sake of theological understanding, not to mention the necessity of dialogue for the sake of communicating Biblical theology to modern man.

Finally, Bron's attempt at the end of his study to re-examine the Biblical view of miracle is commendable but very disappointing. There is no serious exegesis but rather a regurgitation of secondary sources, of contemporary Biblical scholars holding to higher critical views destructive of the unity and veracity of Scripture. This renders Bron's attempt to re-discover the Biblical view of the miraculous most unsatisfactory.

To conclude, this paperback book is not worth its high cost to the average evangelical scholar. Evangelical seminaries, however, should consider it for their libraries. The book, especially in the light of contemporary “charismatic” claims and miracle-mania, points up the need for a thorough work on the subject—one that takes into account the Biblical data,

the history of thought on the subject, and contemporary scientific research—by an evangelical scholar. For this worthy endeavor Bron's work should provide helpful information and insights.

George P. Hutchinson

Winter Haven, FL

The Christ of the Covenants. By O. Palmer Robertson. Grand Rapids: 308 pp., \$9.95.

In this work the author proposes to focus on two areas of concern in Biblical interpretation: "the significance of God's covenants and the relation of the two testaments" (p. vii). These are areas of great significance vital to the formulation of any theological system.

Although covenant theology is a well-established theological framework in Protestantism, the classic works on covenant theology continue to be those of the older theologians. It is refreshing to see another work on this system by a contemporary scholar.

Robertson defines covenant as "a bond in blood sovereignly administered" (p. 4). The definition is based mainly on the consistent use in the OT of the expression "to cut a covenant," which reflects the ancient self-maledictory oath involving the dismemberment of animal carcasses. This definition leads him to reject the concept of covenant as a will or testament because a Biblical covenant is initiated by death (blood), whereas in the case of a will or testament death comes at the end of the relationship.

One may wonder if the word "cut" in the above expression is to be carried as far as the author takes it. Is the Davidic covenant a bond in blood? Are the covenants with the beast of the field (Hos 2:18) secured by blood? The expression "cut a covenant" may have become a crystallized term that lost the literal sense of its original meaning.

It is also questionable whether *berît* should be defined by *kārat* ("cut") even though they often occur in an associative clause. The sovereign administration of the covenant is dealt with in only two paragraphs. The essence of the author's argument is that "recent scholarship has established rather certainly the sovereign character of the divine covenants in Scripture" (p. 15), but there is no discussion of the verses that seem to imply a condition in the Abrahamic covenant (Gen 12:1; 17:14; 26:5), nor is there a discussion at this point of the role of human obedience in covenant.

One of the distinctives of traditional covenant theology is the function of covenant as the diachronic mode of divine redemptive activity. Robertson proves himself to be a traditional covenant theologian in his discussion of "The Extent of the Divine Covenants" (chap. 2). He argues effectively for the application of the term "covenant" to divine-human relationships not called covenants in the specific passages where they are instituted. He notes particularly the statement of the promise to David in 2 Samuel 7, which is called a "covenant" only in 2 Sam 23:5 and Ps 89:3.

Robertson appeals to Jer 33:20, 21, 25, 26 and Hos 6:7 to support the extension of the concept of covenant to the pre-Noahic period. In the case of the latter passage, the author adopts the view that "Adam" refers to the first man rather than to the city of that name cited in Josh 3:16. A great deal is based on this verse even though its interpretation is tenuous. Robertson does not consider the view that "as Adam" (*ke'ādām*) may be translated "as at Adam" (cf. Andersen and Freedman's *Anchor* commentary on Hosea).

The chapters on unity and diversity in the divine covenants (chaps. 3-4) are particularly strong and incisive. The unity in the covenants is to be found in the elements of the promise. In his discussion of diversity in the divine covenants the author examines the structural distinctions in the covenants and observes certain weaknesses inherent in the terms "covenant of grace" and "covenant of works." He follows M. Kline in suggesting that the terms "covenant of redemption" and "covenant of creation" may be preferable. In his discussion of the distinction between the old and new covenants the author demonstrates his ability to handle the NT materials. He concludes that while the old and new covenants are diverse in

their historical setting and content there is an overarching unity to be found in God's dealings with mankind in the covenant of redemption.

Part two of the book (chap. 5) is devoted entirely to a discussion of the covenant of creation, which denotes the "life and death bond" established by God's act of creating man and speaking to him, "thus determining precisely the role of man in creation" (p. 67). The elements of this covenant are the Sabbath, marriage and labor. The discussion of the Sabbath and its relation to the new covenant is full and insightful. Robertson argues: "To speak of the 'abolishment' of the Sabbath under the new covenant . . . involves a breach of the very orders of creation, history, and consummation as revealed in Scripture" (p. 72). Polygamy, divorce and homosexuality contradict "the creational order of marriage" (p. 78). Likewise labor is an integral part of the creation ordinance and contributes meaning to man's existence. The concept of the covenant of creation should lead man to avoid a narrow expression of the gospel and extend his responsibility into the world "of economics, politics, business and culture."

Part three of the book is devoted to a discussion of the covenant of redemption. The discussion begins with a consideration of Gen 3:14-19, in which the author argues for a messianic interpretation of Gen 3:15. The covenant with Noah follows in the discussion. The author views this covenant primarily as a covenant of preservation of the human race. In this connection he considers whether the Noachic covenant sanctions capital punishment in any case and concludes that the Noachic covenant and subsequent Scripture passages give support to capital punishment. The perspective of the Noachic covenant is basically oriented to creation. The context of preservation inherent in the Noachic covenant provides the framework for redemption. In his discussion of the Abrahamic covenant the author argues that the ritual of sprinkling the people with blood in Exod 24:8 reflects the rite of "passing between the pieces" cited in Gen 15:17. The author traces the subsequent judgment of Israel to the life-and-death relationship established at Sinai, which in turn reflected the covenantal procedure involved in the institution of the Abrahamic covenant.

Not all readers will agree with Robertson that the *diathēkē* of Heb 9:15-20 is a covenant and not a will or testament, but his argumentation must be given consideration. Perhaps he sees too much in the phrase "over dead bodies" (Heb 9:17), which he understands to reflect the inauguration of a covenant. The expression may simply refer to the deaths of successive generations, which convey the property of wills and testaments to succeeding generations. The author includes a very helpful discussion of the NT significance of circumcision.

The discussion of the Mosaic Law reveals the author's grasp of current critical opinion concerning the Mosaic Law. The discussion of this important matter is brief but cogent and includes a number of important NT passages.

In an excursus (chap. 11) Robertson discusses the structure of Scripture in both covenantal and dispensational modes. He treats dispensationalism fairly in that he does not approach it only from the standpoint of the older Scofield Bible. His appeal to dispensationalists to consider covenants as the "scriptural indicators of divine initiatives that structure redemptive history" demands consideration and hopefully will lead to a response in the literature.

In his discussion of the Davidic covenant of 2 Samuel 7 Robertson concludes that because David's throne was considered as one with God's throne, Christ is occupying David's throne today. This chapter (chap. 12) also contains a lengthy section portraying the historical outworking of the Davidic covenant.

Chapter 13 is centered on the fact that Christ consummates the covenantal promises by virtue of his role as Messiah. The new covenant will find its fulfillment in the Israel of God.

This work is a substantial contribution—not only to the area of covenant theology in particular but to OT theology in general. The emphasis on a covenant of creation as opposed to a covenant of works represents a refinement badly needed in covenant theology. The concept of a covenant of creation is presented not only as a theological category but a

worldview as well, demanding the extension of the Christian message into the created world.

The dialogue with dispensationalism is at once firm and courteous.

One could wish that certain aspects of the argumentation had been based on more solid exegetical foundations, such as the discussion of Hos 6:7. In the opinion of many theologians who are in disagreement with covenant theology that system has failed to prove that covenant is the sole diachronic mode of redemptive activity. It is in this area that covenant theology impresses its opponents with vagueness.

This is a superior work that clearly fulfills its stated purpose. It is a modern statement of covenant theology that admits weaknesses in the older expression of that system and refines them. At the same time it gives no quarter in its affirmation that covenant is the basic structure of the Bible.

Thomas Edward McComiskey

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

The Atonement: The Origins of the Doctrine in the New Testament. By Martin Hengel. Translated by J. Bowden. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981, \$6.95 paper.

Professor Hengel has dedicated this study of the origins of the NT doctrine of atonement to the memory of Joachim Jeremias. It is an expansion of his Manson memorial lecture at the University of Manchester (November 1979) entitled "The Expiatory Sacrifice of Christ," which appeared in *BJRL* 62 (1980) 454-475. The Rylands library has kindly prepared a special reprint of this lecture as a service to scholars, available from them for one pound.

Hengel intends *Atonement* to be a part of the prolegomena to a more comprehensive Christology. Indeed, it fulfills this role along with his two previous and equally masterful studies, *Son of God* (1976) and *Crucifixion* (1977).

In the first part of the book Hengel addresses the question as to how Jesus' death came to be so quickly interpreted as vicarious atonement, as the soteriological, barbarous and offensive act that formed the basis of primitive Christian preaching. He argues that the interpretive background of the atonement does not lie in Hellenistic categories but within Palestinian Judaism and in OT texts like Isaiah 53. The relative cultural and spiritual unity of late antiquity precludes sharp divisions within Judaism in the Roman world (here taking a position similar to that taken in the Christologies of Moule and Marshall as compared to the layered approach of Hahn and Fuller and the history-of-religions school in general). Therefore the idea of Jesus' death as vicarious need not at all have been developed by the so-called Hellenistic Jewish Christian community or have taken its origins from Greek sources.

Early preaching differed from the conceptions of dying heroes in antiquity and from the philosophically purified nature of what the gods were supposed to be like. God himself, through a recent figure of Jewish history who was perceived to be God's Son, had delivered that very Son over to death and had thereby reconciled mortals at enmity with him. Hengel wishes to insist that while these ideas were articulated by Paul they had roots in the earliest Christian communities in Palestine as well. Even though this message had barbarous features, Hengel shows by way of backgrounds that it was nevertheless understandable in the prevailing cultural context of the Greco-Roman world. The soteriological significance of the crucified Messiah and Son of God took on a further eschatological urgency due to the imminent judgment of the world. These motifs were a part of proclamation in the pre-Pauline period.

In the second part of the book the pre-Pauline formulae which speak of the "giving up" or "surrender" of Jesus are detected and discussed. More recently one would want to note the evangelically-oriented piece by S. Page, "The Authenticity of the Ransom Logion

(Mark 10:45b)," *Gospel Perspectives I* (ed. R. T. France and D. Wenham; Sheffield: JSOT, 1980) 137-161. Hengel is impatient with radical scholars who strip the earliest Christian mission of its thought life by invoking mythological categories so as to make the soteriological interpretation of Jesus' death an anachronistic idea. Likewise the "allegedly independent, decidedly post-Easter 'theologies' of the so-called Q or Marcan 'communities,' detached completely from the person of Jesus, are artificial products of modern exegesis" (p. 35). Q and Mark did not attempt to present "community theology" but primarily the message and work of the historical Jesus, who in the main is identical with the Jesus of primitive preaching.

One factor that was at the forefront in shaping interpretation in the pre-Pauline period was experience. One quote from the aforementioned *BJRL* article will help clarify Hengel's understanding of this factor: "In these first post-Easter days and weeks the disciples can hardly be considered as a group of people coming together for quiet meditation; what they had experienced should rather be compared to the force of an explosion which shattered their inherited ideas. Here a new dimension was brought into the lives of these Palestinian farmers and workers which radically transformed them. They had the inspiring assurance that heaven was open to them. It is no accident that the resurrection appearances were related to the eschatological experience of the Spirit, which they compared to the power of fire from heaven" (p. 472). The experience of forgiveness of sins was a feature of missionary preaching of Peter, James, Paul and the earliest disciples. Similarly the development of the various descriptive phrases concerning the potentially saving significance of Jesus' death "can be regarded as the fruit of the experience of the Spirit in the primitive church" (*BJRL*, p. 466). Hengel correctly sees that experience preceded theology in the area of doctrine of atonement. In addition to the transmission of oral tradition concerning Jesus' sayings, participants in the movement had begun to discover the imprint of the Spirit on facts related to Jesus' death.

The atoning death of Christ breaks all traditional concepts and parallels, which Hengel details from an impressive array of references. The origin of the NT interpretation of this death finds its roots in the Aramaic-speaking community and ultimately with Jesus himself. The pre-Pauline Greek-speaking community, with its development of ideas like the preexistent Son of God and the mediation of creation, is in continuity with the basic idea of the voluntary self-sacrifice of the sinless Son of God, who was none other than the man Jesus of Nazareth.

Hengel concludes pastorally with the feeling that since it was the love of God that motivated the entire scenario, it is the duty of exegetes and preachers today to make this basic art of the gospel understandable to the modern world.

Paul Elbert

132 Holgate Dr., Luton, Beds., LU4 OXD England

So It Was True. By Robert W. Ross. The American Protestant Press and the Nazi Persecution of the Jews. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980 (reprint 1981), 301 pp. plus appendices, notes, bibliography and index, \$20.00 clothbound, \$9.95 paper.

This disconcerting book by the adjunct associate professor of American studies at the University of Minnesota indicates that although some Protestant publications in America reported and deplored persecution faced by Jews in Hitler's Germany, little moral outrage and massive outcry followed. This mood reflected the United States government's lack of intervention specifically in behalf of beleaguered Jewry, even if as a consequence of military engagement the Nazi extermination centers were paralyzed.

Ross contrasts this attitude with the indignation that branded later American bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as the ultimate in violence. Yet in the bombing of Japanese cities America was an active agent in response to Japanese aggression. Ross does not indi-

cate what practical steps the religious community ought to have taken that could have influenced Nazi outcomes. He notes, however, that the mood of much reporting in the religious press was that Nazi atrocities were an incredible unreality with which one could scarcely cope in a supposedly orderly world.

Yet the virtual silence toward Nazi death-dealing confronts evangelical conscience with discomfiting questions. Did the fact that Jews seemed obstinate in their rejection of Jesus as Messiah, and that Hebrew leaders deplored as anti-Semitic the gospel statements that imply Jewish culpability for Jesus' crucifixion, put upon Christian agape too great a strain, one that discloses the shallowness of modern Christian love in contrast to the larger demands that Scripture imposes upon us? Among dispensational fundamentalists, moreover, did interest in Biblical prophecy touching Jewry in general eclipse specific interest in the intense suffering of central European Jews and link the "hope of Israel" solely with the soon-coming Messiah?

Ross leaves no doubt of Christian protest, rallies, and even of giving of funds to rescue threatened Jews, but the lack of moral outrage and outcry constrains him to speak of Protestant silence in the face of Nazi destruction of the Jews and a sense of unreality that was stabbed awake by a tardy awareness that the incredible news was factual after all.

Carl F. H. Henry

Lecturer-at-Large, World Vision International

Introduction to the Critical Study of the Text of the Hebrew Bible. By Jacob Weingreen. New York: Oxford University, 1982, 103 pp., \$7.95.

Justly renowned for his widely used elementary grammar of Biblical Hebrew, Jacob Weingreen, former emeritus professor of Hebrew at the University of Dublin, has placed all beginning students of the Hebrew Scriptures more deeply in his debt by the publication of this excellent manual on textual criticism. It is by far the best such work available for the nonspecialist. Since it is by design an introduction, however, one cannot dispense with Würthwein and other standard treatments of OT texts, manuscripts and versions. In fact Weingreen does not even discuss matters of text families, the origin and history of versions, and the complex development of Massoretic traditions and schools. The scholar, then, must not expect Weingreen to be of much help and therefore will have to continue to rely on more technical and comprehensive studies.

Professor Weingreen introduces his presentation with a definition of the nature of textual criticism. His conservative methodological approach is immediately apparent in that he suggests that the proper approach for the critic to take in the face of an apparent text corruption is one of moderation—that is, one should undertake conjectural emendation with great reservation since more often than not the problem is not with the text but with the critic's lack of information.

One of the most helpful and innovative chapters has to do with rabbinic antecedents of textual criticism. Here Weingreen draws upon his masterful command of Talmudic tradition and demonstrates that the work of text criticism is not a modern phenomenon by any means but is attested in the earliest rabbinical circles. And these Talmudists in turn presuppose a process of criticism that existed centuries before Christ, as LXX and other early witnesses prove. This is well known in theory, of course, but Weingreen gives a number of examples of rabbinic method at work on specific passages—examples not commonly known or readily accessible otherwise.

In the chapter on the scope and limitations of textual criticism the author lists virtually all of the elements necessary to a proper critical study of the OT text. These include Massoretic notations, discrepant readings in duplicate passages, the versions, variant Hebrew manuscripts such as those of Qumran, etc. His suggestion that an example of Massoretic *tiqqūnē sôperim* ("scribal emendations") that went unnoticed or unlisted by the rabbis is that of *bārēk* ("bless") for *qallēl* ("curse") in Job 1:5, 11; 2:5, 9 may be questionable, how-

ever. "Bless" for "curse" is clearly a euphemism, especially when God is the object, but it is gratuitous to assume that a pious scribe altered the text to make it less offensive when such euphemisms could well be expected on the lips of the original speakers (writers).

When he turns to recurring types of error, Weingreen cites the usual confusions of letters and words, transpositions, word divisions, dittography, haplography, homoioteleuton, misvocalization and misinterpretation. Again, he cites many helpful examples of each. He is perhaps even more helpful with his examples of unspecified types of error—i.e., those he attributes to carelessness or fatigue. In each case he makes convincing arguments not only for the existence of such errors but for his reconstruction of the original text. This is likewise true of the list of glosses and editorial notes he cites. An outstanding example is the difficult *man* (Ps 61:8) that immediately precedes *yinšerūhū*. Weingreen ingeniously proposes that *mn* is not a lexical form at all but is rather a proto-Massoretic "*nūn plene*" (*mālē' nūn*) note drawing attention to the nonassimilation of the *nūn* in the following word.

The weakest chapter is that on comparative philology. His method (essentially similar to that of James Barr) is certainly correct and he does offer one or two good examples, but on the whole the treatment lacks breadth and depth (four pages in all). It is at the end of this chapter, however, that he makes the excellent point that "learned journals teem with samples of biblical texts which had been condemned as corrupt but which were subsequently found to be correct in the light of new knowledge emanating from the comparative study of Semitic languages" (p. 94).

Unfortunately, and surprisingly from Oxford University Press, there are many typographical and other similar errors. On p. 45, paragraph 3 should have the square script at the beginning rather than the archaic. There is a word missing on pg. 49, lines 13-14. "Sennacherib" is misspelled on p. 57. "Massoretic" has too many s's on p. 59, 8 lines from the bottom. There is disagreement of person and number on p. 84, line 14. One would like to think that these and the others are deliberate illustrations of the textual problems one may expect in composition, copying, printing and proofreading—and thus support of the author's major theses throughout the book—but more realistically one must assume that the relatively high cost of this little book did not produce the commensurate care in publication that it deserves.

These caveats aside, Weingreen is a must for professors who want to introduce their students to the complexities of this subject, which is fundamental to any meaningful control of the Hebrew text of Scripture.

E. H. Merrill

Dallas Theological Seminary

The Pentateuch. By Lloyd R. Bailey. Nashville: Abingdon, 1981, 160 pp., \$6.95 paper; *The Gospels*. By Fred B. Craddock. Nashville: Abingdon, 1981, 159 pp., \$6.95 paper; *New Testament Apocalyptic*. By Paul S. Minear. Nashville: Abingdon, 1981, 154 pp., \$6.95 paper.

These three volumes are the first in Abingdon's new series, "Interpreting Biblical Texts." Edited by Ralph Bailey and Victor Furnish, the series is designed for those who believe that the Bible has meaning for life today and want to improve their skill as interpreters of Scripture. Interpreters must do two things: (1) determine as much as possible the original meaning of the various Biblical texts, and (2) determine in what ways those texts are meaningful today.

The goal of the series is to show how to pursue these tasks and relate them to each other. These are not commentaries. Rather, they seek to identify, illustrate and relate the meaning of Biblical texts in their original setting to their meaning today. The goal is to avoid focusing on either meaning to the exclusion of the other. The series is written in clear language easily understood by scholar, pastor and layperson alike, a refreshing change after reading obtuse theologians.

Each author is committed to three tasks: (1) describing the distinctive features of the

type of Biblical literature being covered, (2) identifying and explaining his own guiding assumptions in interpreting the text, and (3) discussing possible contemporary meanings of representative texts. Each book ends with a list of books to serve as "Aids to the Interpreter."

In keeping with these objectives, each book first enumerates principles of interpreting a text in its ancient context. Then the author illustrates the use of these ideas through applying them to specific representative texts.

Unfortunately these volumes largely fail to meet the noble goals of the series. The volume on the Pentateuch is really a book on hermeneutics. While it begins with a short description of what the Pentateuch is, the bulk covers principles of interpretation.

It is difficult to consider this a book on the Torah. The only chapter that really interprets the text and seeks modern meaning is almost an appendix. Out of 158 pages about 100 pages examine hermeneutical principles, followed by only 34 pages on the Torah. Thus in one sense the book has indeed done what the series intends, but the treatment is hardly balanced. Furthermore all three volumes, though especially this one, are very tendentious. The whole work is pervaded by a dogmatism that sees anything more conservative than Bailey's position as fundamentalist and therefore anti-intellectual if not ludicrous.

At the same time, viewpoints less conservative than Bailey's are criticized for being too radical. Bailey is at pains to tell those holding different ideas that they are not being critical enough of their positions, but he shows no evidence of self-criticism.

In terms of balance, Craddock's presentation in *The Gospels* is the opposite. After a small section on interpretation comes application and expansion of the hermeneutical principles Craddock employs as he examines each gospel as a whole and then selected passages. While I find Craddock's material superior to Bailey's, the former fails to tell enough about his assumptions. Few laypersons would likely recognize all the unstated but clearly present presuppositions taken from form, source, redaction and tradition criticism that influence Craddock so heavily.

I question the suitability of such speculative methods in a work intended to help laypersons. My skepticism seems justified when Craddock suggests modern meanings of the text. The picture of Jesus he draws through the use of these methods is of someone who did and said little of consequence but is yet the risen and exalted Lord. The Church emerges as a community freely inventing fables about Jesus for its own edification. But why should the Church deliberately develop stories that it knew would cause it to be persecuted? And is it really plausible that the early Church would have no biographical interest in Jesus at all?

Perhaps *New Testament Apocalyptic* best fulfills the series' goals. Minear slowly develops principles for understanding NT apocalyptic and notes where he is using a particular principle. The major drawback is that the book is mistitled. It should be *New Testament Prophecy*, for Minear's definition of apocalyptic is broad enough to include practically the whole NT, making it rather unhelpful.

All NT prophets are apocalyptic preachers in that their message discerned the hidden spiritual struggle present in the earthly trials and tribulations of believers. Minear wants to help modern noncharismatics find meaning in the charismatic pronouncements of NT prophets—pronouncements that were discerned as apocalyptic by charismatic congregations.

These volumes are moderately priced and well-written, but their content could have been much better.

Kenneth D. Litwak

Santa Ana, CA

The Book of Joshua (NICOT). By Marten H. Woudstra. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981, xix + 396 pp.

From the pen of a recent president of the Evangelical Theological Society has come a

much-needed commentary on the book of Joshua. Woudstra has produced a thorough and well-balanced commentary that makes many important contributions to our knowledge of this key book. Although it is not exceptionally long, most issues are handled fairly and with sufficient detail. Sensitive historical matters—such as the date of the exodus—receive considered and well-documented attention.

Woudstra's forte is his analysis of literary structure and narrative techniques and his tracing of key themes. There is an excellent discussion of the concept of "rest" in Joshua. Expressions such as "I will give" and "do not fear" become important landmarks in understanding the author's overall purpose. At several points a comparison between Joshua and his illustrious predecessor Moses is skilfully interwoven into the text. Woudstra astutely observes that the inheritance accounts in Joshua 14-19 are beautifully "framed" by the opening episode regarding Caleb (14:6-15) and the final one giving Joshua's allotment (19:49-50). Similarly the discussion about the two-and-a-half eastern tribes in 1:12-18 is brought to a conclusion in chap. 22. The author's skill in dealing with the flow of the narrative is a definite asset in his interaction with the critical questions of authorship and date. Woudstra deals with such issues tactfully and thoroughly and includes an evaluation of the views of important modern authors also. Of special interest are the frequent references to Dutch authors, whose valuable works are fully utilized by one who is at home in their language. Overall the bibliographical work is excellent, covering both American and European authors. One of the best examples of Woudstra's ability to use his knowledge of Hebrew narrative style to solve a difficult problem is found on pp. 136-139, a discussion of Joshua 8:3-9. He disentangles the apparently garbled chronological sequence in convincing fashion.

One could wish that similar attention had been given to the ethical implications of Rahab's lie in chap. 2 or the problem of the sun standing still in chap. 10. These matters are skipped over with surprising rapidity. There is, however, a fine discussion about the corporate element in sin and punishment, both in relation to Achan (chap. 7) and the alleged rebellion of the eastern tribes (chap. 22). Sufficient attention is also given to the place of the ark of the covenant in the worship and life of the nation. Its theological significance is outlined in connection with the crossing of the Jordan river (pp. 80, 85, 91).

On occasion the book fails to do as thorough a job of exegesis as could be desired. Part of the blame may be placed on space limitations. Beyond that, however, there seem to be notable omissions. Important parallel passages are left out, such as 1 Chr 28:20 in connection with Josh 1:6-9, or 1 Sam 3:19 in the discussion of Josh 21:45. In the latter pair the same idiom ("falling to the ground") occurs. On the plus side it should be noted that there are occasionally some very fine word studies and other comments helpful to the exegete. Throughout the book Woudstra skilfully relates passages in Joshua to appropriate parallels in Deuteronomy and Judges, its most immediate neighbors. The suzerainty treaties, so crucial to an understanding of Deuteronomy, are discussed in sufficient detail in connection with Joshua 24 (pp. 340-341).

Like the other commentaries in this series, Woudstra's *Joshua* includes the author's own translation of the text. In spite of his heavy involvement with the *NIV*, Woudstra does not confine himself to its wording and usually opts for a rendering that reflects Hebrew word order in an overly literal manner. At times, such as in his discussion of the location of Mounts Gerizim and Ebal (p. 145), the use of the *NIV* translation of Deut 11:30 would have helped to clarify the matter. Woudstra also ignores the *NIV*'s solution to the problematic monument set up in the Jordan (Josh 4:9). He argues that this is indeed a different monument from the one set up along the shore.

The book of Joshua is filled with references to cities and towns and tribal boundaries. Some of the places referred to are obscure and hard to identify, but Woudstra painstakingly handles the myriad of names and locations. Yet it is precisely in the area of geography and archaeology that the book runs into its greatest problems. For example, the city of Haran is placed west of the Euphrates (pp. 344-345) and Geba is located seven miles north of Bethel (Jerusalem was intended; p. 278). The city of Timnah is put southeast of Beth Shemesh

rather than west (p. 238). Descriptions of the Jordan valley and the Arabah are also problematic (pp. 58, 140). Surprisingly it is suggested that Tell es-Sultan might not be Jericho (p. 69) or that the City of Salt (15:62) is not Qumran because "its remains are no older than the Roman period" (p. 254). Most archaeologists speak of an Iron Age fortress beneath the Qumran settlement. On p. 188 Woudstra states that Hazor was destroyed in the thirteenth century, "never to be rebuilt." The Arabic names for some cities also cause problems. "El-Jib" (Gibeon) is incorrectly given as "ej-Jib" a number of times (pp. 154, 155). The same is true of Tell el-Jurn on p. 254.

A book of this size is bound to have its share of typographical and transcription errors. In an important definition of the Shephelah on p. 243, a strategically misplaced semicolon obscures the meaning. The alternate name for the city of Byblos is given as "Begal" rather than "Gebal" (p. 367), and the Hebrew word *nekes* is erroneously spelled *kesem* (p. 318 n. 10). *Nahaš* is spelled *Nahas* on p. 356, and a four-line footnote on p. 71 is repeated in toto.

In spite of these limitations it is nonetheless clear that this commentary marks a significant advance in Joshua studies and outstrips its competitors by a wide margin. Granted, its major contribution comes through the author's understanding of narrative techniques and theological ideas, but even in historical and exegetical matters it is often excellent.

Herbert M. Wolf

Wheaton College Graduate School, IL

Dictionary of Modern Theological German. By Helmut W. Ziefle. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1982, \$9.95 paper.

Ziefle, associate professor of German at Wheaton College, has compiled a list of over 10,000 German words with concise English definitions intended to assist students in their efforts to read the German Bible and the works of German theologians. This represents an expansion of Walter M. Mosse's more modest list of about 2100 words in *A Theological German Vocabulary* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), which is now out of print. Ziefle has incorporated Mosse's vocabulary, definitions, and Scripture references, omitted the Scripture quotations and German synonyms, and supplemented Mosse with vocabulary drawn predominantly from the *Wortkonkordanz zur Stuttgarter Konkordanz-Bibel* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1953) and with definitions from *Cassell's German Dictionary* (London: Cassel, 1971).

This dictionary is useful in three ways. First, its small size makes it a convenient, handy dictionary for Luther's Bible. The vocabulary included is fairly comprehensive for this purpose. A thorough examination of the book of Revelation detected only twelve words, apart from cognates and elementary German vocabulary, that are undefined in Ziefle's dictionary: *durchbohren* (1:7), *Ausharren* (1:9), *zerschmeissen* (2:27), *Rassel* (9:9), *Messtab* (11:1), *Winzermesser* (14:17), *Zaum* (14:20), *Geschwür* (16:2), *Frosch* (16:13), *Uppigkeit* (18:3), *Zimt* (18:13) and *Steuerleute* (18:17). Hence one must refer occasionally to another dictionary when reading the German Bible with the help of Ziefle's dictionary. Second, this dictionary can be a source of new vocabulary for the beginning German student who is preparing himself for reading theological German. Third, the dictionary supplements the standard German-English dictionaries. For example, *Entsündigung* ("expiation") and *der Gesalbte* ("the anointed") are not defined in *Cassell's German Dictionary* but are found in Ziefle's dictionary. Likewise Ziefle includes certain proper names such as *Bileam* ("Balaam") whose identity is not obvious to the beginning student. Unfortunately, Ziefle's dictionary remains imperfect as a stopgap for other dictionaries. Some words are still omitted by both *Cassell's* and Ziefle. In recent journal readings I found this to be the case with *Leviratsehe*, *Saatnez* and *Schechina*, as well as the abbreviations *Hss.* and *Sg.*

Although this work is not beyond improvement, it is a valuable contribution to the library of the student of theological German.

J. M. Sprinkle

Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, OH 45220

Wisdom Literature: Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Canticles, Ecclesiastes, Esther. Vol. XIII, *The Form of the Old Testament Literature.* By Roland E. Murphy. Rolf Knierim and Gene M. Tucker, eds. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981, 185 pp., \$12.95 paper.

Murphy, professor of OT at Duke University Divinity School, has collected a wealth of information in this relatively slender volume. He devotes eleven pages to an "Introduction to Wisdom Literature," dealing with basic wisdom genres and the setting of wisdom literature and concluding with the significance of extra-Biblical literature in the ancient Near East (Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Canaanite, Greek). With regard to such influence, Murphy states that "where similarities exist, these largely concern content, not genre" (p. 12).

The book divides into eight chapters (see title plus introduction and glossary), of which each of the first seven begins with a bibliography. It appears that the research was concluded in 1979 and that most evangelical contributions were ignored. The somewhat unusual combination of books under the heading "wisdom literature" is explained by the author in his preface (p. xiii) as a matter of convenience.

To compress six Biblical books into 150 pages can only be done by adhering to the stated purpose of this series—viz., "the commentary is confined to the form-critical interpretation of the texts" (p. x). Thus the value of this volume, and future volumes, lies in the extensive thematic analyzing of every book and the discussions about genres and settings. The author summarizes works previously published on these lines and evaluates them briefly. Only very rarely are textual alternatives suggested.

Of importance, especially for the student who recognizes the literary value of the Bible and wishes to pursue literary analysis, is the glossary (pp. 172-185). This is perhaps envisaged by the editors as a foretaste of things to come since the twenty-third volume in this series is entitled *Glossary of Genre Terms*. Since many of these terms are translations from German, it is hoped that greater precision will be employed in future volumes. For example, "story" equals only *Geschichte* and not *Sage* ("saga") or *Erzählung* ("tale"); *Drohwort* ought to be "threat" rather than "warning"; and *Lehrgedicht* is surely a "didactic poem" (the latter term and its complement, wisdom saying, need attention [p. 184] as there appears to be a partial mix-up between definitions and explanations).

On the whole this book was very carefully proofread so that errors are at minimum. I shall point out the few that caught my eye: On p. 3, line 3 from bottom correct "partiarh"; headings from p. 9 onward could all more consistently be adjectival; *Führungsgeschichte* (p. 87) might be better translated "story of guidance"; it might be helpful to mention the alternative term for *wasf* (*Gliederkatalog*, a typical device of German Baroque literature); the umlaut, otherwise so carefully executed, is missing on "Dusseldorf" (p. 126—Strobel); and the German words after "extent of victory" (battle report—glossary, p. 173) make no sense and should be changed to "Ausmass des Sieges" (incidentally, the listed German article by Richter in *Bib* 47 makes no reference to any of the German terms used).

Conservative scholars will read this book with appreciation and dismay. There will be appreciation for conciseness, discussions of genres, and detailed outlines or structures. But there will also be dismay for late-dating and settings (p. 20), intentions (p. 37), and the occasional numerological game (p. 50—after emendation of names or results being "several digits off," how can such evidence be "too striking to be coincidental"?). Even the appreciation for the discussions of genres will fade commensurate to one's realization that genres are the basic tool of the form critic to fragmentize texts (cf. W. A. Maier, *Form Criticism Reexamined* [Concordia, 1973]) and to one's personal disagreement with the offered classification (e.g., I prefer to classify Canticles as pastoral love song, which is a specific genre, or Ecclesiastes as a philosophical treatise on temporality).

Nevertheless, this book can be used by scholars with profit, by pastors with great caution, and by general students of the Bible as a source of detailed outlines.

Harold H. P. Dressler

Tyndale House, Cambridge, England

Promise and Deliverance: Vol. IV, Christ and the Nations. By S. G. De Graaf. Translated by H. Evan Runner and Elisabeth Wichers Runner. St. Catherines, Ontario, Canada: Paideia, 1981, viii + 294 pp., \$14.95.

Four volumes comprise the entire set entitled *Promise and Deliverance*. The first three volumes are subtitled *From Creation to the Conquest*, *The Failure of Israel's Theocracy* and *Christ's Ministry and Death*. The English translation is jointly published in the United States (Presbyterian and Reformed) and in Canada. Volume 4 includes helpful Scripture references and subject indexes to all four volumes.

A prominent Amsterdam preacher, De Graaf (1889-1955) originally prepared these materials (*Verbondsgeschiedenis*) to provide teachers of Sunday schools, Christian day schools, and inner-city child evangelism clubs with guidance on how to communicate the stories of the Bible. His admonition about story telling in the introduction to volume 1 should be required reading for all children's workers. In it he pointedly emphasizes that the self-revelation of Christ should be the main focus of every story told lest our story telling become only entertainment.

Volume 4 includes studies in the gospel of John (118 pages) and Acts (125 pages), plus a final section of 23 pages that relates selected eschatological chapters from Matthew (24-25) and Revelation (12, 19, 21-22). Each chapter of the book includes a prefatory summary of the key points of the story, a single-sentence statement of the theme of the story, and a longer narrative presentation of the passage being studied. This expanded outline lends itself to subsequent use by teachers. His approach is evangelistic in tone; throughout a faith-response is implied or overtly solicited. His paragraphs are laced with provocative questions designed to cause the reader to interact with the text.

Thus the book is a useful pedagogical tool. Its primary users will be church-school teachers and Bible-study leaders. While its language is relatively simple, its layout and format would not attract young readers; it lacks the color that would compel their interest. And since it is neither a reference work nor a scholarly treatise, it is unlikely that *Promise and Deliverance* would attract the typical *JETS* reader.

A major difficulty for readers of this volume, and probably of volumes 2 and 3 as well unless they possess the entire set, is the absence of preface or introduction, although sixteen pages are devoted to a very important orientation in the initial volume. The publishers might have been wise to include at least an abbreviation of De Graaf's philosophy about story telling at the beginning of each volume to bring it to life.

As one would expect, the book is heavily Reformed in flavor. Some evangelicals will find the frequent impersonal reference to "the Christ" somewhat stilted. This reviewer was bothered by the discussions surrounding the resurrection in chaps. 21 and 22, which left him unsure of what De Graaf believed about the risen Christ. In the final analysis, however, De Graaf will be recognized as a deeply committed Christian anxious for the salvation and Christian maturation of people, especially young people, everywhere.

Robert D. Pitts

Taylor University, Upland, IN

The Favorable Year of the Lord: A Study of Jubiliary Theology in the Gospel of Luke. By Robert B. Sloan, Jr. Austin, TX: Scholars, 1977, 213 pp.

This dissertation written at Basel under the direction of Bo Reicke seeks to answer the questions: "[T]o what degree is the notion of Jubilee—the central image in this normative passage of Luke's Gospel (Luke 4:16-30)—found to recur in the Gospel of Luke; i.e., may this conceivably programmatic theme be found to underlie other Lukan pericopes?" What are the implications of this motif for Lukan Christology and purpose? (pp. 1-2). Sloan presents his case in five orderly chapters. They build in a cumulative way to the final conclu-

sion: "Luke has purposefully employed the picture of jubilee . . . as a metaphorical expression of the *eschatological salvation of God*" (pp. 162-163).

In the first chapter the author clearly lays out the main provisions of the jubilee legislation: the return of land to the original owners, the release of Jewish slaves, the cancellation of debts, and the allowing of the land to lie fallow. He then discusses themes in the legislation that he thinks especially lend themselves to use in eschatological contexts.

The author offers in the second chapter an exegesis of Luke 4:18-19 (16-30) that seeks to show how various phrases from the Isaiah quotation have their proper background in the Jubilee legislation. The implications that the Jubilee has for the actual messianic significance in Lukan Christology are developed. Jesus, who declares Jubilee, is the kingly Messiah who will establish "justice . . . and will therewith usher in the long awaited, culturally renewing and socially liberating eschatological year of Jubilee" (p. 66). Jesus is also the prophet like Moses, who inaugurates the eschatological year of Jubilee. A helpful defense of the historical authenticity and literary unity of the pericope concludes the exegetical considerations.

In the third chapter Sloan argues in three ways for the prevalence of the Jubilee notion throughout Luke's gospel. He reasons from the use of theological themes: *euangelizō*, *aphesis* and *aphiēmi*. He points to direct and indirect citations of Isaiah 61 at Luke 7:22; 14:21. He shows how Jubilee motifs are the background for and give coherence to the structure of the sermon on the plain (6:20-38) and the fifth petition of the Lord's prayer (11:2-4).

Chapter 4 brings the author to a discussion of the implications of this "jubiliary theology" for understanding the theology and purpose of Luke. He gives an extensive critique of Conzelmann's approach to Luke as a theologian of redemptive history under the influence of the delay of the *parousia*. He reasserts that Luke has both present and future eschatological concerns and that the "salvific picture of Jubilee" undergirds both. Sloan sees Luke's purpose as the presentation of the eschatological salvation of God. And the Jubilee picture is a metaphorical expression for it.

The final chapter tackles the vital issue concerning the relationships of the cultic (spiritual) to the social aspects of the Jubilee legislation in the arena of contemporary Christian application. For Sloan, in the Christian gospel message the proclamation of release as forgiveness of sins takes priority over but does not exclude release from socio-economic oppression. Though he sees a role for the Church in making provision for social release now, his final word about the jubiliary justice is an eschatological one. "The complete establishment of jubiliary justice, however, and, by the virtue of the forgiveness of sins, the proper worship of God—i.e., the restoration of *all things*—even yet await the *parousia* of Jesus from heaven" (p. 194).

This book is a welcome addition to the current exegetical and interpretational discussion that liberation theologians have made to center around Luke 4:16-30. Positively, it provides a good summary of the provisions of Jubilee legislation. It explains well the relationship of cultic and social behavior in ancient Israel as reflected in not only the legislation passages but also in Isaiah 58 and 61. Sloan clearly demonstrates that release, forgiveness, is to be understood in a double-edged way. Those who have experienced the cultic release, forgiveness of sins, will carry out the social release, the removal of oppression and establishment of justice according to Jubilee provisions. And he is very careful to point out that the latter situation will only be brought about eschatologically by "the gracious, proclamation activity of the Lord God of Israel" (p. 190).

Sloan is less successful in establishing his main thesis: that jubiliary theology is central to Luke's purpose and theology. Though he convincingly shows that Jubilee was the proper background to Isa 61:1-4 and hence Luke 4:16-30, the evidence he marshalls for its presence throughout Luke was neither so pervasive nor so denotative of Jubilee legislation that one must conclude that this image is Luke's dominant theological theme. The use of Jubilee imagery to explain the flow of thought in the sermon on the plain is most insightful. On the other hand, the author's comments on the Lord's prayer do not appeal to enough of the im-

mediate Lukan context to carry conviction. And when dealing with the themes *euangelizō* and *aphesis* he does not account for how early Christian readers would necessarily discern Jubilee implication in what were common technical terms in the kerygma.

The author could have made his case more strongly had he demonstrated an eschatological interpretation of Jubilee from a history of such use by subsequent OT and Jewish writers. Further, his case for the pervasiveness of the theme throughout Luke-Acts could have been strengthened by a consideration of Luke's view of the poor and their proper treatment.

Finally, Sloan's eschatological argument is one way to preserve the spiritual (cultic) center of Luke's gospel of release (forgiveness of sin) over against the liberation theologians who would at the least prioritize and at the most exclusively speak of release as liberation from socio-economic oppression. Yet there are other lines that warrant investigation if the Jubilee implications of Luke 4:16-30 are to be properly understood. Who are the poor in Luke's understanding? Why are they poor? Sloan is not clear on this. How is the gospel good news to them? In what way in Luke does repentance involve economics? Was Jubilee intended originally or by Luke to be a process of redistribution of wealth with economic equality being the result? Although socio-economic release comes completely in the eschaton, is there some way that the good news to the poor fulfilled in Jesus' preaching means that that kind of release can and should come in "between the times"? Sloan has made a helpful start, but much more exegetical and interpretive work needs to be done before this passage, freed from both Marxist and capitalist biases, may clearly and authoritatively instruct the Church on how to speak "good news to the poor."

William J. Larkin, Jr.

Columbia Graduate School of Bible and Missions, Columbia, SC.

An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus. By Robert H. Stein. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1981, 180 pp., \$8.95. *Parables Jesus Told.* By David Allan Hubbard. Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 1981, 94 pp., \$2.95.

Perhaps no section of the synoptic gospels has received as much attention in recent literature as the parables of Jesus. Evangelicals, however, have too often been slow to take note of this research and have produced very few works of textbook caliber on the topic. Stein, professor of NT at Bethel Theological Seminary, has now tried to fill this gap, and for a college-level introduction his book succeeds relatively well.

Stein divides his study into two main sections, one on general principles of interpretation and one on exegesis of selected parables. In the first section he devotes three chapters to answering the questions, "What is a parable?", "Why the parables?" and "Whence the parables?" He defines a parable as "a figure of speech in which there is a brief or extended comparison" (p. 22), finds three main purposes for Jesus' teaching in parables (to conceal, to reveal, and to disarm), and highlights the authentic Palestinian nature of many of the parables' details, though not to the exclusion of deliberately striking, atypical features.

In the next three chapters Stein reproduces and expands the material from his article on the history of the interpretation of the parable of the good Samaritan in the 1978 E. F. Harrison *Festschrift* (*Scripture, Tradition, and Interpretation*, Eerdmans). Chapter 4 sketches the contours of parable interpretation from the early Church fathers through the nineteenth century, chap. 5 summarizes the contributions of the last century's research, and chap. 6 applies the insights of chap. 5 to the parable of the good Samaritan. Stein emphasizes four main stages of interpretation: (a) "Seek the one main point of the parable," (b) "seek to understand the *Sitz im Leben* in which the parable was uttered," (c) "seek to understand how the evangelist interpreted the parable," and (d) "seek what God is saying to us today through the parable" (pp. 72, 75, 78-79).

In his second section Stein identifies the main topics of the parables, all of which deal with the kingdom of God—as a present reality, as a calling to decision, as revealing the nature of God himself, and as a warning against the final judgment. Each of these four topics receives a chapter in which Stein discusses one representative parable at length and several others much more briefly. The parables of the former category include the great supper, the hidden treasure and pearl, the prodigal son (or “gracious father”), and the sheep and the goats.

The first section of Stein’s book seems more useful than the second; it is at least more original. His discussion of Jesus’ purposes in speaking in parables stands out especially, as he persuasively argues that the enigmatic *hina*-clause of Mark 4:12 must be allowed to retain its full telic force, while at the same time recognizing that Jesus also used parables to reveal and to illustrate. Stein’s history of interpretation provides many entertaining examples of the danger of indiscriminate allegorizing, but he has perhaps followed Dodd and Jeremias just a bit too much by way of overreaction. So too Stein rightly emphasizes the differentiation between the traditional and redactional stages of composition, but it is not clear just how much distinction between these stages he is comfortable with.

The second section contains much solid exegesis, but at least two interpretations seem somewhat strained. First, it is not completely clear that Luke added the second invitation to the outcasts in the parable of the great supper (Luke 14:23) nor that these necessarily referred to Gentile Christians. Of course most nonevangelical interpreters accept both of these points, but problems remain for those who would argue that the evangelists were in every place faithful to the original intentions of Jesus, and Stein’s recourse to “an inspired application” (p. 91) does not resolve all the questions arising. Second, it is not obvious that the parable of the sheep and goats teaches that the world’s nations will be judged on the basis of their treatment of Christian missionaries. Here Stein’s view is in a decided minority, and he needs further interaction with alternative interpretations.

On the other hand, Stein guides his readers masterfully through the complexities of the parables of the treasure and pearl, the unjust steward, and the wheat and tares. In the first, the main point is “joyous sacrifice”; in the second, prudence in preparation for God’s kingdom; in the third, the coming judgment of the entire world (not just the Church).

In short, this book acts as an admirable sequel to Stein’s *The Method and Message of Jesus’ Teachings*. Students who found that volume helpful will warmly welcome this addition.

Hubbard’s volume differs greatly from Stein’s, although much of the basic exegesis is similar. Hubbard, president of Fuller Theological Seminary, has not set out to write for the classroom. He has simply edited a series of eleven messages that appeared originally on his radio broadcast, “The Joyful Sound.” Needless to say, they are quite brief and popular in form but nevertheless quite pointed and challenging in their applications.

Hubbard’s method involves three steps—looking at the setting of the parable, sketching its one main message, and stating its demand or application—and the strength of his conclusions increases as he progresses from the first through the last of these steps. His sketches of the contexts of the parables are weakest because he seldom takes more than one gospel’s version of a passage into consideration and includes material that has dubious relevance for the parable at hand. The setting of “conflict and doubt” for the parable of the sower cannot be sustained in either Mark or Luke, the mission of the seventy in Luke 10 has little to do with the parable of the good Samaritan, and the emphasis on joy in the parable of the ten virgins is found only by referring to three texts from Matthew 24 that are a full chapter removed from the parable itself.

Fortunately, Hubbard’s summaries of the parables’ meanings do not generally depend on this extraneous material. Yet he still seems to press home his “one main point” theme more than his own exegesis justifies. For example, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Hubbard’s rightful acceptance of the authenticity of the interpretation of the parable of the sower demands that the parable be seen as making four distinct (though not unrelated) points about the various responses men make to the call of the kingdom. On the other hand,

Hubbard rightly recognizes the message of the seed growing secretly as "encouragement by God's sovereignty" (p. 31) and the main point of the rich man and Lazarus in the climactic second "half" of the parable (Luke 16:27-31) as faith obeying God's word.

Finally, the format of his book allows Hubbard the freedom to add a section on application to each chapter. Here his warm pastoral concern shines through clearly. The parable of the wheat and the weeds demands "patience but not complacency" (p. 24); the parable of the prodigal son, "rejoicing at the sight of repentance" (p. 48); and the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, "a call to humility" (p. 70). None of these insights is novel, but all can be easily overlooked in studies that are strictly historical or exegetical.

In sum, Stein and Hubbard both provide good models of a generally sound approach to parable interpretation. Compared with other recent evangelical parable research, neither is as comprehensive (cf. Simon Kistemaker, *The Parables of Jesus* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981]) or as innovative (cf. K. E. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980]), but both will repay careful reading nonetheless.

Craig Blomberg

The Epistle to the Galatians. By F. F. Bruce. New International Greek Testament Commentary [NIGTC] series, eds. I. Howard Marshall and W. Ward Gasque. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982, xviii + 304 pp., \$14.95.

F. F. Bruce's commentary on Galatians is the second critical English commentary on the Greek text since Ernest D. W. Burton's ICC commentary in 1921 (Hans D. Betz's in the Hermeneia series, 1979, being the first) and the first conservative Greek text commentary since J. B. Lightfoot's in 1866. It is the second to appear in the NIGTC series (Marshall's on Luke in 1980 is the first), a series that aims to give "careful exegetical attention to theological, historical, linguistic, textual and critical matters as well as to interact with the latest results of NT research and scholarship."

In terms of layout, seventy pages are devoted to introductory matters including a brief outline and a sizable "select" bibliography (an improvement over the first volume of the NIGTC, which mixes abbreviations and bibliography together). Each major section of the commentary proper is introduced by a summary of Paul's argument and each subsection is prefaced by an English translation (Bruce's own?) and textual notes that appear to be based on the copious textual apparatus of the Nestle-Aland 26th edition, although the commentary itself is based on the third edition of the UBS text. Only a summary of the textual evidence is given. It is assumed that this volume will also include appropriate indexes (not reflected in the advance proof).

The only disappointments in terms of general layout, which I take to be largely editorial, are the lack of Greek text as introductory to the commentary (cf. Lightfoot's marginal text) and the lack of footnotes (except in the introduction). The first is surprising since one purpose of the series, as indicated by the series title, is to demonstrate the value of studying the Greek NT. (In this respect the NIGTC series follows the general layout of the ICC series.) The second omission is perhaps more serious since the incorporation of reference material into the body of the text not only breaks the flow of the commentary but also limits drastically the amount of referencing that can be done (cf. the abundant footnoting in Betz's *Galatians*). Yet in spite of interspersed referencing Bruce's style is clear and readable.

The lengthy introduction is an almost verbatim reproduction of four of Bruce's five John Rylands lectures on "Galatian Problems" (1969-73 issues of *BJRL*). The first of the five on "Autobiographical Data" is omitted. The footnotes have been somewhat updated to include a handful of recent articles. The introduction itself has been expanded from those lectures to include a note on the occasion of the letter, a section on theological comparison with 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and a brief summary and interaction with F. R. Crownfield's "The Singular Problem of the Dual Galatians" (*JBL*, 1945), R. Jewett's "The Agitators and the

Galatian Congregation" (NTS, 1971), and J. Drane's *Paul: Libertine or Legalist?* (London, 1975). Although modern city names are given it would also have been helpful to include a map, especially given the technical nature of discussions regarding matters of historical geography.

The introduction focuses on four basic issues: destination, purpose (and opponents), sources and date. Bruce's approach throughout is to survey and to interact with the history of interpretation on these issues. His own position on these issues can only be gleaned from a careful reading of the material and from his interspersed comments. There is no marshalling of evidence *per se*. On the whole, Bruce exhibits a keen perception of the issues coupled with a lucid and realistic presentation of the difficulties inherent in both North and South Galatian theories and in correlative problems regarding date.

Bruce's own position on destination is South Galatian, although he readily admits that the evidence for neither theory is absolutely conclusive (p. 18). Priority is given by Bruce to external rather than to internal evidence. He repeatedly stresses that the South Galatian hypothesis is the one theory that agrees best with the relevant data of the historical geography of Asia Minor (p. 13—i.e., the cities of North or ethnic Galatia were not readily accessible from the principal lines of penetration leading from the Cilician Gates through Lystra; cf. Acts 16:1-8 as well as Ramsay, whom Bruce frequently cites).

Next to the "relevant data" of historical geography, the internal data of Acts, Galatians and the Pauline corpus as a whole is of only secondary, supportive importance—what Bruce calls "possibly relevant." Bruce can therefore state that the issue of destination is strictly independent of the Galatian territory passages in Acts. (Perhaps by this he means that Luke's usage and sources are not determinative for Paul.) Nevertheless he does examine in fair detail both Acts 16:6 and 18:23, interacting with the relevant grammatical, historical, geographical and epigraphical data (pp. 10-13; see especially his reference to C. J. Hemer's excellent studies in *JTS* 1976-77 and in *Themelios* 1977), thereby concluding that the syntax of these two "Galatian" references supports an adjectival versus nominal use of these terms. On this reading, Paul traveled through the Phrygian portion of the Roman province of Galatia in Acts 16:6 ("the Phrygian-Galactic region") and through the Galactic portion of Lycaonia in Acts 18:23 ("the Galactic region of Lycaonia and Phrygia"). The two Galatian passages in Acts can therefore be read in support of a decision on destination that Bruce has already reached on historical-geographical grounds.

After first delimiting the term "Galatia" to the southern portion of the Roman province on the basis of historical geography and then determining the most probable reading of the Galatian references in Acts, Bruce lastly adduces three internal arguments which, in this reviewer's opinion, North Galatian proponents have not yet sufficiently answered (although Bruce labels these, earlier, as ambiguous [?], p. 9): (1) Paul's normal use of provincial versus ethnic titles (p. 15), (2) the Jerusalem collection instructions given in 1 Cor 16:1 to "Galatia" coupled with Acts 20:4 where the Galatian representatives are from Derbe and Lystra (pp. 13-14), and (3) the lack of any other term besides "Galatians" which could include both Phrygians and Lycaonians (p. 16).

Bruce's thorough and careful evaluation of present-day North Galatian scholarship leads him finally to conclude that current research represents no advance over Lightfoot (whose arguments he considers to be, on the whole, subjective and untenable, pp. 7-8) and falls far short of the "meticulous care" taken by P. W. Schmiedel (1901) and J. Moffatt (1911). In particular, modern scholarship in his opinion has not given serious consideration to the historical-geographical data, which for Bruce must have the first and last word in any determinative answer to this question (pp. 14-16).

Bruce's second major introductory section on the "singular" problem of the epistle adds little to Lightfoot's analysis of the situation as a twofold threat involving a denial of Paul's authority and a repudiation of the doctrine of grace (pp. 22-23). Bruce identifies the opponents in Galatians with those of Acts 15:1 as a Judaizing element within the Jerusalem church, which claiming the authority of the mother church infiltrated the church at Antioch

in order to force circumcision on Gentile believers (Gal 2:4-5 being a parenthetical comment to this effect; here Bruce parts company with Lightfoot). From Antioch they would have made their way to the South Galatian churches, the news of which Paul would have received while en route to the Jerusalem council. This then in Bruce's estimation would be the earliest of Paul's epistles, dating ca. A.D. 49 just prior to the council proceedings recorded in Acts 15 (a conclusion drawn in the last section of his introduction, p. 55).

Bruce also incorporates into his introductory material a rather distinctive section on the source relationship of Galatians to the common stock of primitive Christianity (e.g., primitive Christian tradition, OT testimonia, teaching of Jesus) around which Paul weaves his own distinctive teaching. Bruce locates this primitive core in such Galatian themes as salvation by grace, faith as the means of appropriation, and the law of Christ as summarized in the golden rule. This whole section, however, presupposes a pre-50s date for Galatians as there is no comparison made with the Pauline *Hauptbriefe*.

The last section of the introduction focuses on date and related questions. Bruce avoids the traditional approach to dating Galatians by determining its most probable place in the historical record of Acts. He seeks, rather, to establish where it would logically fit in the Pauline corpus. (This, however, is not an implicit affirmation, on Bruce's part, of the secondary historical character of Acts; see p. 43.) There is therefore no correlation attempted between the Jerusalem visits of Paul recorded in Galatians and those recorded in Acts. Bruce avoids any discussion of whether Galatians 2 equals Acts 11 or Acts 15, which would determine *ipso facto* a *terminus a quo* for the epistle. He turns, rather, to the possibilities regarding Paul's ailment in Gal 4:13 and to the force of *houto tachesis* in 1:6. This is surprising given that elsewhere Bruce states that a determination of date depends in large part on the interpretation of Paul's Jerusalem visits in Galatians (see *NBD*, "Galatians," p. 448, and cf. p. 10 of this commentary).

The thrust of Bruce's intent throughout is to demonstrate that an early date for Galatians is not improbable or even impossible given the data (p. 55). Here again there is no marshalling of positive evidence for an early date. Bruce concentrates, rather, on a negative evaluation of traditionally late-date interpretations. Six key points, however, can be gleaned from Bruce's presentation that are critical if not decisive for a pre-council dating of Galatians: (1) why Paul, if Galatians is later, does not refer to the council ruling in answering his opponents; (2) after the publication of the council decree it would be difficult for the Judaizers to invoke Jerusalem church authority and thereby impose circumcision on Gentile believers; (3) the Judaizing activity of 2 Corinthians, where there is no hint of the circumcision question, is fundamentally different from that of Galatians (Phil 3:2, as well, indicates a Jewish versus Jewish Christian opponent); (4) some 14 years between Paul's conversion and the first missionary journey is sufficient time to develop the "mature" thinking of Galatians (i.e., thematic similarity with Romans need not indicate close dating); (5) it is hazardous to plot development of Paul's thought on the basis of occasional letters that respond to individual needs; and (6) it would be surprising to find any marked development in Paul's soteriology that would be a logical outworking of his conversion Christology rather than arising out of the exigencies of Judaizing threats.

Several of these points presuppose at least a general correlation and meshing of the data of the Pauline corpus with the historical account in Acts. Although Bruce's intent not to begin with Acts is laudable, it might have been relevant at some point in his discussion to at least explore the relationship between Galatians, whose opening chapters are obviously autobiographical, and the account in Acts, which still maintains some biographical relevance.

The introduction concludes with a select bibliography that is particularly noteworthy for its sizable list of important *Festschriften* and an outline that is surprisingly descriptive versus theological (e.g., "No Turning Back"). The major divisions of the outline from chap. 5 on appear somewhat arbitrary, and although Bruce makes brief mention of Betz's recent structural endeavors ("apologetic letter genre") it is somewhat disappointing that he does not mention or interact with other structural analyses (e.g., J. Bligh's chiasmic structure, J.

Grimes' discourse structure, and the recent development of N. A. Dahl and J. L. White's Greek epistolary structure).

Regarding the commentary itself, there is little to fault Bruce on. He is exegetically precise, consistently balanced, and perceptive in his handling of the text and issues. There is liberal referencing of classical, hellenistic, sectarian, rabbinical, patristic and early Christian sources. He interacts with a fair breadth of the most recent German, French, English *et al.* scholarship (through 1980). All important text-critical issues are incorporated into his discussions (see *hois oude* of 2:5). Brief bibliographies on major themes and issues are found throughout (e.g., *apostolos* 1:1). Due regard is given to Paul's use of the OT including the MT and LXX (e.g., 3:6, 11), and careful attention is given to grammatical and lexical detail and issues.

Bruce does, however, bring certain concerns to the text. He shows a preference for the OT versus Hellenism as primary background and as determinative for Paul's lexical usage and theological understanding (contrast Betz). He understands Paul's conversion experience as the *sine qua non* for his understanding of the Law and attempts to reconstruct the logical steps Paul would have taken in his thinking as a result of his Damascus road encounter. Bruce is not a systematist. His discussion of important terms with doctrinal applications is scanty at times, and broader Pauline usage is neglected at points (e.g., *dikaioō*, *dikaioσynē*, *logizomai*, *exagorazō*).

Perhaps a closer examination of his treatment of several important passages would be informative at this point:

1:15-17: Bruce's exegetical notes are informative (see *ek koilias mētros mou* as a Septuagintalism for "since before my birth"). His discussion of *apokalypsai ton huion autou en emoi* where he opts for inward illumination ("in me") is almost too brief to be helpful (cf. Burton "in me," Lightfoot "through me," and Bligh "to me"). Perhaps a reference to the *NIDNTT* appendix on prepositions would have been appropriate. His historical notes on "Arabia" and "Damascus" are brief but informative. Bruce concludes from 2 Cor 11:32-33 that this sojourn in Arabia was more than a "weekend" retreat (but no mention is made of Lightfoot's interpretation of "Arabia" as symbolic for Sinai). Unfortunately Bruce cannot keep pace with Betz's footnoting of secondary sources (especially archeological), which take up as much or more space than the commentary itself.

1:18-19: Bruce takes *epeita meta etē tria* as dating from Paul's conversion rather than from his return to Damascus. Paul went up to Jerusalem, according to Bruce, to make Peter's acquaintance (*historēsai*) and to gain first-hand information about Jesus' teaching, life, death and resurrection. Regarding *heteron tōn apostolōn ouk eidon ei mē Iakōbon*, Paul clearly in Bruce's opinion did not restrict the designation *apostolos* to the twelve. Following Lightfoot, *ei mē* is taken by Bruce as modifying *apostolōn* rather than *eidon* and as exceptive in force, thereby including James among the *apostoloi*. The only mention Bruce makes here of the parallel account in Acts 9 (v 27 *Barnabas auton ēgagen pros tous apostolous*) is in referring to *tous apostolous* as an instance of a generalizing plural (although his discussion at the end of 1:20 could be construed to imply that Luke included more in his account than Paul's account here allows).

1:22-23: Most commentators deal with these verses either by calling into question the account in Acts (Burton, Betz) or by excluding Jerusalem from the "churches of Judea" (Ridderbos, Guthrie, Lightfoot, Cole, perhaps Boice). Bruce, however, offers a plausible historical explanation—namely, that most of the believers would have left Jerusalem for the countryside of Judea due to current persecution (cf. Duncan: unknown specifically to those churches that were his former ground of persecution activity). Is this reading of the text in harmony with the account in Acts 9 (*kai ēn met' autōn eisporouomenos kai ekporouomenos eis Ierousalēm parrēsiάζomenos en tō onomati tou kyriou*, v 28)? Bruce never says.

2:1-10: The vast majority of commentators identify this visit with Acts 15:2 ff. The view taken by Bruce, however, is that this visit is to be identified with that of Acts 11:30 on the basis of evidence intrinsic to the epistle—namely, that Paul's argument is dependent on no

Jerusalem contact being left out (chaps. 1-2) and that the social problems of 2:11 ff. logically antedate the council visit of Acts 15 whose purpose it was to resolve. (Do not look for a reconciliation of Acts 11 and Galatians 2.) Bruce then argues persuasively for an ellipsis after v 3 ("the question of circumcising Gentile converts was first raised when . . .") and for vv 4-5 as a parenthetical reference to an incident at Antioch prompted by "false brethren" who are to be distinguished from "those from James" in 2:12a who came with a warning about Jewish militant activity aimed at both Rome and Gentiles (v 12b "the circumcision party").

2:16 *ou diakaioutai ex ergōn nomou*: Following C. F. D. Moule, Bruce distinguishes two basic Pauline uses of *nomos*, revelatory and legalistic (cf. 4:21 where he equates *hypo nomon* with law in its strict sense and *ho nomos* with the Pentateuch). Here it is the second of these—namely, the Law as a basis for personal justification—that is in view, according to Bruce. Although Bruce disregards it, perhaps the anarthrous state of *nomos* might be relevant here. It is disappointing that he gives little attention to the Pauline usage of *dikaioō/dikaioynē* and *pistis*, which are so integral to Pauline soteriology (cf. Burton's detached notes).

3:6, 11: On 3:6 one could have wished for a fuller treatment (no comment on *logizomai*, and he could have expanded on Paul's OT usage). It is surprising that Bruce devotes so much space to tracing Abraham's movements and summarizing Habakkuk's dialogue with God. Surely the reader would be acquainted with the salient features of these OT narratives. On the other hand, Bruce's high regard for the original context and meaning of Gen 15:6 and Hab 2:4 as determinative for Pauline usage and intent is refreshing (contrast Burton and Betz). Bruce states that Paul's conversion experience rules out even perfect adherence to the Law as a basis for justification. It is "by faith" in God as a permanent principle for both OT and NT, not "by law" that the one who is righteous (=justified) will live (=find life). Bruce in conclusion makes the important and provocative theological identification between "righteousness by faith" and "life."

3:28 *ouk eni arsen kai thēly*: Bruce's treatment of vv 26-27 is balanced and appealing. His reminder that the Jewish Prayer (which many commentators only partially quote) was not articulated for purposes of personal disparagement but in view of disqualification from religious privileges is important. While most commentators agree that what is in view here is an obliteration of racial, social and sexual distinctions before God (i.e., salvific accessibility), Bruce is one of the very few who draws as well the necessary practical implications of this "equality before God" within the Church, which is the whole point of 2:11-14. As Bruce states, there has been a tendency to restrict the degree to which "there is no male and female." What Paul has in view contextually, however, is new existence in Christ in its entirety. This "new existence" includes the gifting for spiritual leadership within the body. Bruce concludes that if a Gentile may exercise spiritual leadership in the Church over a Jew, or a slave as freely as a citizen, then why not a woman as freely as a man? Hence Gal 3:28 states the basic principle by which restrictions, if they be found elsewhere in the Pauline corpus, are to be understood and not vice versa.

4:24 *hatina estin allēgoroumena*: Although Bruce states that what Paul has in mind is that form of allegory that is commonly called typology, the distinction Bruce makes between typological allegory and nontypological allegory is far from clear. Bruce opts for Barrett's explanation of Paul's apparent lack of concern for historical fact—namely, that Paul was obliged to refute the "two-son" soteriology of his opponents through inversion.

In the final analysis, Bruce's careful research, eye for the important, consistent excellence, lack of dogmatism, and first-hand familiarity with the primary sources combine to make this commentary a must for any serious student of Paul. Most will find little if anything to fault Bruce on. Although Bruce's position on destination and dating is not at present the majority opinion, his is the most consistent presentation and interpretation of all the data to date. Given, however, the limitation of space and format, Betz will need to be con-

sulted for the sheer volume of referencing done and Burton will still be valuable for his detailed word studies and detached notes.

Linda Belleville

University of Toronto

Christian Unity: An Exposition of Ephesians 4:1-16. By D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981, 277 pp., \$9.95.

Clearly, Lloyd-Jones had the gift of preaching. Readers will agree that he was one of the finest pulpiteers of the twentieth century. After giving up the medical profession at the age of twenty-seven, he moved to a small Welsh parish and remained there for eleven years until G. Campbell Morgan invited him to become his associate at Westminster Chapel. Succeeding the deceased Morgan as pastor in 1943, Lloyd-Jones became one of England's most attractive Bible expositors, retiring in 1968. He died in 1981. During his distinguished career he founded the Westminster Fellowship, which regularly attracted a membership of some 400 London clerics. He was the first chairman of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students and gathered some notoriety because of his disagreement with Billy Graham over seating "liberals" on the platform and giving evangelistic invitations. Other significant works he wrote include the two-volume *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* (Eerdmans, 1959) and a six-volume exposition of portions of Romans (Zondervan, 1971-75).

This volume is characterized by sound expository procedures. He makes a judicious use of Scripture. His careful adherence to hermeneutical principles assures the reader that he holds a very high view of Scripture. The language flows smoothly and is appropriately evangelistic at points since the messages originated in his preaching at Westminster Chapel. Lloyd-Jones was "staunch in his Reformed and Puritan views," in interesting contrast with the Arminian G. Campbell Morgan. But he preferred not to allow labels to interfere with the clear communication of the gospel.

Lloyd-Jones has made a powerful statement on the subject of Christian unity in this exposition. It is not a declaration that all of his readers will accept, but it is one that gets at the heart of the ecumenical issue for most conservatives. In 277 pages he helps the reader confront the mind of the apostle Paul and focuses on the "real issues" of unity. For Lloyd-Jones those issues are doctrinal. They relate to a proper understanding of what the Church is intended to be, of who Christ is, and of what our relationship to him, as Head of the Church, must be. He distinguishes between unity among all of Christendom (which he soundly rejects) and unity "among Christians as members of the body of Christ, the Church," contending that "a true understanding of the nature of the Christian Church makes the principle of unity quite inevitable" (p. 254). He challenges pressures for organizational union by holding to the rigidly conservative view that true Christian union can be understood only in the context of Paul's analogy of the body with its proper Head.

He rejects all arguments that support unity at the expense of sound doctrine and that are based on any type of sentimentalism. He believes "speaking [which he prefers to translating "holding" or "professing"] the truth in love" does not mean compromising the truth for the sake of artificial unity. He objects that "'Speaking the truth in love' has come to mean that you more or less praise everything, but above all, that you never criticize any view strongly, because, after all, there is a certain amount of right and truth in everything" (p. 243).

One hears less about these issues today than half a generation ago, and as one reads Lloyd-Jones' arguments one finds himself asking, "I wonder when he preached these sermons?" According to the publisher, "these expositions were originally preached at Westminster from 1954 to 1962." This gives some feel for why he spoke with such vehemence on the issue. Yet knowing his convictions and the strength of his personality, one can only conclude that he would say the same thing today—as indeed he has through this exceptionally strong work.

If this volume is any indication of the quality of the other seven volumes in this series on Ephesians, pastors and students of the English Bible will benefit from owning the entire set—which, according to Ralph Earle, is “an inexhaustible mine of source material.” The eight-volume set lists for \$86.60 in quality hardbound copies.

Robert D. Pitts

Taylor University, Upland, IN

Die geschichtliche Einordnung der Pastoralbriefe. By Jakob van Bruggen. Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, 1981, 62 pp., n.p. paper.

The author of this work, professor of NT at the Theologische Hogeschool in Kampen, is familiar to American readers primarily because of his defense of the Byzantine text (*The Ancient Text of the New Testament*, 1976) and his criticism of dynamic translation (*The Bible and the Future*, 1978). His dissertation at Utrecht, however, has treated the chronological problem of Gal 2:1, and in this booklet he returns to the historical investigation of Paul's life and work.

After a summary of the history of research into the pastorals where van Bruggen vigorously asserts the authenticity of these letters, he moves on to develop a new proposal regarding their place in Paul's ministry. Conservative scholarship, conscious of some apparent discrepancies between the book of Acts and certain historical data in the pastorals (leading many scholars to deny Pauline authorship), has argued that these letters were written by Paul subsequent to the composition of Acts. This view assumes that Paul was eventually released from the imprisonment described in Acts 28. If therefore the historical data in the pastorals do not fit the framework of Acts, that is simply because these epistles deal with a later period. This construction thus resolves the supposed conflict: After being released Paul returned to Ephesus and nearby places, writing 1 Timothy and Titus during this “fourth journey,” later to be imprisoned a second time in Rome, where he wrote 2 Timothy shortly before his death.

Van Bruggen is not satisfied with this hypothesis and argues that 1 Timothy and Titus were written during the third journey (Acts 18:23-21:16), that Paul was imprisoned in Rome only once, and that therefore he wrote 2 Timothy during this imprisonment. How does van Bruggen then solve the historical conflicts? By postulating an extensive journey in connection with Paul's “painful visit” to Corinth (cf. 2 Cor 2:1). The fact that Paul lived for three years in Ephesus (Acts 20:31) does not mean that he could not have left the city during that period. Moreover, Luke's silence regarding such a journey is hardly a decisive consideration.

One must freely admit that the usual conservative position is not without difficulties. We have, for example, no hard evidence that Paul was released from prison in Rome and traveled far and wide in the 60s. Van Bruggen emphasizes other problems, such as the reference to Timothy's youth in 1 Tim 4:12. It would appear, however, that van Bruggen's greatest difficulty with the usual view is Acts 20:25, where Paul informs the elders of Ephesus (at the close of the third journey) that they would not see him again. The author argues (p. 30) that this statement must be regarded as revelatory, and since 1 Timothy indicates repeated contact with the Ephesian community, “eine Datierung nach der dritten Reise ist somit ausgeschlossen” (p. 34).

But then what do we do, for example, with Phil 1:25-26, where Paul expresses assurance that he will be released from prison? Van Bruggen is forced to date Philippians, along with Colossians and Philemon, earlier, and he chooses the Caesarean imprisonment as the origin of these prison epistles (according to him, only Ephesians and 2 Timothy were written from Rome). Yet this move does not adequately resolve the apparent conflict between Acts 20:25 and Phil 1:25-26 (see esp. Lightfoot's commentary on the latter passage). An additional difficulty with van Bruggen's reconstruction is that it intensifies the problem created by the

distinctive style of the pastorals. While van Bruggen himself quickly dismisses this problem by appealing to Luke's possible secretarial assistance, many will balk at the idea that 1 Timothy and Titus come from the same period that produced Romans, 1-2 Corinthians and (possibly) Galatians.

This booklet contains a number of questionable comments, yet the author's many provocative suggestions and clear presentation make it worth reading. Furthermore, while I do not find the argument fully persuasive, neither do I regard it as implausible. On the contrary, we should welcome this proposal as an alternate explanation of the facts. Only by giving it serious consideration can we hope to test its validity.

M. Silva

Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, PA 19118

Christ Above All: The Message of Hebrews. By Raymond Brown. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1982, 272 pp., \$6.95 paper.

"I have a very lively, or rather deadly, recollection of a certain series of discourses on the Hebrews," said Spurgeon of his teenage years, "which made a deep impression on my mind of the most undesirable kind. I wished frequently that the Hebrews had kept the Epistle to themselves, for it sadly bored a poor Gentile lad." Such thoughts, cited by Raymond Brown in *Christ Above All: The Message of Hebrews*, undoubtedly express the sentiments of many who come to this epistle for the first time. It presents a world of priestly ceremonies and animal sacrifices, a world far removed from our own. The discussion of Melchizedek alone makes even the most knowledgeable Christian feel that he should be numbered among those "dull of hearing" to whom the letter was originally addressed. As a result the message of Hebrews, apart from a few favorite verses, has often been sorely neglected in our churches, and we welcome this volume by Brown (principal of Spurgeon's College, London) as the latest addition to the Bible Speaks Today series edited by John R. W. Stott and J. A. Motyer. In keeping with the purpose of that series Brown seeks to expound the Biblical text accurately while relating it in a readable fashion to contemporary life.

As the title suggests, Brown stresses the Christocentric message of this epistle, that "the eternal Son of God is supreme and sufficient" (p. 8), and he organizes his exposition into three divisions reflecting this: "God's Son" (1:1-6:20), "Christ's Work" (7:1-10:18) and "Our Response" (10:19-13:25). It is, however, unfortunate that Brown gives us no more detailed outline that would help us to follow the very logical and carefully constructed argument. Under these three headings twenty-seven chapters, covering from three to twenty-seven verses each, take us through the epistle in short expositions that have a distinctly homiletical ring about them—both in structure (e.g., on 3:7-4:13, "This passage presents its readers with a warning, an appeal, and a promise") and in content (e.g., speaking of 10:19-39, "two features of its teaching . . . call for practical application in our own everyday lives").

Concerning his exposition of Christ's superiority over angels in chaps. 1 and 2, one might object to the contention that this argument was simply used because "the Jewish people had placed their hope in mediators" (p. 38). Rather, was this not more likely merely a part of the epistle's larger argument for the supremacy of the new covenant mediated by Christ, over the old covenant that was "put into effect through angels" (Gal 3:19, *NIV*)? (On this see G. B. Caird, "The Exegetical Method of the Epistle to the Hebrews," *CJT* 5 [1959] 44-51.)

The supremacy of Christ is, according to Brown, not only the central doctrinal message given to us by Hebrews but is also its chief point of contemporary relevance, for "nothing is of greater importance in our own time than a reminder of the immense dimensions of the biblical doctrine of Christ" (p. 14). Most importantly it is crucial when one is tempted to fall away from the faith as the first recipients of this letter most certainly were. "These first century readers would be less likely to turn from him in adversity if they had looked to him

in adoration. The opening sentences of the letter are designed to bring them and us to our knees; only then can we hope to stand firmly on our feet" (p. 32).

Such a statement of the uniqueness of Christianity that this epistle so strongly affirms is bound to create conflicts when assessing our faith in the context of our pluralistic societies. Brown maintains that our unconverted friends need to be "understood, loved, and helped" (p. 176). This stands in marked contrast to his polemical attitude toward "some contemporary theologians" for whom he offers nothing but harsh criticism. This epistle, he contends, presents "a stark challenge to modern humanitarian christologies," and he cites repeatedly as targets the contributors to *The Myth of God Incarnate* and Don Cupitt in particular.

Those looking for new interpretations may be disappointed with *Christ Above All* because no new ground is broken here. The author draws heavily on the excellent works of F. F. Bruce and Philip Hughes as well as those of Westcott and Calvin. Despite his efforts Brown is unconvincing in his attempt to explain how the author repeatedly applies the Scriptures to Christ "without denying their initial OT reference." Further, important textual discrepancies between the LXX and MT are not even mentioned in the discussions of the author's use of Psalm 8 and Hab 2:3-4. The strength of this book lies elsewhere, however. With responsible scholarship Brown throws light on the often mysterious text of Hebrews, revealing much that is of contemporary relevance and application. His book deserves a wide audience of pastors and lay people who want to understand, enjoy and obey this too-often-neglected NT epistle.

William L. Kynes

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

Harper's New Testament Commentaries: The Epistle of James. By Sophie Laws. New York: Harper, 1980, 242 pp., \$14.95.

Scholarly, up-to-date commentaries on the epistle of James have been, until relatively recently, hard to come by. The dearth ended with the publication of commentaries by Reicke (1964), Mussner (1964), Mitton (1966), Sidebottom (1967), Michl (1968), Adamson (1976) and Greeven's revision of Dibelius (1976). To this list may now be added the *Harper's New Testament Commentaries* series volume on James by Sophie Laws, lecturer in NT studies at King's College, University of London. The commentary is the outgrowth of a dissertation done at Oxford University.

Laws holds, against those (e.g., Spitta and Massibeau) who consider James a Jewish tract Christianized by the interpolation of the words "Jesus Christ" in 1:1 and 2:1, the following: (1) James is definitely a Christian book. To be sure, its understanding of the Christian faith is "superficial and undeveloped" (p. 3), but none the less Christian. (2) James definitely reveals knowledge of the world of Judaism. However, "the elements of 'Jewishness' in James are thrown into relief by the lack of pronounced Jewish coloring" (p. 4). Thus the "Jewishness" of James is less "Jewish" than one might think. It certainly should not be over-emphasized. (3) James also belongs to the hellenistic world. The author's good Greek, his use of rhetorical devices, his acquaintance with Greek philosophy, his choice of illustrations, etc., are used to support this claim. Given these three basic characteristics of the epistle, Laws concludes: "James' environment would seem to be the meeting of Christian, Jewish and Hellenistic thought, at a popular and unsophisticated level" (p. 6).

Laws searches diligently for a specific setting for James in early Christianity. After probing both internal and external evidence she concludes that the epistle had its origin in some part of the Roman Christian community. Its apparent use by Hermas and its affinities to 1 Peter play an important part in this decision. However, she admits that this identification of a specific setting is "a plausible, if not a provable, hypothesis" (p. 26).

Who are the readers of James' letter? Here again Laws is cautious but suggests the possibility that it is addressed to the "god-fearers" (*sebomenoi* or *phoubomenoi tou theou*),

Gentiles who constituted the fringe of the hellenistic synagogues. Both the Jewish and hellenistic elements of the epistle would make sense if addressed to this group.

In addressing the question of authorship, Laws thinks that the objections to the traditional view still hold good. Thus although she concedes that the good Greek of the epistle could have been penned by the brother of Jesus, she balks especially when confronted by the exceedingly small place Jesus has in the epistle and the attitude of its author toward the Jewish Law, especially in cultic matters. Neither of these square with what we know of James in the NT or what we might have expected of him. Her solution: James is pseudonymous. This aids in fixing parameters for its dating. The *terminus a quo* would be A.D. 62, the date of James of Jerusalem's death; the *terminus ad quem*, its use by Hermas (A.D. 96?).

The introduction is followed by a rather full commentary (almost 200 pages on the five chapters of James). It is done in the best tradition of British NT scholarship. The discussion of opposing views is fair and complete. The comments often bring new and fresh insights into the text (see especially the extensive treatment of 2:14-26, a crucial passage). By choice it is more technical than expositional. Thus for the preacher it probably will be less usable than some other recent works on James (e.g., Mitton and Adamson). Nevertheless it is a valuable addition to the growing list of solid commentaries on the epistle.

There are several flaws in Laws' work. (1) She has not dealt adequately with the literary character of James. Striking similarities between the homiletical and expositional midrashim and the epistle cannot be overlooked. These could be clues to such questions as authorship, environment and setting. (2) She does not recognize the thoroughgoing Jewishness of James. Passages like 1:12-14; 2:1; 4:4 would hardly be intelligible to Gentiles, whether they were "god-fearers" or not. James is the most Jewish book of the NT, and although it does reveal contact with hellenistic thought and forms they are superficial by comparison. (3) It will not do to reject the similarities in language between the epistle and the letter James sent out in Acts 15 on the grounds that "the historical accuracy of Luke's report is debatable" (p. 40). Evidence must be forthcoming to support such a position, and Laws produces none. (4) She has not explained why a pseudonymous author would have used the name James without further identification. This has always been a stumbling block to those who reject the traditional authorship.

Despite these objections, I commend Laws for her fine work and recommend it to anyone who is interested in studying the epistle on more than a superficial level. A knowledge of Greek is highly desirable, if not absolutely necessary, for reading this commentary with profit.

Walter W. Wessel

Bethel Seminary West, San Diego, CA