

BOOK REVIEWS

Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form and Background of the Old Testament. By William Sanford LaSor, David Allan Hubbard and Frederic William Bush. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982, xiii + 696 pp., n.p.

Readers of this *Journal* will by now be familiar with this impressive offering by three professors from Fuller Seminary. It presents the combined results of decades of teaching the OT refined by experience and student feedback. The net result is an eminently readable and valuable work that will surely be the standard OT survey text in evangelical circles and that will command respect elsewhere for years to come.

The plan of the book is a teacher's and student's delight. (I have used it in two different years and four survey sections now as the main text, and this statement reflects my own and my students' reactions.) After some introductory chapters on matters such as authority, revelation, inspiration and canon there are chapters on every book in the OT, arranged according to the Hebrew Bible's groupings: Law, Prophets, Writings. The books in the latter two are arranged according to the authors' chronological scheme and thus follow neither the Hebrew nor Protestant canonical order. There are also chapters on specific sections or topics (e.g. the Pentateuch, Former Prophets, chronology of the monarchies, prophecy, Hebrew poetry, messianic prophecy, etc.), most of them very good. A number of my students have commented on the value of the chapter on geography, for example. The chapter on Hebrew poetry is thoroughly up to date and is the best I have seen in a comparable length. Three books rate two chapters: Genesis ("Primeval Prologue" and "Patriarchal History"), Exodus, and Isaiah (on background and message).

Further enhancing its student value is the supply of the standard helps. There are subject, author and Biblical-language indexes and a brief general bibliography at the end of the book. Each chapter is copiously endowed with footnotes and a section with suggestions for further reading, which are helpful and up to date (e.g. Childs' *Introduction* is extensively quoted). There are many excellent pictures, most by LaSor. Nine area and period maps are included, but their quality is unfortunately not the best. Inclusion of a standard map set (e.g. Hammond's) would have been a big improvement. A real strength, however, are the numerous charts. They are used to clarify different points, from the content of Genesis, the structure of the plague narrative, the offerings in Leviticus, and census figures in Numbers, to the excellent chart of all Biblical prophets (including the nonwriting ones), the several chronological charts, and the one on the festivals. (Access to these is limited by the lack of an index to them, however—e.g. the festivals are listed in the Psalms chapter rather than somewhere in the Pentateuch, as might be expected.)

The authors' purpose is "to introduce the reader to the background, content, literary quality, and message of the Old Testament as a whole and of its various books" (p. vii), and they succeed admirably. Every chapter typically devotes sections to each of these concerns as well as to other standard critical concerns. They have managed to retain a warm and even devout tone in their approach to the Biblical texts. The book is not quite a full-blown OT introduction, but it comes close. Any who have labored through the valuable but often-repetitive material in Harrison's *Introduction*, for example, will find almost every issue dealt with there covered here as well but in a much more concise, readable style.

The book goes beyond technical introductions, however, by devoting half or more of its space to matters of content and theology. Each chapter's outline is dictated by the nature

of the book under discussion. Thus the emphasis in Leviticus is primarily content-oriented, centering around the holiness motif, the sacrifices, and the book's contemporary relevance, while Deuteronomy's treatment devotes significant space to compositional matters alongside content and theology, and Exodus receives an entire chapter on historical background and other matters.

In addition, there are many short treatments of particularly significant or knotty passages or issues. Examples include the "star-and-scepter" prophecy in Numbers 24, the holy-war problem in Joshua, the sun-and-moon oracle in Joshua 10, Jephthah's vow in Judges 11, the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah, the Tyre prophecy of Ezekiel 28, the interpretation of Ezekiel 40-48, the son-of-man question in Daniel 7, and many more. I would of course quibble with some of the omissions. For example, treatments are missing of the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, the sacrifices for "inadvertent" versus "deliberate" sin, the Immanuel prophecy (or several of the well-known prophetic passages, for that matter), and the imprecatory psalms (the only discussion of imprecations is a brief word in the chapter on Nahum). It is furthermore surprising that the issue of the *sensus plenior* is relegated to only a footnote or two, given the attention usually devoted in the book to methodology and especially given LaSor's championing of that approach elsewhere. Concerning the answers given, they are well thought out and carefully presented and are solidly conservative in the main. I would only take issue on a few points. The discussion of *herem*, for example, is almost self-contradictory: It claims that Yahweh, the holy God, was the one punishing the unspeakable abominations of the Canaanites, and yet it also claims that the Israelites, in carrying out the *herem*, "did not think it wrong" (implying that we might, despite the affirmation that it was at God's behest), and that they "were not ready for such teachings as the Sermon on the Mount." The Canaanite deaths seem a rather high price to pay if they were merely to accommodate Israel's undeveloped understanding. (To be fair, it is the first of these points that receives the most emphasis, but the tension in the answer does exist.) The authors' commendable caution and balance occasionally extend too far, however. After considerable discussion they do not reach any real conclusions on the sun-and-moon oracle, the genre of Jonah (a between-the-lines reading indicates their cautious preference for it as a parable emphasizing God's missionary concern), or the date of Daniel, for instance. The discussion of authorship of Zechariah 9-14 is also inconclusive (although, surprisingly, the chart on p. 302 suggests a pre-exilic date for it, a position that is all but rejected on p. 492). Even in particularly thorny cases such as these, a reader deserves to know an author's leaning, however tentative. Quibbles aside, though, this feature of the book is especially good. It almost becomes a commentary in some spots and offers much more than the average survey does.

The authors are nothing if not thorough. In addition to the above, they extensively cover ancient Near Eastern history at the most relevant points and mention the major steles, inscriptions and other archeological discoveries that have Biblical relevance. A helpful feature is the extensive quotation from the Bible, which helps illustrate points being made and gives a flavor of the Biblical text. The weakest chapters in the book are the ones on the monarchy: They consist mainly of a re-telling of the Biblical story.

One aspect of the book that will certainly be much discussed is its theological stance and approach. That the authors are devoutly conservative is very evident. They see the OT as only fully understood when the NT is taken into account; they proclaim Jesus as Messiah and the incarnate God; they affirm the creeds and confessions of the early Church and the Reformation; they attack anti-supernatural a priors on several occasions; they repeatedly stake out conservative positions on critical issues (for example, they speak out against the JEDP hypothesis, see the Pentateuch as "substantially Mosaic," and present a strong case for the plausibility of an eighth-century origin for Isaiah 40-66).

At the same time, it is also very evident that they do not identify with the right (as opposed to the left) end of the conservative spectrum. They represent the best of evangelicalism in most cases, in moving beyond shrill, defensive reaction to modern scholarship to

offer positive contributions from an evangelical perspective and reasoned, nuanced alternatives to many critical theories. Their tone is calm, confident and gracious. They devote much-needed attention to genre and function of texts, something that evangelicals have often overlooked in their interest in historicity. There is a sensitivity to the editing processes that undoubtedly obtained for most books. At the same time, their canonical shape and message is given prominent attention.

Despite all of this, many evangelicals (including this one) will differ with the authors on some basic points. They will, for example, see in the book a different view of historicity of narrated events than they would hold. They will claim that there is no need to question the historicity of events that are arranged in a richly artistic tapestry and preserved for primarily moral or theological purposes (rather than for strictly historical interest), only because they are recounted in such a neat construction or only because scholarship's present knowledge might be incomplete. LaSor, Hubbard and Bush would likely agree in principle, but at several points the emphasis is upon the literary genre and intent almost to the point of declaring historicity to be irrelevant or even nonexistent. Examples of this historical doubt occur in the discussions of Genesis 1-11, parts of the patriarchal narratives, Jonah, Esther, and Daniel 1-6.

Furthermore at some points the authors' emphasis on nuance and broad inclusivity will occasionally leave many wanting more. For example, the careful discussion of inspiration states that God was the source of the Scriptures and that they have an inherent quality and power that will affect the recipient, and then concludes that inspiration "was simply the work of God's Spirit in whatever form, at whatever stage, by whatever means, and to whatever extent necessary to ensure that the redemptive purpose of his revelation was made effectually available" (p. 13). Nowhere are the terms "infallibility" or "inerrancy" even mentioned, let alone discussed.

These few reservations, however legitimate, should not obscure the otherwise positive reaction I have to the book. It is a model of good textbook writing: helpful, well-organized, thorough, informed, and warmhearted, all at the same time. It came along precisely at a time I was struggling to find an appropriately seminary-level survey text, one that was not merely a history of Israel, a technical introduction, or a retelling of the Bible story, and I have found it to precisely fit the bill. I do wonder about its college-level applicability, since most college survey classes will be in the freshman year. Despite the authors' desire, I suspect it may be a bit above that level unless used selectively. Regardless of this, however, it deserves a long life.

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Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art. By Robert H. Gundry. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982, 652 pp., \$24.95.

No commentary published in the last twenty-five years has sparked as much controversy among evangelical scholars as Robert Gundry's *Matthew*. Even before its publication, rumors were floating about that its conclusions caused it to be rejected from a major commentary series by one evangelical publishing house, and developments within the Evangelical Theological Society have confirmed the depth of feeling about the book in scholarly circles. It also caused no little stir at the Society of Biblical Literature meetings in December, 1982, where one of the better attended seminars centered on a discussion of this book and another major scholarly publication on Matthew, Robert Guelich's *The Sermon on the Mount*. Almost the entire issue of *JETS* 26/1 (March 1983) was devoted to a series of comments and rejoinders by Gundry, Douglas Moo and Norman Geisler on questions concerning Gundry's methodology. Other longer review articles have appeared as well; cf. esp.

D. Carson, "Gundry on Matthew: A Critical Review," *Trinity Journal* 3(NS)/1 (1982) 71-91; P. B. Payne, "Midrash and History in the Gospels with Special Reference to R. H. Gundry's *Matthew*," in *Gospel Perspectives, Volume III: Studies in Midrash and Historiography* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1983) 177-217.

The present review cannot attempt the depth of those publications, and the student wishing more than a cursory glance at the theological and methodological presuppositions and consequences of the work should look to them. We shall look briefly at the format, purposes and usefulness of the book.

Matthew has a total of 585 pages of commentary proper. This is broken down into 66 sections, some brief (several only occupy one page) and some lengthy ("The Rejection of Falsely Professing Jewish Christian Leaders as Portrayed in the Rejection of Israel's Leaders" [23:1-25:46] is 63 pages). The lengthy ones are usually broken down into several subsections. This structuring reflects Gundry's belief that "we should avoid imposing an outline on Matthew. It is doubtful that the first evangelist thought in terms of one" (p. 10). The section titles are generally helpful but sometimes confusing as, for example, when two of the five famous concluding formulae to the five discourses of Jesus are singled out as sections (pp. 136, 203) but the other three are not, though Gundry recognizes their intentional unity of purpose (p. 11). As the section heading noted above points out, Gundry reveals in the headings his conclusions about Matthew's purposes in writing the passages described. This is helpful for the scholar wishing to see at a glance what tack the author has taken on certain passages, but even more helpful for those who have read the commentary once and would like to find the place where a certain topic was mentioned. Since the topical index is so brief that it is useless (one page of print), the section headings are all the more useful for this purpose. Dividing the gospel in this manner may also have contributed to Gundry's avoidance of major excurses, an increasingly frequent and helpful device in modern commentaries (cf. e.g. P. Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*). Gundry's format makes them unnecessary.

Each section of the commentary thankfully leaves out any Greek text or translation (a waste of space) and, after an introduction to the section under discussion, proceeds to explain the text either verse-by-verse or by considering a group of two to five verses together. The discussion is mostly in one size of type, though there are occasional explanations in very small type. Presumably these are to be considered of less importance than the larger-type comments, but they often contain insightful discussions—e.g., the note concerning the other reasons offered for the inclusion of four women in Matthew's genealogy (p. 15) or the interesting note at 17:27 finding evidence for a pre-A.D.-70 date for the gospel in the story of the coin in the fish's mouth (p. 357).

In the larger format of the book, two things strike the reader as worthy of note. First, Gundry has chosen to give only an eleven-page introduction to the commentary, the majority of which discusses his method (though he also briefly outlines Matthew's theological concerns and states his beliefs about Matthew's structure). This choice has the great advantage for the reader of leaving material that should be decided on the basis of an interpretation of the text until that interpretation is complete. Thus questions about the date, authorship and provenance of the gospel are left to an appendix at the end of the book ("Some Higher-Critical Conclusions," pp. 599-622). One wonders, however, why questions of structure and theological overview were also not held back. These are also certainly conclusions based on a reading of the text. An excellent discussion that reinterprets the Papias fragments found in Eusebius dominates the appendix anyway and may have served the reader as a helpful support for Gundry's approach if included in the introduction, since the shock of Gundry's conclusions about the birth narratives is great enough to harm the reader's fair reading of the rest of the text, a point that Gundry himself recognizes (p. xi).

Second, the choice of indices seems odd at best. There are three: (1) an index of Greek words found in the gospel, giving six different word-count statistics, including the number of times Matthew has apparently inserted the word into parallel material, the number of

occurrences of the word in passages peculiar to Matthew, the number of occurrences shared with Mark and/or Luke, and the total numbers of occurrences in Matthew, Mark and Luke; (2) a topical index with nineteen entries including such diverse "topics" as "Universality," "Omniscience of Jesus," "*Corpus Mixtum*" and "Genitive Absolute"(!); and (3) an index of modern authors. The Greek index will be helpful to a handful of Matthew specialists, though the statistics on Matthean "insertions" and on terms found in passages peculiar to Matthew are the only ones not readily found elsewhere, and even their usefulness as statistics may be questioned. The index is also not complete, though there are listings for some important phrases as well as the important words (cf. e.g. the several listings under "huios"). The topical index is severely limited by the number of entries and has such a strange diversity of items that an organizing principle is not discernible. The index of modern authors is complete but seems out of place in a commentary written avowedly on the principle that the author intends to "do justice to [his own] line of interpretation . . . and let readers make critical comparisons of their own" (p. 1). Indeed Gundry spends very little time in dialogue with other commentaries and critical articles. He quotes them almost always as the source of or as support for his viewpoints. Why then would anyone ever want to use the index, if no criticism of an author's view is to be found in the text? An index of ancient authors and/or a Scripture index would have been more useful than those offered, with the exception of the index of Greek words.

The statement that the author wishes to follow his own line of comment on the text rather than enter into "a great deal of interplay with views expressed in the works of modern scholarship" (p. 1) serves well as an introduction to a discussion of his purposes in writing the commentary. The subtitle of the book, "A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art," also opens a window onto the topic, for Gundry has not attempted to comment on the text for the doctrinal theologian and still less for the preacher. He has, rather, written for the NT scholar a full-length monograph in the form of a commentary. The thesis of the monograph is that at least a part of the synoptic problem can be solved by adopting the hypothesis that Matthew wrote with Mark, a much-larger-than-normal Q, and his own peculiar sources before him. Matthew was, indeed, the tax-collector apostle who, as an eyewitness, knew the "brute facts" of Jesus' history but eschewed them in favor of a very free "haggadic and midrashic" (p. xi) reinterpretation in order to address the problems of his own church. That the commentary also speaks to other issues is of course obvious, but the comments never wander far from these basic aims.

Thus, the annunciation to Mary in Luke 1:26-38 is seen as the source for the annunciation to Joseph at least partially to show Joseph as "a model of righteousness, mercy, and obedience to God" (p. 20), though Joseph is not mentioned again after Matt 2:19. Joseph's "thinking right and merciful thoughts" in his attempt to get out of the way of the Holy Spirit's work (Matt 1:19) "contrasts with the scribes' evil and merciless thoughts about the healing of a paralytic on the Sabbath (9:4) . . . [and] with the Pharisees' thinking evil of 'the son of David' who heals the sick and delivers demoniacs (12:25)" (p. 22). These interpretations are made without the slightest bit of evidence offered that Matthew intended Joseph as a model or as a contrast. The text itself suggests nothing more than that Matthew intended to write historically, saying only what he believed to be actually true of Joseph. Where is it intimated that Joseph is a "model of righteousness" for the reader, and why should the fact that Joseph thought righteous thoughts be construed as an intentional contrast by Matthew with figures and events introduced eight and twelve chapters later respectively? If some further reason must be sought for the mention of Joseph's righteousness, why not find it in the broader, more natural context of the general, consistent emphasis on righteousness found throughout the gospel? This is surely more reasonable ground to walk on.

Examples of this sort of exegesis abound throughout the commentary. Even the slightest detail is seen as heavily fraught with significance (cf. Gundry's comment on p. 1: "Even small peculiarities gain attention"). Matthew's addition of the letter *ph* to Asa's name in

the genealogy "produces a secondary allusion to the psalmist Asaph, who, according to very early tradition in the title, wrote Psalm 78. In 13:35 Matthew will quote part of that psalm as fulfilled. Thus a note of prophecy comes into the genealogy" (p. 15). There is nothing, in fact, wrong with seeing significance in detail if one assumes a redaction-critical posture toward the gospel. Matthew of course must have altered details in the text for a reason, if he had any purpose in writing the gospel at all. The objection to Gundry's use of this method comes in the lack of support for many of the highly tuned changes that he finds; there simply is too little evidence for them.

The consistent attitude found in Gundry toward seeing Matthew as one who alters traditions in a nonhistorical way causes him not to see that Matthew sometimes alters Mark in order to clarify for the reader what actually happened historically. Thus Gundry views the confession of Jesus as the Son of God in Matt 14:32-33 (after Peter has walked on the water and Jesus has calmed the storm) as taking the place of the statement that the disciples "did not understand about the loaves, but their heart was hardened" (Mark 6:52) and anticipating Matt 27:54 (p. 301). Rather, it explains the fact that the disciples had not understood enough about the miracle of the loaves (Matt 14:13-21) to expect Jesus to calm the waves and that their astonishment was in fact worship. If the confession of the disciples anticipates anything at all it looks forward to Peter's confession in 16:16, not the confession of the centurion in 27:54.

Gundry's purpose of thoroughly presenting his own line of interpretation should not be viewed in a wholly negative light, though. It has given the commentary a unity that makes the author's train of thought easy to follow, and it often does yield insights that are fresh and stimulating. To return to the two examples criticized above, Gundry's interpretation of the birth narrative about Joseph does explain in a thought-provoking way Joseph's motivation for divorcing Mary ("not as fearing to break the law through failure to divorce Mary, but as fearing to do wrong by taking Mary to wife when she was pregnant by divine causation," p. 22), and his attention to detail does provide useful information about the narrative of Jesus' walking on the water (e.g. the contrastive *de* and the phrase *hoi en tō plōiō* [14:33] do further separate the rest of the disciples from Peter and Jesus in the story). And, in a more general way, his suggestion that the crowds are to be seen in a less neutral way than they normally are—i.e., as the larger body of wavering disciples in the Church—contributes significantly to an understanding of many passages (cf. e.g. the discussion of Matthew 13, pp. 250-282).

Overall, however, Gundry's choice to deal almost totally with Matthew's grammar and vocabulary and with his redaction of Mark makes the book fall far short of what is needed today in the way of a commentary on Matthew. There is both too little and too much in this commentary: too little comparison of Matthew with contemporary Jewish materials and of Gundry's views with the views of other scholars, and too much use of word statistics that, while helpful in many places, are often simply thrown in seemingly for no purpose at all. Gundry tries to justify the choice not to interact with modern scholarship in a thoroughly footnoted fashion (pp. 1-2), and one can sympathize with his decision not to do so. But in a volume aimed at displaying an entirely new approach to the interpretation of Matthew for the scholarly world, is this decision really justifiable? And if one intends the book to be used by students and pastors (as the dust jacket states), how can the fact that comparative material in the Jewish sources has been offered in the works of Strack-Billerbeck, Schlatter, Klostermann, Braun and Jeremias be given as a reason for not including such material (cf. pp. 1-2) when the works of four of these five are found only in German and three of the five are now quite dated? Examples of the irrelevant use of the word statistics developed by Gundry abound in the commentary. How does the fact that "the combination scribes and Pharisees is a Mattheanism (9,0)" contribute to our understanding of Matt 12:38 at all (p. 242), or, one page later, that "*kathōs* yields to the Mattheanism *hōsper* (6,3)" in Matt 12:40? Indeed Gundry's reluctance to define numerically what is a "Mattheanism" (p. 4) casts a shadow of doubt on the validity of the use of the term at all.

Two final comments. Though this book fails to prove its thesis (it merely states it thoroughly) and is often wrong in its assessment of the reasons for which Matthew redacted his sources and therefore in much of its application of the technique of redaction criticism, if evangelical scholarship ignores redaction criticism in its interpretation of Matthew because of Gundry's misapplication of it, that scholarship will be the poorer for it. Second, Gundry's "A Theological Postscript" (will the book be remembered primarily for this postscript?) is a well-articulated defense of the position that one can investigate Matthew from a midrashic viewpoint and still hold honestly to the inerrancy of the text. If his book could prove that Matthew intended to use midrashic technique as thoroughly as Gundry claims he did, I, for one, would be glad to concur. As it is, however, Gundry has failed, and failed totally, in that endeavor.

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Jude, 2 Peter. By Richard J. Bauckham. Word Biblical Commentary vol. 50; Waco: Word, 1983, 357 pp., \$18.95.

Contributions are beginning to appear of a new series of a projected 52-volume commentary on the whole Bible. The contributors are worldwide, but all the contributions are written in English. The doctrinal perspective is broadly evangelical under the general editors David A. Hubbard and Glenn Barker. The OT editor is John D. W. Watts, and the NT editor is Ralph P. Martin. The editors will doubtless reflect the general stance of Fuller Theological Seminary. A large number of the contributors are British or Canadian scholars as is the case with the volume under review.

The NT volumes print the Greek text in short segments followed by the author's translation. The OT volumes only print the Hebrew text in a limited amount. The general features of the commentary are quite attractive: Each author furnishes his own translation of the text, the layout of the format provides defined sections that are to assist readers at different levels, and an introduction provides orientation. The sections in the *Jude, 2 Peter* volume are "Bibliography," "Translation," "Notes," "Form/Structure/Setting," "Comment" and "Explanation." The "Bibliography" sections provide scholarly literature in several languages. Textual discussions occur in the notes (cf. pp. 108-109). The "Explanation" section offers a synthesis following the analysis. This feature allows the commentary series to be used by laypeople. The "Comment" section could be used by the intelligent layperson, but it is mainly for university and seminary trained people.

Richard Bauckham is presently a lecturer in the history of Christian thought at the University of Manchester. His work on *Jude* and *2 Peter* will be an indispensable tool for all who labor in this area of Scripture text. His commentary totals 357 pages on four chapters of Scripture. By way of comparison J. N. D. Kelly's comments in the Harper Series are only 134 pages. As an aside, Trent Butler's work on *Joshua* in the Word Biblical Commentary with 24 chapters receives only 304 pages. So this work on *Jude* and *2 Peter* is a very full work. The quality of research is also very high.

Bauckham argues that *Jude* is almost certainly written by Judas the brother of Jesus and that his brother James is James "the Just" of the Jerusalem Church. Bauckham thus is against the current scholarly consensus that *Jude* is pseudonymous (held by Schelkle, Reicke, Kelly, etc.). He follows most scholars that *2 Peter* is dependent on *Jude*. He also agrees with the scholarly majority in holding that Peter did not write *2 Peter*. "Second Peter bears so many marks of the testament genre . . . that readers familiar with the genre must have expected it to be fictional, like other examples they knew" (p. 134). Bauckham states that "the Petrine authorship was intended to be an entirely *transparent* fiction" (p. 134; italics his) and that "the fiction is not intended to deceive" (p. 328).

To this reviewer, Bauckham's discussion on canonicity (pp. 161-162) is weak. He believes the book deserves an honorable place in the canon because it "embodies a claim to be a faithful mediator of the apostolic message" (pp. 161-162). Yet he holds that 2 Peter is closer to 1 Clement, 2 Clement and the Shepherd of Hermas than to any NT books (p. 149). He thinks it probable that their common indebtedness is to a tradition of Roman Christianity (p. 150). However, Bauckham argues against Käsemann's judgment that 2 Peter is a document of early Catholic viewpoint (pp. 151-154). Bauckham's guess as to the author (if one must guess) is Linus (2 Tim 4:21), who was bishop of Rome after Peter or Anencletus (Cletus) (pp. 160-161). Linus wrote in the name of the Roman Church and "therefore under the name of its greatest leader" (p. 161). The position of the transmission of apostolic authority to the bishop of Rome will not be acceptable to many Protestant scholars. Did the authority fade from Linus to Clement (of Rome) or should we rethink the canonicity of 1 Clement or the Shepherd (esp. since, according to Bauckham, 2 Peter is close to them)?

Bauckham sees no improbability in 2 Peter's use of *Theos* for Jesus, nor does this require a late date (p. 169). On 1:4 ("become sharers of divine nature") Bauckham's explanation is that "although v 4b has been a classic proof text for the Greek patristic and Eastern Orthodox doctrine of deification, in its own historical context it does not refer to a participation in the life or essence of God Himself, but to the gift of 'godlike' immortality" (p. 193). His discussions on important theological passages (e.g., on 1:20-21) are careful with full interaction with the exegetical possibilities (pp. 228-235).

In summary, this is the commentary to own and study on Jude and 2 Peter. All libraries and serious exegetes should possess it. But I hope not all will uncritically accept his judgment on the authorship of 2 Peter.

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The Holy Spirit in the New Testament. By David Ewert. Scottdale: Herald, 1983, 324 pp., \$11.95 paper.

"To add another book on the Holy Spirit to the great number available is a daunting undertaking. One can only hope that by ordering the biblical materials in a new way, familiar truths will shine with new luster." With these words David Ewert of the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary begins his scholastically-informed and pastorally-motivated treatise.

The work speaks from a wealth of study. A quick glance at the extensive endnotes, a nuisance for the student/scholar, confirms Ewert's dependence on the works of Dunn, Green, Stott, Bruce and others. Yet the book is by no means a chore to read. Ewert's ingratiating style will enable the layperson to read and study the book with profit. The author's years of pastoral experience are evident in the often inspirational exposition. He is not above correcting the eisegesis that supports the experiential reductionism often practiced in Pentecostal circles, yet does so with charity. He does not avoid problem passages and provides the exegetical guidance necessary for making interpretive decisions.

The organization of the Biblical materials follows the canonical order, making the book unique. The work is divided into three parts: the gospels, Acts and the epistles. After an introductory chapter on the role of the Spirit in the OT Ewert systematically discusses every passage in the NT that mentions the Holy Spirit. This sequence is helpful in two ways. First, the reader is presented with the unfolding picture of the chronological movement/involvement of the Spirit within the framework of salvation history. In part 1, a chapter detailing the preparatory nature of John the Baptist's movement is followed by two chapters focusing on the relationship between Jesus and the Spirit (his conception, endowment and ministry by the Spirit) and the Spirit in Jesus' teaching (focusing on the Johannine material). The author does not fail to present the exegetical options in the discussion of the means of new birth (John 3:3 ff.) and the chronological relationship between

the first Christian Easter (John 20) and the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2). The reviewer would have appreciated more development of the relationship between the evangelists' discussion of the Holy Spirit (especially John) and the needs and controversies of the early Church.

Part 2 details "The Coming of the Spirit," focusing on Pentecost and the events recorded by Luke in Acts and outlining the earliest spread of Christianity. Ewert follows others in cautioning his readers against finding a pattern for Christian experience in the book of Acts. He states that the prescriptive use of this material is an abuse of Luke's purpose and that to find a normative sequence is not only doomed to failure but in danger of theological error. The author's agreement with Green over against Dunn on the reality of the faith of the Samaritan "believers" in Acts 8 is a very convincing caution against reading Luke through Paul's eyes, although the reader may be unconvinced with the repetitive conclusion that Luke's purpose is a "record of the unique." In an attempt to understand what it meant to be full of the Spirit in the early Church Ewert studies the ten passages in Acts in which Luke reports this phenomenon under the four headings of witness, courage, service and character. The final chapter in part 2 on the presence of the Spirit in the Church's pioneer days discusses the creation, problems and mission of the early Christian community.

The book's arrangement is helpful in a second way. The historical foundation that is established in parts 1 and 2 forms the proper framework for the epistolary teaching about the Spirit in the life of the individual believer within the context of the Christian community. Since a large part of the material dealing with the Holy Spirit in the epistles is from the pen of Paul, part 3 is by and large a discussion of the apostle's pneumatology. The seven chapters of part 3 that constitute almost half of the book begin with a discussion of how the apostles related the Holy Spirit to the Church's spiritual foundation (revelation, illumination and proclamation) and conclude with some observations on the eschatological significance of the Holy Spirit. This last chapter offers a helpful etymology of each of the NT words that express the assurance of the Christian hope (*sphragizō*, *arrabōn* and *aparchē*) and concludes with a discussion of the substance of that hope (the redemption of the body, final justification by God and eternal life). Intermediate chapters continue to follow the chronological pattern and discuss the Spirit and the new life in Christ (the individual perspective), the Christian community (the corporate perspective) and the nature and continuation of the new way of life that springs from these beginnings. Two chapters address worship and the gifts of the Spirit. Chapter 12, "The Spirit and the Christian Life," paves a careful path through the overrated ecstatic manifestations of the Spirit at Corinth and the overemphasis on sobriety at Thessalonica. Ewert discusses the process of transformation under such headings as walking in, being led, strengthened and filled by and bearing the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Acknowledging his dependence on Green's organization and discussion of the gifts of the Spirit, Ewert nevertheless provides added insight into the relationship between the *charismata* and natural endowments ("when a natural gift is put into the service of God it becomes a spiritual gift," p. 263) and the service of others as the purpose of the gifts. Ewert echoes Green and others who state that to be a Christian is to be charismatic.

In the author's preface Ewert expresses his hope of emulating William Barclay's gift of making difficult things simple. His organizational skills, ability to combine scholarship with pastoral insight in a delightfully readable manner and above all the creation in the reader of a yearning to be more open to the Spirit leaves the reviewer in no doubt of the writer's successful realization of this worthy goal. The book is marred by a few typographical errors (p. 12, line 8: "avoid"; p. 140, line 1: the omission of the definite article in the section title; p. 177, line 20: "Masson" misspelled; p. 185, line 8: omission of "or" in the citation of Gal 3:2 from the *RSV*). This is a worthy addition to the study of a very important subject.

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The Great Code: The Bible and Literature. By Northrop Frye. New York and London: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1982, xxiii + 261 pp., \$14.95.

Since the *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) we have come to expect trenchant analysis from the master of myth-criticism, Northrop Frye, who describes his latest, timely attempt as his "personal encounter" (p. xi) with the text of Scripture, not as Biblical criticism or theology. Let me summarize the gist of his argument, which intricately unfolds over eight chapters.

In a highly informative historical-linguistic reconstruction, Frye first delimits the three types of language—hieroglyphic, hieratic and demotic—that treat metaphysical questions, but adopts the somewhat misleading term *kerygma* to describe Biblical language, with its metaphorical origins, metonymic contemporaneousness and mythic proportions. Frye defines "myth" as both a story or plot, and a story of sacred and social significance—a drastically needed and potentially helpful distinction. Mythic patterns, for Frye, "give shape to metaphors and rhetoric" (p. 35) of later literature, including the Bible's central myth of deliverance.

Concerning metaphors, Frye provides a concise lesson in their "profoundly illogical, if not anti-logical," nature: "They assert that two things are the same thing while remaining two different things." Many of Christianity's basic doctrines can only be expressed using metaphor, suggesting to Frye that metaphor is one of the Bible's "controlling modes of thought" (p. 54). Since metaphor without external correspondent is inherent to the Bible's essentially poetic language, Frye posits, the literal or primary meaning of the Bible is its metaphorical sense. The Bible as a whole is one gigantic metaphor or myth. Based on a typological use of the OT in the NT, Biblical myth is diachronic for Frye, hearkening back to the OT and forward to the apocalypse and being contained in seven phases of revelation—creation, revolution, law, wisdom, prophecy, gospel, apocalypse—each story a type of its successor and an antitype of its predecessor. Frye's complex, eclectic potpourri of primitive stories traces the recreation of the world after the fall into the new world of the apocalypse.

Frye emphasizes that Biblical imagery—paradisal, pastoral, agricultural, urban and human-life—is part of this ideal, apocalyptic world that the "human creative imagination envisages, which human energy tries to bring into being, and which the Bible presents also as a form of 'revelation'" (p. 139). And narratively the Bible is a divine comedy contained within a sequence of repetitious myths. Frye cites the exodus as the central event of the OT and Christ's resurrection as its antitype, concluding strangely that "the life of Christ as presented in the Gospels becomes less puzzling when we realize that it is being presented in this form" (p. 172). Always making complex associations, Frye concludes with an intriguing study of the book of Job as the epitome of Biblical narrative.

In the concluding chapter on rhetoric Frye, propounding his most provocative conclusions, argues creditably against the concept of individual authors composing the Bible, proclaims wisely the futility of distinguishing the Bible's original material, opts for the relative lateness of OT documents based on the preponderance of prose over poetry, and praises the Bible's oracular simplicity (he praises the *KJV* for its literality, while criticizing modern translations, which lack style and rhythm). Frye concludes by emphasizing that the Bible's resonance—the ability of a particular statement to acquire universal significance—is based on its "imaginative unity . . . founded on metaphor" (p. 218) and polysemous meaning. Harkening back to medieval interpretation, Frye posits true Hegelian dialecticalism as the key to probing the Bible's world of words.

The above summary, altogether too brief, should hint at the unexcelled brilliance of Frye's insights, his encyclopedic knowledge, sophisticated erudition and sheer cleverness. It is rewarding to peruse Frye's prose and to leap from symbol to symbol, allusion to allusion, in the hands of a master. But I suppose that is where my problems begin. For Frye, the Bible is to be manipulated. In his "personal encounter" he dictates the tempo, but

many of his titillating observations leave the text in the background.

I am bothered for example by Frye's anti-historical temper. His treatment of myth and metaphor ironically demythologizes the Bible by tracing every "event" to an earlier mythological source. Frye claims that anything "historically true" in the Bible is not there "because it is historically true," and that "the sense of historical fact as such is simply not delimited in the Bible, anywhere" (p. 40). Luke, Paul and I would take exception.

And despite his disclaimer against theologizing, Frye thinks theologically, his final chapter resembling ambiguous modern theologies of the word interpreted by faith. Note also Frye's observations that God is a "ferocious" being (p. 181) whose existence as creator "is a projection from the fact that man makes things" (p. 112; cf. p. 228 where Frye endorses Feuerbach's assertion, "man creates his gods in his own image"); the Trinity evolves from the "metaphorical kernels" of the sky, sun and air (p. 156); men are murderous "psychotic apes" (p. 211); and the fall is a folktale about sexual knowledge. What about theodicy? For Frye it is a "dreary chess problem" (p. 114), and original sin is no more than "man's fear of freedom" (p. 232). When one repents (?) he does not stop doing evil but gains "an enlarged vision of the dimensions of human life" (p. 130). The end of time promises only that heaven and hell are "up for grabs" (p. 230), though Frye maintains that hell is a "foul doctrine" (p. 74).

We should also question Frye's *post hoc* mythic interpretations of various passages (see p. xix), his cyclical view of history, the mistaken emphasis on *eros* in Luke 7:47, his discrediting of Paul's understanding of Judaism, and his citation of *Enuma elish* as behind the Genesis account of creation.

Those expecting a traditional treatment of the Bible as literature will be sadly disappointed by Frye's work. But for the inquiring and discriminating reader, *The Great Code* is a storehouse of challenging information, especially on language, metaphor and myth.

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"Righteousness" in the New Testament: "Justification" in the United States Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue. By John Reumann. With responses by Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Jerome D. Quinn. Philadelphia: Fortress/New York and Ramsey: Paulist, 1982, xvii + 278 pp., \$13.95 paper.

This volume is the seventh in a series that features Lutheran and Roman Catholic scholars in dialogue over traditionally divisive theological issues. The place and meaning of "righteousness" language in the NT manifestly qualifies as such an issue. Choosing a Lutheran, John Reumann, to write the main essay was, as the prologue hints, a matter of ecumenical courtesy—the Roman Catholic Joseph Fitzmyer had contributed the basic document in the dialogue concerning "teaching office and infallibility." Fitzmyer also writes the response to Reumann's essay in this volume, and Jerome Quinn, another Roman Catholic, adds a brief note on righteousness language in the pastoral epistles. I will (1) summarize the argument in Reumann's essay, (2) relate and comment on the most important of Fitzmyer's criticisms, and (3) add a few criticisms of my own.

Reumann sets the stage for his survey of the NT evidence by reminding the reader of the centrality of justification for the Lutheran Reformers and by pointing out an apparent ambiguity in the place given the doctrine: The Apology for the Augsburg Confession (1531) evidences a "broad" use of the term, while the formula of Concord (1580) confines justification to one step in an *ordu salutis*. A further issue, very important in contemporary Lutheranism, is whether justification is to be regarded as the central doctrine or whether it should be understood on a par with others—although perhaps as *primus inter pares*.

In his survey of the OT use of righteousness language, Reumann emphasizes the connotations of salvific activity found in Isaiah and argues for a cosmic background for the lan-

guage. The terminology appears in covenant, lawcourt, apocalyptic and ethical contexts. Although Jesus' use of righteousness terminology is infrequent and unremarkable—Reumann regards the significant gospel occurrences as redactional—his use of *basileia* of the imminent eschaton establishes a material parallel to Paul's "righteousness of God" (here Reumann follows Jüngel).

Reumann turns next to the NT evidence. His method is to proceed through each corpus, in approximate chronological order, commenting on every occurrence of a term using the root *dikaio*.

Evidence from early "confessional slogans"—1 Pet 3:19; 1 Tim 3:16; 1 Cor 6:11; 2 Cor 5:21; Rom 3:24-25a—suggests that *dikaio*-language was used to interpret the significance of Jesus' death at an early date. The usage at this stage was Christologically oriented and without a single, stable signification. The fact that significant pre-Pauline *theologoumena* employ *dikaio*-language warns against thinking that justification in Paul can be viewed as a mere "*Kampflehre*," employed as a foil to Judaizers. Reumann regards the doctrine as central in Paul, used and shaped according to the needs of the situation that the apostle faced. To be sure, early letters such as 1-2 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians do not employ *dikaio*-language very frequently, but the doctrine "stands, unarticulated, behind what he writes" (p. 49—commenting on 1 Corinthians specifically). In Galatians (dated in A.D. 54) *dikaio*-language comes into its own. Reumann suggests that Paul and his Judaizing (and Jewish) opponents held in common the importance of justification. Paul's contribution was to deny resolutely any place for "works of the law" in the process. Reumann regards Paul's use of the verb *dikaioō*—here in Galatians and throughout Paul—to have declarative force, while he is suspicious of Ziesler's attempt consistently to include in the noun *dikaïosynē* an ethical thrust. In Gal 5:5 ("But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope") Reumann finds evidence that "justification runs through the whole life of the believer and beyond" (p. 59)—a notion that he emphasizes throughout his treatment of the Pauline materials.

Romans is naturally given considerable attention, and it is here that some of Reumann's own views clearly emerge. He regards "righteousness" as the theme and organizing principle of the letter and, following the "Käsemann school," considers the distinctive thrust of the term to be "God's saving activity, the gift inseparable from the Giver, a power of dominion to which one submits, forensic, i.e., received not achieved" (p. 88—he specifically includes the usages in 1:17; 3:21 ff.; chap. 6; 10:3-4 here). And, again following Käsemann and his pupils, Reumann attributes to Paul an apocalyptic-oriented expansion of the term from the OT "faithfulness to the covenant" to "faithfulness to creation" (he finds 3:5 particularly significant here).

The "deutero-Paulines" (Ephesians, Colossians and the pastorals) preserve to varying degrees the distinctive Pauline view of righteousness, but without the full Pauline theological framework. Thus, in Ephesians "realized" eschatology tends to diminish the "not yet" pole of tension in Paul's own eschatology, while in the pastorals ecclesiology is pushing out eschatology: Both developments tend to rob justification of its critical importance. Reumann's conclusion on the "Pauline school" (including Paul and his followers) includes a valuable survey of suggested "centers" for Paul's theology. It will be no surprise that Reumann opts for "righteousness" as the doctrine that has best exegetical claim to be the center of Paul's thinking.

Reumann considers all of the occurrences of "righteousness" in Matthew to be redactional. The term is closer to its OT roots than it is in Paul, with the stress lying either on the gift of salvation (cf. Isaiah) or on God's approved conduct. This difference in the use of *dikaio*-language does not, however, signal a theological contradiction (p. 135). Like Matthew, Luke-Acts uses *dikaio*-language according to the OT model, and little influence from Paul is discerned in the Acts speeches. Reumann finds James' usage to be close to Matthew's. On the crucial question of chap. 2 he argues that James' thrust is not to be set in contradiction to Paul's concerns. While the two authors use their language in different

ways, they agree on the essentials of the doctrine. James in fact is best viewed as attempting to preserve and defend Paul's teaching against misunderstanding. In Hebrews Reumann finds another author whose use of *dikaio*-language is closer to the OT than to Paul. 1 Peter, on the other hand, preserves more of the distinctive Pauline significance. 2 Peter, which Reumann dates to the first half of the second century, applies righteousness language to a pluralistic Hellenistic culture.

Reumann concludes that righteousness language is both more varied and more important than the Reformers thought. It has "a sound claim for centrality in Scripture" (p. 185).

Fitzmyer's response, while brief, is characteristically full and well-argued. I will mention some of his more important criticisms and take the opportunity to register my own opinion where appropriate. He criticizes Reumann for accepting the idea that righteousness has a cosmic background in the OT and for thinking that the term involves a faithfulness to creation in Paul (pp. 199, 211). I fully concur with Fitzmyer here. The case for finding a reference to creation in Paul's use of the term is remarkably weak. I also share Fitzmyer's reserve about the evidence gleaned from the early confessions, both with respect to the identification of some of them and with respect to the significance of righteousness terminology in them. Related to this is the question to what extent Paul's stress on righteousness is to be attributed to Jewish polemics. Again I think Fitzmyer is correct to give less importance to this factor than have others (e.g., Schweizer, Stendahl) but to find it more significant than does Reumann. When all is said and done, the massive concentration of *dikaio*-language in texts dealing with the "Jewish question" is significant. Fitzmyer is also justified (if I may use the word) in criticizing Reumann for his statement that Paul contributed little to NT Christology. Not only are the "hymns" important, whether pre-Pauline or not, but the crucial importance of Paul's "in Christ" language with its variegated theological implications cannot be ignored. In a tantalizingly brief paragraph Fitzmyer offers a rather strong criticism of E. P. Sanders' work on *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*. He finds Sanders' two basic assumptions in his use of rabbinic materials to be unfounded and says that "the whole question of the relevance of rabbinic material for the interpretation of Pauline writings needs serious, new assessment" (p. 218). Hear, hear!

The one criticism of Fitzmyer that I would like to register involves his discussion of the verb *dikaioō*. Fitzmyer acknowledges that the verb has forensic significance. Indeed he focuses on the forensic aspect of *dikaio*-language throughout his essay. He justly criticizes Reumann for losing the term "from its judicial moorings" (p. 200). But if justification is forensic, does not the "real change" it confers involve position or status before the righteous judge? The verdict of the judge in the law court does not change the defendant; it changes (and the change is "real") the status of the defendant.

In the previous two paragraphs I have indicated some of my misgivings about Reumann's essay by underscoring Fitzmyer's remarks. Here, finally, let me add two of my own. First, I am concerned that Reumann may have confused the issue by finding in all of Paul's *dikaio*-terms a broad reference to salvation "from start to finish." The verb is consistently oriented to the Christian's past. Rom 8:30 certainly cannot, contra Reumann, be used as evidence to the contrary; Paul in vv 29-30 concentrates on the essential acts of God in his work with the Christian, and nothing would suggest that *dikaioō* must include "everything from call to glory" (p. 86). Perhaps without accepting Ziesler's conclusions *in toto* a greater distinction between noun and verb should be observed than is the case in Reumann's work.

Second, I would criticize the tendency in Reumann to make Paul's view of righteousness (as interpreted by Reumann) decisive for the NT. He says for instance that James' "corrective" and the "pseudo-pauline *perversion*" (italics mine) must not be "mistaken for what is original and central" (p. 158). But original and central to what (or whom)? Because justification was central for Paul, must any NT theology that does not maintain its centrality become a "perversion"? Is it not necessary to evaluate the material thrust of each NT "theol-

ogy" within its own framework and then compare it with other contributions? To be sure, if righteousness as interpreted by Paul were the center of NT theology, then departures from that perspective could legitimately be labelled "perversions." But I question whether "righteousness" can be regarded as the center of NT theology. Indeed I wonder if it is broad enough to function as the center of Paul's theology. Part of the problem of course lies in what is meant by "center." For instance, in terms of theological framework I would think "salvation-history" is a good candidate for "centrality" in Paul. In terms of content, however, Christology (with its varied and extensive interpretation and application) could be considered central. But even if we were to follow Reumann's argument about the centrality of "righteousness" in the NT, it must be pointed out that he has succeeded only in demonstrating the centrality of the language in the NT, not any particular interpretation (Pauline or other) of that language (Fitzmyer sees this also; cf. p. 226).

Other minor caveats could be registered: The work of L. Morris and J. Piper (which I think was in publication in time to be used in this volume) is strangely neglected; the desire for comprehensibility and fairness often leads to uncertainty about conclusions; the treatment of the OT background is very brief. But I want to avoid the book reviewer's trap of hypercriticism. Reumann's essay succeeds remarkably well in what it sets out to do. We are indebted to him for such a comprehensive, generally very sane and often insightful survey of *dikaio*-language in the NT. He is to be commended for dealing with all the evidence and resisting attempts to short-circuit that process (for example, he refuses to relegate 2 Peter and the pastorals to the dustbin of "early Catholicism"). And he consistently attempts to perceive the unity among NT authors (James and Paul; Matthew and Paul) that too many facetiously dismiss because of a difference in word usage. Reumann's work is probably the most valuable survey of righteousness language in the NT in the English language. Fitzmyer's essay is icing on the cake, and it also illustrates how close modern Biblical exegetes from different confessions can be on theological issues that were once so divisive. In such unity, however, something might be lost. As Fitzmyer points out, Reumann can vindicate Luther's claim that justification is the center of Paul, but only by giving the term a meaning that Luther may not have recognized.

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Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation. By Henry A. Virkler. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981, 255 pp., \$12.95.

Venturing outside one's field of competency to write a book is at best a risky endeavor. In the case of Henry Virkler, however, it has had the benefit of enabling him to apply knowledge of the stages of development of study of any subject area to the interpretation of Scripture. He particularly attempts to give help in translating hermeneutical theory into practical steps of interpretation. At points he give a "consumer's" rather than a "producer's" perspective on sermons.

The book reflects current issues in hermeneutics. In the opening chapter Virkler discusses several areas of contemporary controversy: (1) Is there one valid meaning of a text? (2) Does the divinely inspired text of Scripture possess a fuller sense than that intended by the human author? (3) To what extent should Scripture be interpreted "literally"? (4) Does one's spiritual condition affect one's ability to interpret Scripture? (5) Is Scripture inerrant?

The author advocates a five-step hermeneutical procedure: (1) historical-cultural and contextual analysis; (2) lexical-syntactical analysis; (3) theological analysis; (4) genre identification and analysis; (5) application. The book is well organized, reflecting the author's competence in psychology and curriculum. Each chapter begins with goals for the student and concludes with a chapter summary. At numerous points he lists suggestions for addi-

tional reading. Of special interest are the "brain teasers," case studies provided to give the reader practice in application of the hermeneutical theory.

The book has real value as an introduction to hermeneutics. The exercises are particularly useful in translating theory into practice. The analyses are at times oversimplified (e.g. the statement of three views of inspiration, pp. 20-22). The treatment given to some topics is disproportionate to that given to other similar issues (e.g. twelve pages devoted to inerrancy compared to nine pages given to the other four controversial issues combined). The work tends to be a compilation of the thinking of others rather than original thinking by the author. The influence of Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., is particularly evident at a number of points. There is a wide variety of issues introduced, and the reader is familiarized with the contemporary issues in evangelical hermeneutics as well as with some major historical types of hermeneutics.

This book would be suitable as a primary text in an introductory hermeneutics course. It would also be usable for serious study groups of advanced lay Bible students.

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Understanding and Applying the Bible. By Robertson McQuilkin. Chicago: Moody, 1983, 288 pp., n.p. paper.

J. Robertson McQuilkin's book grows out of many years of teaching hermeneutics and a resultant desire for a textbook that would serve exactly his purpose. Consequently he has produced a work that is accurately described by the title: It is intended to facilitate both the understanding and the application of the Bible. The book is intended for those who have no previous formal training in hermeneutics or Biblical languages. It is clearly and simply written, is well outlined, and includes both verbal illustrations and graphic charts to communicate the author's points.

The book is divided into two major parts. Part 1 deals with presuppositions and principles and part 2 with guidelines and skills. McQuilkin is aware that presuppositions affect conclusions and consequently attempts to identify these. Among different approaches he mentions the supernaturalistic, which searches for hidden meanings; the naturalistic, which emphasizes human authorship and minimizes or reinterprets anything supernatural; the dogmatic, which conforms the interpretation to a preconceived conclusion; and a fourth approach, combining two or more of these approaches. His own approach is an instance of the fourth type, employing the presuppositions of the human authorship of the Bible, its divine inspiration, and the coherence of its doctrines, in a balanced blend.

From these presuppositions the author then derives principles, which he seeks to demonstrate from Scripture itself. Since Scripture is our authority it should be our authority even for our method of interpreting it. He derives three principles from the nature of the Bible: (1) Since the Bible was written by human beings it must be treated as any other human communication in determining the meaning intended by the author; (2) since Scripture is God-breathed and true in all its parts the unity of its teaching must be sought and its supernatural elements recognized and understood; (3) since Scripture is God-breathed it is absolute in its authority for doctrine and life. Prerequisites for interpreting Scripture are regeneration, commitment, prayer and humility.

McQuilkin then moves to guidelines for interpretation. Under human authorship he deals with understanding human language; historical, physical, cultural setting; a method for word study; analyzing thought structure; examining the context; figurative language; understanding parallels; and Hebrew poetry. In part 1 of divine authorship he treats unity of Scripture; coherence of truth; approach to alleged discrepancies; and Biblical prophecy. Part 2 of divine authorship deals with identifying the audience God intended and identify-

ing the response God desires. Here he emphasizes that Scripture has not really been applied until we are obeying and experiencing it.

McQuilkin is to be commended for his awareness of the role that presuppositions play in interpretation and for consciously (and self-consciously) isolating and criticizing those presuppositions. It is also encouraging to find him taking seriously the nature of the Bible in formulating an interpretive methodology. He shows awareness of the big hermeneutical problem—moving from the content of Scripture to its relevance for our situations today. An increasing number of interpreters are coming to realize that this requires isolating the underlying principles governing the Biblical precepts, and McQuilkin has given some concrete guidance in identifying these. Two flow charts offer a step-by-step approach to determining the applicability of Biblical materials for today. Systematic theologians will appreciate his dealing with the relationship between interpreting the Bible and developing a theology.

Having said this, I sense that McQuilkin may have attempted too much within one volume of this size. At points the treatment is superficial and misleading (e.g. grouping Kierkegaard, Barth and Bultmann together as the existentialist approach, whose underlying presupposition is that the Bible "contains the Word of God" [p. 38]). Not all students of hermeneutics will agree with his criteria for identifying the permanent elements of the Biblical message, and the arguments given for them are not always convincing.

All in all, however, this is a useful guidebook, which students and preachers could well utilize to enable them to draw correct interpretations of Biblical passages and to stimulate them to the development of their own hermeneutical method.

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