

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Questioning Back: The Overcoming of Metaphysics in Christian Tradition.* By Joseph S. O'Leary. Minneapolis: Winston, 1985, 225 pp., \$19.95.

Although it would be going too far to say that every evangelical theologian ought to read this book, it would certainly be enlightening for any conservative theologian for whom the death of God of the 1960s has given way to the death of radical theology. That not all theology has become traditional again is well demonstrated by the publication of this volume, whose praises are being touted on the dust jacket by important names of the theological avant garde: H. Cox, L. Dewart, P. van Buren, and others. The work of O'Leary, who is currently researching Japanese Buddhism, may well signal a rallying point for a revival of the theological left wing.

Once again we have before us a piece of theological analysis provided on behalf of the "contemporary believer," who turns out to be the traditional unbeliever who still wants to make a profession of Christian faith. Only the means of carrying out the balancing act have changed. This time it is Heidegger (interpreted in the style of the 1980s as a hermeneutician rather than as an existentialist) and J. Derrida, the father of deconstructivism, who are to lead theology back onto the path of true contemporaneity. The thesis as stated by the title is, to coin a slogan, that "that theology theologizes best which metaphysicizes least."

Such an idea would seem *a priori* to have to be unfair to either metaphysics or theology or both. On the whole metaphysics fares quite well under O'Leary's scrutiny, at least if one grants his Heideggerian presuppositions. The idea is that just as Heidegger paved the way for the overcoming of metaphysics in his new thinking on Being, so the time has come for theology to overcome metaphysics for renewed fidelity to Christian faith. That the total elimination of metaphysics from Christian theology may never be entirely realizable O'Leary does not deny. Nevertheless he sees no alternative but to try.

O'Leary's theological model is Luther, who perhaps better than almost anyone else in the history of theology recognized how metaphysics has distorted the Christian message. O'Leary capably demonstrates in both traditional theologians (especially Augustine) and modern ones (e.g. Rahner and Barth) a tension between their Christian faith and the metaphysics by which it is restrained. This part of his analysis ought to be of greatest interest to more traditional theologians.

It is theology that may find itself unrecognizable after treatment by O'Leary. According to him the "intention of faith is the unifying theme of Christian theology" (p. 7). Faith, not its object, stands at the center. The content of faith is variable. Any further specification could land one back in metaphysics. Ought one be surprised that for O'Leary this demetaphysicization also precludes "biblicism"—namely, a return to the Biblical version of theology? Even there we must look behind the metaphysical concepts. Thus O'Leary states that "the fundamental teaching of John is that the phenomenality of Jesus Christ, as apprehended in faith, is one with the phenomenality of God" (p. 221).

Then how do we find the essence of Christianity after we have debunked all traditional expressions? This is a hard question that may leave us speechless. "In awaiting the renewal, faith may be condemned to long, bleak periods of inarticulateness in which all glibness is silenced" (p. 27). Dialogue with the faith of Judaism, Islam and eastern religions is going to be necessary to rediscover what is at the heart of Christian faith. "Today it is the presence of those other traditions which presses Christianity into shape, re-

vealing to it its precise historical identity" (p. 208). Whereas Christian tradition needs to be overcome, non-Christian responses to Christianity become authoritative.

This review has concentrated on some of the glaring highlights of O'Leary's work. There is much solid philosophical analysis here, along with a fascinating application of Heidegger and Derrida. But for evangelicals, who may become too introspective and critical of each other, the book is a good reminder of where the real challenges to orthodoxy are today.

Winfried Corduan

Taylor University, Upland, IN

*The Good News of the Coming Kingdom: The Marriage of Evangelism and Social Responsibility.* By Andrew Kirk. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1985, 164 pp., \$5.95.

No novice in the area of Church-and-society issues, Kirk has written *Theology Encounters Revolution*, *Liberation Theology: An Evangelical Perspective from the Third World*, and *Theology and the Third World Church*. The present work is designed to be a provocative, question-raising springboard for further discussion of the issues raised. It is based on the eschatological premise that God will bring in a new world "marked by total harmony, reconciliation and justice, in which the worth and dignity of each individual is fully respected" (p. 12). Prompted by the belief that the Church is disenchanting with present ways of engaging the world with the gospel, Kirk sets out to challenge the thinking of culture-bound Christians and suggest new ways of looking at the meaning of Christian faith.

After an introduction that defines and scrutinizes the major groups in Christendom (evangelical, liberal and radical) and concludes that all operate deficiently, the ensuing five sections serve to lead the reader through the author's thinking on this most timely subject.

Through a review of mostly modern history Kirk reveals, in part 1, how economic systems, be they capitalistic or communistic, have left people strangled spiritually and unable to free themselves from the chains of their cultural/economic framework. The Church is charged with being so accommodating to these structures that it has moved away from the essentials of the gospel. Introduced is the idea of conversion not being just an "add-on" feature to life but a wholehearted embracing of the kingdom of God and its righteousness. The nuclear threat, abortion, and widespread aggression are seen as the fruit of a western (including Soviet) mindset that the author hopes will cause the west to reconsider its own history and present role in the world.

In part 2 Marxism is shown to be a challenge to Christianity in the area of ministry to basic needs. Stated is the concept that the Church cannot, in the face of the Marxist ideal concerning the distribution of daily needs, offer only a message of individual reconciliation and the hope of reversal of fortunes in another life.

Forming the "therefore" section of his thesis, parts 3 and 4 find Kirk building upon ideas already suggested and focusing on areas such as wealth and poverty, the redistribution of the former, the real meaning and scope of the gospel, and the methodologies used in delivering the good news of the kingdom to a needy world. Of particular interest to some might be chap. 10, where the author serves up an editorial of current evangelism methods. His proposals are particularly challenging and refreshing, causing one to re-think his approach to fulfilling the great commission. Many eggshells are crunched upon in what could be the pivotal chapter, linking the heavily historical first sections to the forward-looking pages that follow.

Using the Church as a model, Kirk describes the future kingdom in part 5. As Chris-

tians live their faith, suffer for Christ, and witness to his mercy, the world will see the beginnings of this new world coming. Kirk does not fit neatly into most endtime scenarios, but that is probably for the best since it frees him from the clichés he so ably seeks to avoid throughout his book. An epilogue serves to remind Christians to worship the Ruler while working in the kingdom. Questions for discussion on each chapter are included at the end, along with a brief appendix concerning the feature of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelisation.

Written in a simple, thought-provoking style, this is a presentation all can benefit from, be he preacher or pew-sitter. Kirk lives up to his promise of making the reader "consider afresh how adequately [we] are expressing [our] faith to the circumstances of today's world" (p. 12).

Mick Boersma

Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, La Mirada, CA

*Social Context and Proclamation. A Socio-Cognitive Study in Proclaiming the Gospel Cross-Culturally.* By David Filbeck. Pasadena: William Carey, 1985, 180 pp., \$8.95.

Approaching the Bible from the perspective of the social sciences is increasingly being done by such Biblical scholars as Gottwald, Kee, Meeks and Tidball, to mention only a few. By analyzing the social milieu of the OT and NT world, theologians are fine-tuning their interpretations of the Bible for today's world. In like manner, missiologists such as Nida, Tippett, Kraft and Hiebert have attempted to incorporate the academic disciplines of sociology, anthropology and linguistics into their repertoire as they train others in more effectively communicating the Bible in cross-cultural situations. It is this latter group to which Filbeck belongs, though his excellent analysis is important for Biblical scholars as well.

Filbeck breaks new ground with his "socio-cognitive study" aimed primarily at the missionary who is or will be communicating the gospel in a cross-cultural situation. Following the lengthy first chapter, "Introduction to Communication," Filbeck's book divides neatly into two parts: (1) an analysis of the missionary as communicator of the gospel, and (2) an analysis of the society to which the gospel is to be communicated by the missionary. The real strength of the second part of the book is a chapter-by-chapter analysis of tribal, peasant, modern and developing societies and the differing strategies the missionary will need to employ in each unique cultural situation.

Especially pertinent to the readers of this *Journal* is chap. 4, where Filbeck tackles the thorny issue of cultural hermeneutics and the related question of cultural relativity. Filbeck maintains that the missionary must always seek to communicate the Bible in society in ways most understandable by those in that particular society, not necessarily in ways harmonious with the standard Biblical interpretation from the missionary's own cultural perspective. While acknowledging that "cultural relativity has not been well received in theology" (p. 68), Filbeck goes on to succinctly explain why this has been the case. The basic problem involves different understandings of truth in theology and in the social sciences. In theology truth is propositional, and what is propositionally true in one cultural context is propositionally true in another. In the social sciences, however, truth is "systematic"—in other words, it is truth according to a cultural system. Thus in cultural relativity what is true in the context of one culture may or may not be true in another cultural context. "Obviously," Filbeck points out, "this latter view of truth is upsetting to those who hold that revelation consists of propositions that . . . must be proclaimed as such in every cultural context" (p. 68). He goes on to defend his view of

truth with a stimulating analysis of the apostle Paul's understanding of cultural relativity in Romans.

While Filbeck primarily addresses his book toward missionaries, the challenges missionaries face in communicating the gospel are challenges for all Christians in this increasingly pluralistic world. The book is a good source for those individuals contemplating cross-cultural work or those who are involved in the training of those who will be communicating the gospel cross-culturally. It points to the need for a continuing dialogue between theologians and missiologists as both attempt to make the good news more relevant for each generation and each culture.

Larry W. Caldwell

William Carey International University, Pasadena, CA

*Encyclopedia of Psychology*. Edited by David G. Benner. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985, 1,223 pp., \$39.95.

This reference work on psychology represents a significant contribution of Christian scholarship for the Church. Its mammoth size leaves the reviewer with a difficult task. Nevertheless an overview of this volume and its 1,050 entries will be given. It was written for the public at large, particularly the Christian public. As its title indicates it is an encyclopedia of psychology, and many of its entries represent factual detailed information about major psychologists, tests, therapies and most symptoms and disorders. Many of the articles on religious or Christian topics have a primarily psychological or integrative slant rather than a purely theological one, as might be expected in a volume of this nature. This work should not be confused with a dictionary of theology or Christianity.

Perhaps the most helpful thing about the volume for the nonpsychologist (besides its alphabetical listing of topics) is the category index, which organizes all the articles into twelve categories as follows: fields of specialization and professional organizations; eminent contributors to psychology; systems and theories; human development; learning, cognition and intelligence; sexuality, marriage and family; social behavior; personality; psychological assessment; religion; psychopathology; and treatment approaches and issues. The latter two are further subdivided into several subcategories. Turning to the contributors, the last reads like a Who's Who of Christian Psychology. However, it also includes a number of psychologists in secular settings and a few graduate students whose faith commitments are unknown to this reviewer.

In evaluating the contents of this work it is important to emphasize that the majority of the articles supply balanced, normative, psychological information without any attempt to relate it to Christianity. This should not be viewed as a weakness by the Christian community but rather that this volume is reporting the state of the field. The quality of the articles varies somewhat, as might be expected in a volume with a plethora of authors. In terms of the distribution of articles, there is preponderance on personality, psychopathology and therapy. Psychological assessment (test and testing) articles are relatively limited and articles on social behavior are rather under-represented. However, this distribution of articles probably reflects the proportion of Christian psychologists in the different areas of psychology. In terms of the articles that touch on Christianity, this reviewer found the following to be outstanding: Biblical Anthropology; Christian Psychology; Demonic Influences and Psychopathology; Doubt; Guidance, Divine; Guilt; and Psychology as Religion. The following articles written with a strong psychological slant were also helpful: Christian Growth; Conversion; Faith; Perfectionism; Sin, Psychological Consequences; and Spiritual and Religious Issues in Therapy. On the other hand the article Counseling and Psychotherapy: Theological Themes was marred by a higher-

critical and neo-orthodox view of Scripture. Furthermore, in the article Jesus Christ we find our Lord portrayed as a rather mystical, psychologized Savior whose purpose was to promote emotional growth.

Although this reviewer might be considered biased because he contributed three articles to this volume (Basic Youth Conflicts Seminars, Healthy Personality, Nouthetic Counseling), he heartily recommends it to pastors, counselors, church librarians and others who wish to broaden and deepen their knowledge of the field of psychology and its implications for various aspects of Christianity. Its assets far outweigh its limited flaws as a reference work for church libraries and as a reference tool for pastors. It is not intended as a reference tool for the professional psychologist, though there are obviously things that can be learned by anyone reading this volume.

John D. Carter

Rosemead School of Psychology

*Tragedy in Eden: Original Sin in the Theology of Jonathan Edwards.* By C. Samuel Storms. Lanham: University Press of America, 1985, 316 pp., \$25.75/\$12.75.

This book is a detailed and precise examination of the New England Arminian controversy of the eighteenth century and Jonathan Edwards' response to it. The volume contains an excellent introduction to and summary of Edwards' great treatise on *The Freedom of the Will* (1754), and from this discussion we also receive insights into how another of Edwards' treatises, *Original Sin* (1758), is related to and interacts with *The Freedom of the Will*. Throughout the monograph Storms demonstrates good control of the philosophical and theological details of the controversy. There are three features of the debate to which Storms especially directs his focus. The first is that of Adam's fall and God's sovereignty. Ultimately Storms shows how Edwards must trace Adam's decision to sin back to a pre-fall infinite regress ending in God. Storms concludes that Edwards' philosophy collapses into theology, and thus Edwards is "philosophically weak" at his ultimate critical point. But what Storms does not seem to totally grasp is that for Edwards philosophy has to collapse into theology, for Edwards' worldview is of a world based on God. Ultimately the question comes down to the standpoint from which one judges Edwards: that of human philosophy, or that of Scriptural theology.

The second feature of Storms' work is his discussion of mediate and immediate imputation of Adam's original sin. Storms concludes, contrary to P. Miller and others, that Edwards taught immediate imputation rather than mediate imputation. Not all Calvinists acknowledged this distinction, but it arose out of breaking down of the elements of original sin into "guilt" and "corruption." Storms maintains that Edwards taught that "the guilt of Adam's transgression is directly imputed to his posterity prior to their individuated existence as persons" (p. 227). Logically Adam's guilt caused the corruption inherent in original sin. That is immediate imputation. On the other hand, mediate imputation teaches that Adam's sin is passed on via the corruption of man's nature inherited from Adam. Storms points out the distinction in this manner: "Thus, whereas the former doctrine [immediate imputation] insists that the imputation of Adam's sin precedes corruption of nature and is reckoned to be its cause, the latter doctrine [mediate imputation] maintains that the imputation of Adam's sin follows hereditary depravity and is its effect" (p. 228). Finally Storms devotes time to Edwards' concept of continuous creation, which forms a philosophical and theological basis for Edwards' doctrine of the immediate imputation of Adam's sin.

The most disappointing aspect of the book is the format. It seems that this text was computerized and then simply printed. There are huge gaps between words. If the hy-

phenation setting had been included the esthetic effect would have been much better. The table of contents has no indication of pagination, and there is no index. The large chunks of quotation could have been perhaps broken up a bit more and melted into the text. At times there is excessive underlining.

Nevertheless this is an excellent contribution to the history of eighteenth-century New England, the thought of Jonathan Edwards, the history of Arminianism, and the history of Calvinism. We might ask why it is directed to a narrower audience of evangelicals when such issues are of interest to a much more diverse group of individuals. A publication of the whole dissertation from which the book was excerpted might have been more useful and would have appealed to that broader audience.

David A. Weir

Center of Theological Inquiry, Princeton, NJ

*Through Christ's Word: A Festschrift for Dr. Philip E. Hughes.* Edited by W. Robert Godfrey and Jessie L. Boyd III. Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1985, 252 pp., \$10.95 paper.

This admirable volume is a fitting tribute to Hughes on his seventieth birthday. Few scholars have cast their net as widely and as competently as Hughes, and therefore the editors decided to divide the volume into three parts. Part 1 offers five NT studies. H. Ridderbos writes on "The Word Became Flesh"; L. Morris contributes an essay on "Love in the Johannine Epistles"; F. F. Bruce provides some reflections "On the Social Identity of Early Christians"; C. Spicq writes on "Revelation 18:17"; and M. Silva contributes an essay on "Semantic Change in the Greek Bible." The second part embraces three OT studies. The first, "Trial by Ordeal," is by M. G. Kline. R. B. Dillard writes "David's Census: Perspectives on 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21"; and E. B. Smick reflects on "Israel's Struggle with the Religions of Canaan." Appropriately the third section, on historical and theological studies, is the longest. J. I. Packer contributes an essay on "Arminianisms." W. S. Reid writes on "John Calvin: Lawyer and Legal Reformer." The essay on "Friedrich Spanheim (1600-1649)" is by R. Nicole. The final three essays are: W. W. Benton, Jr., "Federal Theology: Review for Revision"; J. N. Akers, "Southern Presbyterians and Slave Mission: Conflict and Accommodation in the Old South"; and W. R. Godfrey, "Church and State in Dutch Calvinism." The book concludes with a bibliography of Hughes' writings. *In multos annos!*

D. A. Carson

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

*Alvin Plantinga.* Edited by James E. Tomberlin and Peter van Inwagen. Hingham: Kluwer, 1985, 420 pp., \$55.00/\$24.00.

"Alvin Plantinga," declare the editors of this *Festschrift*, "is widely recognized as the most important philosopher of religion now writing. Indeed, his work is the principal reason for the rebirth and flowering of philosophical theology during the past twenty years" (p. ix; cf. the comments by Adams and Alston on pp. 225, 289). This book honors Plantinga by devoting the fifth volume in the Profiles series to his thought.

What makes his prestigious distinction so remarkable is that Plantinga is an outspoken evangelical who has spent most of his career at Calvin College. By the sheer force of his intellect, however, he not only acquired national attention but has also almost

singlehandedly changed the face of American philosophy with respect to religious thought. Tragically, few evangelicals who are not themselves philosophers are familiar with his work. Although the critical essays in this volume will not be the place for such evangelicals to begin, nevertheless this book serves as a reminder that it is high time to begin, lest ironically the brilliance of one of Christian thought's greatest stars be appreciated chiefly by those whose eyes have not yet been opened to see the truth.

Actually this volume does contain one ideal entry point for the beginner to the thought of Plantinga: his "self-profile," which surveys his youth, education, professional career and research projects. This delightful, often amusing, intellectual autobiography is a superb introduction to the man and his work. I found it to be both instructive (e.g., would that evangelical theologians would heed his admonition that "a certain amount of modal logic . . . is essential for decent work on many of the main topics of theology"!) and, quite frankly, inspirational to see the development of this great Christian mind. Those too who are familiar with Plantinga's formal, analytical style of writing will be surprised to see that he can also write beautiful prose. His reflections on what the death of Christ meant to God, for example, are quite moving. If one does not read anything else in this collection, I would urge every serious evangelical thinker to read at least the self-profile of this remarkable man.

Nine essays are contributed by philosophers who are specialists in areas addressed by Plantinga that seek to evaluate critically his contribution to the respective fields. Following the group of essays is a reply by Plantinga in which he responds to the essayists' critiques. Although the essays are themselves stimulating, what really makes this volume worthwhile is Plantinga's incisive replies, which well illustrate the power and penetration of his intellect. These replies along with the section on research and writing from the "self-profile" give the reader the cutting edge of Plantinga's thinking on such issues as necessity, possible worlds, actualism, rationality and religious belief, the problem of evil, and so forth.

The first essay by P. van Inwagen treats "Plantinga on Trans-World Identity." He wholeheartedly endorses Plantinga's views and tries to show that persons who think that there is a problem of trans-world identity have simply been misled by faulty mental pictures. Van Inwagen furnishes some diagrams to illustrate his point, which one would have thought to be obvious, except that one of the later essayists, K. Fine, seems to have been precisely thus misled and would perhaps have profited from van Inwagen's discussion. J. Pollock's essay, "Plantinga on Possible Worlds," is a very difficult and impressive piece of metaphysical analysis, though one's interest in the essay rather abates when Pollock confesses at the end that due to the delay in publication it no longer represents his own views on the subject. Nonetheless the essay is very important because it serves as a foil to advance Plantinga's own analysis of serious actualism and properties in his reply. Plantinga holds to an actualist view of *possibilia*—i.e., there are no things that do not exist. In order to explain the sense of this doctrine Plantinga reinterprets it in terms of properties—i.e., there is no property that is entailed by, but does not entail, existence. Plantinga also holds to what he calls serious actualism—i.e., necessarily no object has a property in a world in which it does not exist. Plantinga had earlier conceded that serious actualism does not follow from actualism, but one of the important fruits of this reply is a proof that actualism does indeed entail serious actualism (pp. 318–319). Plantinga's analysis of Pollock's critique also advances his own views on conditions and properties. Pollock fails to differentiate between a condition being satisfied at a world and being satisfied in a world. Something need not exist in a world to satisfy a condition at that world, but it must so exist to satisfy a condition in that world. This may seem like scholastic hairsplitting, but as van Inwagen reminded us (p. 101) Plantinga's definitions are carefully chosen and precise, and the distinction here is consistent with his earlier definitions and is important. On the basis of this distinction we gain a new insight into

properties: A property is a condition that is satisfied at a world *W* only if it is satisfied in *W*.

The essay by Fine discusses "Plantinga on the Reduction of Possibilist Discourse" and, while extremely technical and abstruse, is a very confused discussion of Plantinga's views with some bizarre opinions of Fine on truth and possible worlds mixed in. Plantinga disavows any interest in the project attributed to him by Fine (viz., translating discourse about possible objects into an actualist language), though many of Fine's subpoints are relevant to Plantinga's concerns. Fine argues that a haecceity (thisness) must be of something and so an unexemplified haecceity cannot exist unless there are also corresponding merely-possible objects. But Plantinga rejoins that just as my brother-in-law can exist without me but would not then stand in the "is the brother-in-law of" relation to me, so an unexemplified haecceity can exist but would not then stand in the "is the thisness of" relation to anything. Plantinga also uses the insights garnered from his exchange with Pollock to analyze Fine's notion of inner and outer truth in terms of the more perspicuous concept of truth of a world and truth in a world. Once this is done, Fine's argument that a nonexistent proposition can be true is seen to rest upon a mere redefinition of terms, and serious actualism is reaffirmed.

D. Ackerman's essay, "Plantinga's Theory of Proper Names," is next, and here Plantinga seems most deferential, asserting that he is not sure that he has a satisfactory answer to her criticisms. Still he reaffirms the view expressed in his article, "The Boethian Compromise" (1978), that proper names express essences and that different names of the same object sometimes express different essences of the object. The next essay by C. Ginet, "Plantinga and the Philosophy of Mind," makes some good points, but its subject matter seems to have been eclipsed by Plantinga's work on religious epistemology since *God and Other Minds* (1967). Plantinga thus replies that the evidence for other minds based on the analogical argument is not sufficient for knowledge and refers the reader to pp. 78–82 of *Faith and Rationality*, where he defends belief in other minds as properly basic.

R. Adams' article on "Plantinga on the Problem of Evil" is a fine piece of philosophy of religion, such as we have come to expect from that author. In this essay he manages to summarize Plantinga's complex free-will defense in remarkably simple terms, pointing out its crucial assumptions. He agrees that Plantinga has solved the abstract logical problem of evil but reiterates his disagreements with the Molinist doctrine of divine middle knowledge. Of the solution to the concrete logical problem of evil (viz., the quantity and quality of evil) Adams is less confident, pressing both the metaphysical objection against true counterfactuals of freedom and the ethical objection against God's permitting certain kinds of evil. One very interesting point Adams makes is that if one does allow the Molinist solution, Plantinga's appeal to fallen angels as a possible explanation for natural evil becomes superfluous. Adams then provides a very helpful discussion of Plantinga's views of the probabilistic problem of evil, charging that Plantinga has not done enough to blunt the atheist's program of rational persuasion against theism. Adams seems to favor many partial defenses that together might make the probability higher that the world's actual evil should exist, given God and our background knowledge. In his reply Plantinga responds not so much to Adams' article as to Adams' earlier "Middle Knowledge and the Problem of Evil" (1977). Plantinga provides a long-awaited defense of middle knowledge against Adams' objections. His response is subtle and incisive, and anyone concerned with divine omniscience or the problem of evil ought to study this reply carefully.

J. Tomberlin provides an essay on "Plantinga and the Ontological Argument" in which he argues that Plantinga has not shown that belief in God is rational due to the ontological argument. He argues that the belief that possibly God exists cannot be "genuinely basic" for the theist because the atheist's belief that possibly God does not exist

has the same epistemic status, and both cannot be true. But this seems to be a misinterpretation of "proper basicity," and Plantinga replies that both the theist and atheist can be within their epistemic rights in their beliefs.

The essay by P. Quinn, "Plantinga on Foreknowledge and Freedom," easily vindicates Plantinga's rebuttal of N. Pike's (sadly influential) argument for theological fatalism. Evangelicals tempted to abandon God's foreknowledge of future free acts ought first to read this essay. Finally, W. Alston discusses "Plantinga's Epistemology of Religious Belief," but I found Plantinga's own discussion of this subject in his "self-profile" more interesting and profitable than this exchange.

The volume closes with a comprehensive bibliography of Plantinga's writings (partially annotated), a list of secondary literature, and a name and subject index. This book is a fine and well-deserved tribute to one of contemporary Christendom's brightest minds.

William L. Craig

Westmont College, Santa Barbara, CA

*Confessions of a Theologian: An Autobiography.* By Carl F. H. Henry. Waco: Word, 1986, 416 pp., \$14.95.

There can be small doubt that in this book Henry tells what has been on his heart—in some cases for a long time. Not that he has not said so before, but this time he tells about himself, family origins, early work as a reporter, conversion, education, marriage, children and career. All of this is interesting and helpful in the way any truly Christian biography is. Least interesting and least edifying to me are the many pages about his travels and his speeches here and there in company with this or that minister, professor, missionary or fellow traveler.

Henry is important for the ideas he has expounded and for the good causes he has promoted during a long and unusually busy public life as Baptist preacher, seminary professor, sponsor of conferences, promoter of causes, and especially as founding editor of *Christianity Today* and author.

Because I am approximately contemporary with him I have read very much of what he has published as it appeared, including a rare copy of his doctoral thesis on A. H. Strong's theology. He was kind enough to send me an unsolicited copy a long time ago. It will be interesting to other contemporaries to learn what brought on some of his actions and writings.

*Christianity Today* is the largest burden of his heart, as indicated by the fact that approximately forty percent of his entire book is devoted to it, directly or indirectly. The story of how he, along with N. Bell, B. Graham, M. Kik and others, staffed and produced the magazine, with the advice and support of several wealthy Christian laymen on the first board of directors, makes interesting reading.

Struggles about policy, content and management began immediately, for the early participants were strong-minded men. Henry emerged with barely enough authority to act in a manner befitting his title of editor-in-chief. There was even difficulty in gaining and keeping the title: "All I wanted, I wrote Nelson, was a title appropriate to the responsibilities, as understood by the whole staff" (p. 152). The fascinating narrative of Henry's struggles, wins, losses (and apparent ultimate defeat) about policies, content and editorial slant fills much of pp. 160–301.

Henry's relationship with the magazine did not terminate happily, and he is unsparing of anyone in explaining why. He wanted the paper to be a thought-related journal, read by ministers, scholars, students and leaders of thought. But some, especially those concerned with its financial viability, had other ideas. Henry wanted to reason on the

pages with liberals and unbelieving intellectuals as well as to address evangelical interests. His contests with some associates and the board are there to see—episode by episode and line upon line. He never calls a spade by any other name than a spade.

Plainly, he feels that some of the treatment he received by the board and some staff, treatment that led to his termination as editor, was shabby. He read their actions as summary dismissal. The reader will follow with sympathy, perhaps agreement. Henry is not rancorous. He does not approve of the way the magazine has since “veered from its original stance as a professional thought journal to a largely lay-oriented publication” (p. 300).

Henry also devotes a great deal of the book to the founding and fortunes of Fuller Theological Seminary. He writes: “In May, 1947, radio evangelist Charles E. Fuller, Harold John Ockenga, Wilbur M. Smith, Everett F. Harrison . . . and I met at the Palmer House in Chicago to talk and pray about launching an evangelical seminary in California” (p. 114). Smith, Harrison, Henry and H. Lindsell (who later succeeded Henry as second editor of *Christianity Today*) met the first entering class of 39 in September of the same year.

Fuller prospered and grew as a conservative, evangelical seminary. The first president, H. J. Ockenga, brought sharp criticism when at that time he coined the word “neo-evangelical.” “Actually extremist fundamentalist spokesmen decried the term ‘evangelical’ no less than ‘neo-evangelical,’ and went to incredible lengths to deride and embarrass the new seminary and its friends” (p. 117). The story of how Fuller modified its official statement on the doctrine of Scripture and, in Henry’s view, slipped seriously from its initial moorings is traced through several pages. It was from Fuller that Henry was “snatched” to become first editor of *Christianity Today*—a reluctant departure for Henry also regretted by colleagues at Fuller.

The author does not engage in theology or apologetics, even though he has labored continuously in those areas for more than forty years and gave some of his best literary efforts to them. His writings were surveyed in *Carl F. H. Henry* by B. E. Patterson (Word, 1983), of which my review appeared in *JETS* 27 (1984).

The chips from Henry’s axe may now fall where they will. He has already served his own and another generation beside. With energies apparently little abated, his face seems set in another direction, for with this prayer his autobiography ends: “Lord, get me safely home before dark.”

Robert Duncan Culver

Houston, MN

*Computer Assisted Tools for Septuagint Studies*, vol. 1: *Ruth* (SBLSCS 20). By Robert A. Kraft, Emanuel Tov, et al. Atlanta: Scholars, 1986, 325 pp., \$11.95 paper (\$7.95 for SBL members).

This is the first hardcopy fruit of the CATSS (Computer Assisted Tools for Septuagint Studies) project primarily based at the University of Pennsylvania and partly based at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Those who have been attending the computer section at SBL for the last few years or who have kept current by reading *BIOSCS* 14 will be familiar with the project itself, the encoding procedures, the personnel who have done the work, the texts used, and the like. Such matters are briefly reviewed in this book.

In some ways, this book is merely illustrative of the kinds of things the project can achieve. The first 80 pages or so are given over to an explanation of the abbreviations and symbols used for textual variants, the transliteration codes for Hebrew and Greek, the variety of symbols used in the Greek-Hebrew alignment of *Ruth*, technical aspects

relating to the partially automatic alignment of the Greek-Hebrew alignment, procedures adopted in computer-assisted morphological analysis, and so forth. The heart of the book (pp. 85-176) is a printout of the Greek-Hebrew aligned parallel text of Ruth, the MT text being BHS and the LXX being Rahlfs (though the project adopts the Göttingen text where it is available). This printout includes a full apparatus to the Greek and the appropriate codes that explain the alignment. The remainder of the book offers printouts of special applications that have arisen from this database: a Greek-Hebrew index of the main text (including variants) and a Hebrew-Greek index of the main text (without variants). To use this material most creatively, of course, it would be necessary to have access to the computers, database and programs that have generated this book, for as the authors themselves point out there is almost an infinite variety of ways in which these data can be processed to produce interesting and useful information.

Of course Ruth is short and relatively free of difficult alignment problems. But the project should not be criticized for that: The scholars involved have exercised enormous care and methodological responsibility to produce a work that serves as a foretaste of what will be available when the entire Hebrew canon and LXX have been completed. Eventually such work will be available on CDROMs that are read by relatively inexpensive equipment attached to PCs, and then even relatively small institutions will be able to profit from the immense industry and creative scholarship represented by this volume.

If the project has not yet demonstrated the applicability of its work to exegetical and interpretative questions, it has nevertheless focused on what must come first: proper encoding of the data, and corresponding verification, to achieve extraordinarily high accuracy.

D. A. Carson

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

*The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 3: K-P. Edited by Geoffrey W. Bromley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986, xix + 1060 pp., \$37.50.

This, the third volume of a four-volume revision of a former old standard, is everything that the publishers claim in their promotional descriptions on the dust cover: It combines the defining function of a dictionary with an encyclopedia's presentation of comprehensive information, attempting to summarize the current state of knowledge about each of the topics discussed and provide the reader with some basic sources for further study. Thus in general the reader will not only find excellent definitions of Biblical and theological terms, historical identifications of Biblical persons and events, and historical and geographical identifications of Biblical places and sites, but he will also find valuable discussions on the usage of Biblical terms, the Biblical basis for each theological doctrine being discussed, and a brief history of the scholarly debate over the meaning and significance of such Biblical terms and theological doctrines. While it is a little difficult to assess how up-to-date many of the articles in this volume are because the bibliographies are arranged alphabetically and not chronologically, they generally reflect an awareness of the most recent archeological discoveries and the most recent methods of interpretation. Several of the OT articles, for example, reflect some awareness of the Ebla (Tell Mardikh) discoveries, and most of the articles on the books of the Bible refer to the canonical-critical approach of B. Childs. None of the articles on the books of the Bible, however, reflect an awareness of the modern literary approaches to the Bible such as those of R. Alter or M. Sternberg or even those of more evangelical writers like L. Ryken, though there is an article on "Literature, The Bible as," by C. Linton. Consequently most of the outlines or discussions of the contents of the books of the Bible are based on rather

subjective criteria—that is, this is the way the author of the article sees the book.

Though it might be argued that the availability of a plethora of modern Bible dictionaries, handbooks, encyclopedias, introductions and surveys makes the publication of another encyclopedia unnecessary, it is doubtful whether any of the existing dictionaries, handbooks, or encyclopedias offers quite the wealth of information in such a balanced fashion as this new encyclopedia. For example, the reader will undoubtedly find the articles on the Biblical books much less critical than similar articles in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* and much more sensitive to critical issues and open to viable alternatives to traditional views than similar articles in *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*. A good example of this balance is the article on the Pentateuch by E. E. Carpenter. After briefly describing the basic theological content of the Pentateuch and emphasizing the recognition of its essential historicity, Carpenter traces the history of the development of the documentary hypothesis (JEDP) including its viability for modern scholars. In the course of this discussion Carpenter points out the weaknesses of the documentary hypothesis that have been brought out by modern archeological discoveries and other critical methods such as form criticism, tradition criticism and canonical criticism. However, he notes that modern archeological discoveries are not unequivocal and do not invariably prove the Bible and that, though the methods of form criticism and tradition criticism sometimes prove helpful in understanding the prehistory of the Pentateuch, they do not ultimately aid in determining its final date. Consequently Carpenter notes that we cannot definitively determine the date of the final form of the Pentateuch or describe how it arose. After briefly describing some of the views of those who still hold to a modified form of the documentary hypothesis Carpenter closes his article by describing some of the views of those whom he would consider conservative in their approach. While it is doubtful that all would agree that all of the views described are conservative, Carpenter does succeed in the course of his discussion of the various views to show that there are different ways to account for the Mosaic, pre-Mosaic and post-Mosaic materials in the Pentateuch by scholars of different theological persuasions. Throughout the article Carpenter has striven to point out the weaknesses of critical methods. He has, however, also pointed out areas where conservatives need to do more work to account for the origin and present form of the data in the Pentateuch.

While the majority of articles on the Biblical books that this reviewer read are characterized by this balance—carefully tracing the history of interpretation, honestly evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of critical positions, incorporating the strengths of these positions where it seems appropriate—this is not invariably the case. Hence it seems to this reviewer that on occasion critical concerns and speculative debate tend to dominate the discussion. This, for example, seems to be the case with the article on the gospel of Luke by E. E. Ellis where the majority of the article is taken up with a discussion of authorship, date and sources. The content, structure and theology of the book are relegated to a few brief paragraphs. Happily, however, Ellis' article on Luke proves to be the exception rather than the rule, as comparison with D. A. Hagner's article on Matthew and G. J. Wenham's article on Leviticus demonstrates. Thus though each of these latter articles wrestles with the problems of authorship, date and sources like the article on Luke does, they are also concerned to develop the content and theology of the book in question. For the most part, then, the layman, preacher and teacher will find a helpful discussion of the content and theology of each book of the Bible discussed, even though they will generally not find them as helpfully organized and documented as Hagner's article on Matthew where he breaks down the discussion on theology under the concepts of kingdom, Christology, discipleship and eschatology and further discusses the tension between universalism and particularism, Judaism and Christianity, and law and grace and discusses the structure of the book under objectively observable stylistic criteria.

In addition to finding a somewhat balanced discussion on the authorship and date of

most of the books of the Bible and a general concern to deal adequately with their content and theology, the reader will often also find some rather helpful discussions on literary features that will help him appreciate and interpret the different genres of literature in the Bible. Though this is sometimes done in the discussion on the various books of the Bible, it is also done in separate discussions on individual genres. One of the more helpful discussions in this regard is that on Hebrew poetry by N. H. Ridderbos and H. W. Wolf. In addition to interacting with modern studies on poetry by such scholars as J. Kugel and M. O'Connor, this article defines and illustrates the various forms of parallelism found in Hebrew poetry and describes and illustrates some of the other features of Biblical poetry such as assonance, wordplay, repetition, chiasm, expansion, and such poetical devices as personification, apostrophe and hyperbole. This is one of the most helpful articles on Hebrew poetry of any length. A similar article on Proverbs by D. A. Hubbard is also helpful in describing the different genres contained in the book of Proverbs and other wisdom books—that is, popular sayings, didactic sayings, admonitions, comparisons and numerical sayings.

In general the reader will also find a balanced discussion on doctrinal or theological concepts that are first defined, then developed from the Biblical text, and finally traced through Church history. Wherever appropriate the term or concept is also traced in the doctrines of the inter-Biblical period—that is, in the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha and QL. While it is almost always possible to ascertain the theological stance of the author of an article, an attempt has generally been made to represent opposing views fairly. A good example of this is seen in the article on the *parousia* by L. Morris. Though he is obviously an amillennialist and argues against the premillennial position, he attempts to describe objectively what different kinds of premillennialists believe. However, it is not always the case that opposing views are given the same fair treatment. As an example, the article on the Lord's supper by R. S. Wallace is written from a decidedly Reformed view of the spiritual efficacy of the Lord's supper and scarcely deals with the Lutheran view of the real presence of Christ or the Zwinglian view that it is merely a sign and a memorial.

While many will undoubtedly find reason to fault the new *ISBE* for the tendentiousness that some doctrines are dealt with in it, there are plenty of other theological and Biblical concepts for which they will not. This is especially true of such an article as that on miracle by C. Brown, which carefully defines the Biblical terms used, traces the manifestation of miracles in Biblical history, discusses the post-Biblical Jewish and Hellenistic concepts of miracle as well as the modern philosophical debate over the existence of miracles, and assesses their apologetic value. Few likewise will find fault with the excellent article on magic by D. E. Aune, which likewise carefully defines the Biblical concept, traces its use in the Bible, discusses its relation to the miracles of Christ, and shows how the Bible deals with it in terms of polemic.

Unfortunately, however, not all Biblical concepts receive the same careful attention. With one or two exceptions like the article on name by G. W. Hawthorne, which not only discusses the significance of the concept of name but also the significance of being baptized into the name of Jesus and of praying in his name, most of the briefer discussions on words are mere listings of the Hebrew or Greek words that are translated by the English word in question and disjointed discussion of some representative usages. When attempts are made to distinguish between different Hebrew and Greek words translated by the same English term, the distinction is all too generally based on either etymology or an assumed root meaning, a fallacy that J. Barr has repeatedly warned against. As far as this reviewer is concerned, this is the weakest feature of the new *ISBE*. The reader should not be misled into believing that he is actually reading a word study on the various words.

As for the articles on peoples, places and events that bear on the Biblical text, most

appear to be carefully done and to have the purpose of relating the reader to their relevance to Biblical history. Hence there are articles that trace the history of such peoples as the Medes, the Moabites and the Phoenicians and detail their relation to the nation of Israel. The article on Moab by J. R. Kautz, III, which traces the history of Moab's relations with Israel during the period of the conquest and later during the periods of the judges and the time of the Omride dynasty, is especially well done, as is the article on Phoenicia, written by M. Liverani and translated by W. S. LaSor. The long article on Palestine by LaSor is also very well done, describing in brief compass the geological formations, the general geography, and the climatic conditions of the land and giving a brief history of its occupation from the earliest periods when culture can be documented until the post-Biblical period and at the same time carefully identifying all the different peoples who inhabited it and briefly describing all the languages they spoke. Several color plates showing various geographical features of the land accompany the article. Attention is also paid to orienting the reader to the relative location of individual sites mentioned in the Bible. The identification of a site is almost always accompanied by a small map showing its location in relation to a well-known geographical feature such as the Sea of Galilee or the Dead Sea and sometimes by pictures of the site or an important archeological discovery. An example of this kind of orientation is the map relating Lachish to Jerusalem and the picture showing an Assyrian relief depicting Sennacherib's siege of Lachish and that showing the excavation of the Canaanite temple at Lachish from the Late Bronze Age.

This encyclopedia is extremely well done. The articles are generally clearly written and carefully edited. Typographical errors or misspelled words are rare. The documentation is usually more than adequate for further research and is generally up-to-date. The text is accompanied by maps, charts and pictures wherever appropriate. The orientation appears to be basically evangelical. Though some views on critical issues may be debated, most of the authors at least consider themselves to be evangelical and to be striving to deal with the data of Scripture within the framework of a recognition of its unique authority. This reviewer highly recommends this encyclopedia to all serious students of the Bible, to laypeople, to pastors and to teachers who want to know more about the Bible and its background.

Donald Glenn

Dallas Theological Seminary

*Biblical Criticism in the Life of the Church.* By Paul M. Zehr. Scottsdale/Kitchener: Herald, 1986, 112 pp.

Most readers of this *Journal* are thoroughly conversant with the debates about Biblical inspiration and authority that have torn apart so many Christian denominations and institutions in recent years. It may therefore slightly surprise some to learn that at least one group in this country, the Mennonite Church, has only recently been coming to grips with this issue. Zehr offers a mediating perspective as he tries to steer a course between the dominant views of the Mennonite laity, which have ignored or looked askance at the role of Biblical criticism in the life of the church, and the prevailing perspectives of modern, non-Mennonite scholarship, which have questioned or rejected a high view of Scripture.

In a brief opening chapter Zehr describes his spiritual pilgrimage from his naive but pious childhood faith through his academic studies of the Bible at Eastern Mennonite College and Seminary and at Princeton to his role as pastor and administrator in the Mennonite Church. He sets the tone for the entire work as he describes the essentially

positive experiences he had with moderately conservative teachers of Biblical criticism while nevertheless recognizing that without proper checks and balances such criticism can lead one dangerously astray.

Chapters 2 and 3 expand this theme with reference to lower and higher criticism. Zehr discusses how virtually all the findings of modern textual criticism have enhanced our knowledge of the original text of Scripture and of the reliability of its transmission. He illustrates how source, form and redaction criticism can explain the otherwise puzzling combination of differences and similarities among synoptic parallels, how historical criticism stripped of antisupernatural presuppositions can go a long way toward validating the resurrection accounts, and how recent modifications of the documentary hypothesis can uphold the antiquity of Israel's monotheism without rejecting all post-Mosaic tradition history for the composition and editing of the Pentateuch. For each method Zehr also frankly acknowledges numerous weaknesses.

Overall the discussion is so brief that it is doubtful whether the uninitiated will be able to utilize Biblical criticism on their own without further training. In some cases Zehr's brevity leads to mistaken impressions or allegations. For example, he curiously links inspiration with every stage in a text's traditional history, including its "translation into our language" (p. 22), though elsewhere he seems only to be saying that "the Holy Spirit was active in the total process of the development of the Bible" (p. 66). He omits all mention of alternatives to the two-source solution to the synoptic problem, mistakenly defines the "double tradition" as material common to any two of the synoptics (p. 39), claims that Luke is more interested in the deity than in the humanity of Jesus (p. 43), and attributes the view that sees the early Church as inventing sayings of Jesus only to "a few extreme cases" of form criticism (p. 46).

Chapter 4 concludes the body of the book and is entitled "Biblical Criticism and the Church." Here Zehr offers nine guidelines for a cautious appropriation of the best of modern scholarship in a pastoral setting: (1) being wary of transitory fashions of scholarship, (2) not pitting inspiration and higher criticism against one another, (3) interpreting Scripture as both an intellectual and spiritual exercise, (4) obeying the text once it has been interpreted properly, (5) using criticism to refute liberal scholarship on its own grounds, (6) avoiding un-Biblical philosophical presuppositions that vitiate one's methods or conclusions, (7) employing criticism in the preparation more than in the delivery of sermons, (8) teaching it as a required part of Christian high-school, college and seminary curricula, and (9) encouraging Christian scholarship at the highest academic levels in the service of the Church.

The upshot of this agenda, Zehr believes, will be a great appreciation of the authority, meaning and relevance of the Bible for Christian living. Still, Zehr shies away from the term "inerrancy," believing that it stems from a faulty philosophical base (Aristotelian deduction) and manifests a "lack of clarity on what constitutes an error" (p. 74). Granted, the Mennonite tradition has often upheld what most inerrantists mean by the term without actually using it, but if this book was to have currency in non-Mennonite circles Zehr should have interacted with those evangelical scholars who have repeatedly dealt with his allegations. Remarkably his footnotes and bibliography contain frequent references to other noninerrantist evangelicals (e.g. Jack Rogers, F. F. Bruce, Bruce Metzger, I. H. Marshall) but not a single reference to any treatment of inerrancy by one of its advocates.

If Zehr succeeds in convincing some of his ultraconservative clientele of the positive values of Biblical criticism, then the book will have been worthwhile. But one wonders how persuasive his sketchy remarks can be for one entrenched in an anti-intellectual mindset. For almost everyone else this book simply rehearses what can be found in numerous other sources, often with greater clarity or force. The book is commended in a brief foreword by J. C. Wenger and is concluded with three appendices, the first giving

an outline of the book that Zehr originally presented to a 1984 Mennonite conference, the second reprinting a portion of H. S. Bender's 1959 *Biblical Revelation and Inspiration* ("The Meaning of Inspiration"), and the third suggesting "Resources for Bible Study."

Craig L. Blomberg

Denver Seminary

*Old Testament Parsing Guide: Genesis—Esther.* By Todd S. Beall and William A. Banks. Chicago: Moody, 1986, viii + 391 pp., n.p.

When I was a seminary student many years ago, my Hebrew and Greek language instructors and professors were unanimous in their insistence that I and my classmates should never use "crutches" for classroom preparation. We were told that helps such as analytical lexicons, "ponies," and the like would forever cripple us in our ability to read the original languages of Scripture quickly and effortlessly. In the earlier stages of my language study I therefore often found myself spending ten or fifteen minutes puzzling over a verbal form that a "crutch" could have helped me parse in a much shorter time or could have parsed for me immediately.

It is my considered judgment that my well-meaning language teachers gave me advice that was both good and bad—good in the sense that mindless use of a "crutch" becomes addictive and makes the student dependent on it, bad in the sense that judicious use can be just as effective a learning tool as toughing it out alone, come what may. In other words, a "crutch" *qua* "crutch" is neutral: Depending on how it is used, it can either perpetuate lameness or hasten healing.

The book under review is just such a tool. By parsing every Hebrew verb in the Bible from Genesis through Esther (unfortunately, the books are here arranged in Protestant canonical order rather than in Masoretic sequence) it serves as a handy instrument for speeding up the process of reading and translating for the beginning and/or intermediate student. At the same time, those who are serious about wanting to learn the inner workings of Hebrew verbal morphology will then turn to the standard handbooks and grammars for discussion of this or that verb that they have had difficulty in parsing. Beall and Banks are therefore to be thanked for undertaking the enormous task involved in producing this first installment of their *Parsing Guide*. I wish it had been available to me in my first year of Hebrew studies.

Several features of the *Guide* are especially commendable. It lists, verse by verse, every verbal form in order from Genesis through Esther (the verbs are printed in unvocalized Hebrew), including pronominal suffixes but omitting inseparable prepositions and the prefixed *wāw*. The parsing of each form includes its stem, "tense," person, gender, number, root, and suffix (if any). A basic meaning for each verb is also given, as is the BDB page number where the discussion of that particular verb begins. The student who makes full use of this tool will thus receive a great deal of helpful information about the 42,079 verb forms (according to the count printed on the dust jacket) that occur in the books treated.

A few suggestions before the final volume of this two-volume set goes to press: (1) In volume 1, participles are parsed in terms of gender and number but not in terms of whether they are in the absolute or construct state. It would be a relatively simple matter to add an "a" or a "c" (as in "msa," "fpc," etc.), which in a great number of cases would provide morphological if not syntactical help.

(2) The verbal meanings in volume 1 are often misleading, if not downright incorrect. For example, every time a form of *hyh* occurs the meaning is given as "be, become." Although there are indeed cases in the OT where *hyh* not followed by the preposition *lē-*

means "become," in the vast majority of cases it means simply "be." When "be, become" are always given as possible meanings of *hwh* wherever it appears, the uninitiated student might get the impression that either meaning is everywhere possible—an impression that can only perpetuate the fiction that the verb perhaps means "become" in, e.g., Gen 1:2. And what is one to make of the translations "get, buy" for *qnh* in Gen 14:19, 22? That God Most High is the "Getter" or "Buyer" of heaven and earth? Surely "Creator" or "Maker" is intended in those two verses, as Biblical and extra-Biblical parallels amply attest. In short, more careful nuancing of basic meanings would have vastly enhanced the usefulness of this first volume.

(3) Repetition of verbal forms within the same verse (or, in some cases, within the same context) should not be reflected in the *Guide*. Even the most hopeless dullard hardly needs to be given the same data for the same participial form eleven times in a row (Num 7:19–79). The volume could have been printed much more compactly (and at a lower price) if such sensible economies had been effected.

When and if volume 1 goes into additional printings (and it should, in my judgment) a couple of corrections relating to the introductory material need to be made. The example of the infrequent use of the question mark to indicate uncertain parsing (p. vii) is not carried through on p. 11, where the reference appears. And on the abbreviations page "pola = pola" should, I assume, read "pola = polal."

Despite the above comments, however, I gladly give a high grade to this first volume of the *Parsing Guide*. Hopefully volume 2 will follow hard on its heels for the benefit of those who need quick help in parsing the verbs from Job through Malachi.

Ronald Youngblood

*The Meaning of Creation: Genesis and Modern Science.* By Conrad Hyers. Atlanta: John Knox, 1984, ix + 203 pp., n.p. paper.

Here is a fresh attempt at finding a solution to an old problem: How should the Bible and science be viewed when they appear to contradict one another? The difficulty is particularly acute in the matter of origins, where creationists and evolutionists have been doing battle for over a century. While some have resolutely insisted on one side or the other, others have attempted to show that there is no conflict between creation and evolution and that (through the gap theory, the day-age theory, or some other means) Genesis 1 and 2 really can be harmonized with evolutionary thought.

Hyers falls into the latter category. He regards both the creationist's and the evolutionist's view of Genesis as overly literal and incorrect. As Hyers states in the first chapter: "Quite ironically, those who would dismiss the Bible as contradicting science and those who would defend it as the true science find themselves in agreement that these biblical texts are to be interpreted 'literally,' that is, as intending to offer factual statements of scientific and historical truth" (pp. 19–20). According to Hyers, when viewed properly there is not really a contradiction between Genesis and science because the Genesis accounts are not trying to depict historical events as we know them: "Science, as it were, moves along a *horizontal* plane with its steadfast attention to immediate causes and naturalistic explanations for phenomena. Religion moves along a *vertical* plane that intersects this horizontal plane from beginning to end" (p. 33).

Having established this basic framework in chap. 1, Hyers moves to a discussion of the meaning of the Genesis 1 creation account in chaps. 2–4. In these chapters he shows why the creation account cannot be taken literally but was instead written during the exile to combat idolatry: "The issue was idolatry, not science; syncretism, not natural history; theology, not chronology" (p. 46). He argues that Genesis 1 is a "cosmogonic

model" similar in some respects to the pagan cosmogonies but with a monotheistic emphasis as opposed to the polytheistic cosmogonies of other nations (p. 71). He notes the extensive symbolic use of numbers in Genesis 1 (found in other religions as well), especially the numbers seven, twelve and three. He concludes that "those, therefore, who would attempt to do a literal reading of numbers in Genesis 1, as if the sequence of days were of the same order as counting goats or merchandise or money, are offering a modern, secular interpretation of a sacred text—in the name of religion" (pp. 79–80). Hence Hyers rejects such attempts to reconcile the "days" of Genesis 1 with evolution (as in the day-age theory) as misguided.

Chapter 5 is a transitional chapter between the discussion of Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 in which Hyers explains that one must read some chapters as myth (i.e. "moral treatises, whose materials are collected and arranged to serve religious purposes"), not history: "The narrative *form* is not the message; the religious *content* is the message" (pp. 100–101). In chaps. 6–7 Hyers emphasizes the different nature of the account in Genesis 2: While Genesis 1 represents the urban, civilized, ordered "modern" world (the cosmological form), the account of Genesis 2 (written during the time of Solomon) represents the pastoral, shepherd world (the mythical form). Chapter 7, entitled "Pastoral Simplicity and the Temptations of Civilization," reveals Hyers' predilection for the simple pastoral model over against the modern concept of power and domination. Finally in chap. 8 Hyers concludes by asserting that Genesis 1 represents a masculine view of God (order, domination, power) while Genesis 2 reflects a feminine view (passivity, unpredictability): Only when both are considered together is a complete view of creation achieved, that of a "controlled accident" (p. 177).

The book as a whole is very well written and logically argued. If one agrees with the author's presuppositions, the argument leading to the rather innovative conclusions in the final chapter are compelling. Perhaps the homily against the dangers of progress and civilization (chap. 7) does not belong in a book entitled *The Meaning of Creation*, but it does make for interesting reading.

Judged by its jacket cover, however, the book fails miserably. We are told that "the primary value of Hyers' work is his careful consideration of the texts of Genesis as the basis of Christian heritage, faith, and life. . . . Hyers presents an undistorted view of Genesis, carefully unfolding the religious meaning of the creation texts." Other than the last few chapters, Hyers' work is simply a repackaging of the old liberal form-critical views of Genesis 1 and 2 that have been around for decades. Although Hyers states that his book will spend much time on "the biblical texts themselves" (p. 8), one of the biggest problems of the book is its inattention to the Biblical data. One looks in vain for a detailed exegesis of any portion of Genesis 1 or 2 in the entire book. To be sure, in chap. 2 there are a few textual arguments given to support the author's contention that Genesis 1 and 2 should not be taken literally and in fact represent two conflicting creation accounts. Hyers argues that the use of *tôledôt* in Gen 2:4 somehow contradicts a literal understanding of "day" in the preceding account (his reasoning is not at all clear to me), that the term "firmament" is nonscientific, and that the order of creation in Genesis 1 and 2 is different and contradictory. Yet he does not even consider the standard conservative explanation that Genesis 2 is not a second creation account *per se* but rather a topical account specifically preparing the way for the events of chap. 3. Instead Hyers simply presents the standard critical line without any real discussion of alternative views: He holds to the JEDP documentary hypothesis, with a sixth-century date for Genesis 1 and a tenth-century date for Genesis 2, and presents a form-critical view of Genesis as well (Genesis 1 as a cosmogonic form and Genesis 2 as myth).

Rather than a detailed exegetical look at the Biblical texts the book contains a string of assertions without supporting evidence. For example, we are told that the sun, moon and stars in Genesis 1 "were divinities to be feared, worshiped, petitioned, and appeased"

(p. 21). And the account of Gen 3:15 "must originally have been a way of accounting for the peculiar leglessness of snakes"; the serpent could also represent "the temptation to gain access to the knowledge and power of technology, urbanization, and imperial dominion" (p. 123). Regarding Eve's role Hyers observes that "Eve's first eating of the tree of knowledge, which led to farming and eventually to urbanization, may have some historical basis in the probable origins of agriculture in simple plantings by women" (p. 101). And as for the account of Eve's birth from Adam's side, "obviously the story is developed from the male point of view and out of a patriarchal society" (p. 131). My favorite among Hyers' many assertions is his statement in support of a "controlled accident" view of the universe: "There is at least as much evidence for chance occurrences as for systematic order and progression in natural history" (p. 166). Not only is Hyers' statement a direct contradiction of Scripture, but he offers absolutely no documentation for this astonishing revelation. Such unproved assertions are the norm, not the exception, in this book.

Most troubling in the book was the tone, especially since I was looking forward to an "undistorted" and "unsensationalist" presentation of the creation issue. Rather than irenic, the tone seems to be pompous, almost arrogant. Typical is Hyers' treatment of those who hold to the gap theory: "One may also mention in this context—though it is hardly deserving of mention—the bizarre *restitution hypothesis* which has enjoyed a meandering life among some fundamentalists" (p. 39). While I happen to agree with some of Hyers' arguments against the gap theory, the tone of his remarks is not helpful at all. In particular the Biblical literalist (which I happen to be) is treated with special scorn. For example, Hyers states (using guilt by association) that "today's literalists can trace their ancestry—without any missing links—to yesterday's proponents of a flat earth and an earth-centered universe, although the former teachings are vestigial" (pp. 24–25). Hyers concludes that "a literalist interpretation of the Genesis accounts is inappropriate, misleading, and unworkable" (p. 28) and further that "it is at least equally true that biblical literalism, from its earlier flat-earth and geocentric forms to its recent young-earth and flood-geology forms, is one of the major causes of atheism and materialism" (p. 26).

Hyers' writing style is fresh and clear and his presentation is well thought out, but the meaning of creation can only be ascertained through a careful handling of the Biblical text, not through unsupported assertions and dogmatic ridicule of Biblical literalism.

Todd S. Beall

Capital Bible Seminary, Lanham, MD

*The Galileo Connection: Resolving Conflicts between Science and the Bible.* By Charles E. Hummel. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1986, 293 pp., \$8.95 paper.

Although an excellent introduction to the history of the conflict between science and faith, the present volume, in the opinion of this reviewer, expresses a rather dated outlook upon that conflict.

The book is divided into three parts: "The Scientific Perspective," "The Biblical Perspective" and "Conflicts and Reconciliation." In the first part, which comprises half of the book, Hummel very clearly and concisely traces the development of the modern scientific method in response to cosmological questions. The ancient Greeks explained the motions of the planets around the earth using a complicated system of epicycles and deferents. Motivated by a "grand aesthetic view of the structure of the universe" Copernicus simplified the Ptolemaic scheme by placing the sun at the center of the solar system, though he maintained a belief in the uniform circular motion of the planets.

Kepler, using the recorded observations of Tycho Brahe, discovered that elliptical orbits about the sun as a focus were the most "mathematically simple and aesthetically beautiful" models that accurately fit the data. Galileo popularized the "new astronomy" through his telescopic observations of the heavens and was the first to articulate clearly the principles of the modern scientific method. Newton capped this quest for the mathematical structure of nature by deriving Kepler's laws of planetary motion from Galileo's laws of mechanics and his own universal law of gravitation. Thus both terrestrial and celestial motion could be described by a simple set of mathematical equations.

Hummels' presentation of these developments, in which he recognizes the role of the Christian commitment of these four key scientists, is strongly biographical, though he may have exaggerated that of Newton. As the title suggests he regards Galileo as paradigmatic for the conflict between science and faith. Hummel debunks the popular misconception that Galileo was persecuted for free thinking by an obscurantist, theologically defensive Church and instead presents Galileo as a victim of the conservative university establishment. He regards Galileo as paradigmatic because this scientist was the first to advocate most clearly the separation between efficient and final causes, between the how and the why. Galileo taught that "God has given us two books, one of nature, the other of Scripture," that "two truths never contradict each other." The two books are read by different methods, and their respective conclusions should not be confused. This separation between the how and the why seems to be fundamental to Hummel's approach to resolving conflicts between science and faith.

In the second part, "Biblical Perspectives," Hummel concisely sets down basic hermeneutical principles in which he develops this distinction between the how and the why, between the purposes of the language of science and the language of Scripture. "Scripture tells us how to go to heaven, not how the heavens go." He defends the compatibility of miracles with scientific laws. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century naturalism regarded Newton's mathematical laws of physical motion as immutable axioms of nature and thus reduced the universe to a closed system of cause and effect. But here scientists overstepped the bounds of science and became philosophers when they confused the how with the why. This realism was supplanted by a Kantian instrumentalism, which today in turn has been replaced by a critical realism. This interprets scientific theories as provisional models of reality that are contingent and subject to revision, not immutable axioms and so not exclusive of miracles. Hummel then applies this discussion of hermeneutical principles and scientific theories to Genesis 1.

Hummel has clearly described the fundamental change in the modern scientific outlook upon the universe, from a closed system of necessitarian causality to an open system of contingent order. But this change came about through developments in physics (specifically field theory, relativity and quantum mechanics), not biology. In this reviewer's opinion, the cutting edge of a mutually fruitful dialogue between science and Christian theology lies in physics, not biology.

The third and shortest part, "Conflicts and Reconciliation," is largely a summary of the creation-evolution debate from the nineteenth century down to the 1981 Arkansas Act 590. The various positions are concisely set forth, but one feels that nothing new has been added to the discussion. Hummel includes a very clear sketch of Polanyi's discussion of "personal knowledge" in science.

This reviewer, however, comes away with the feeling that he has read a nineteenth-century book. This divorce between how and why is an old way of skirting the interaction between science and theology, which historically led to the spiritualizing of theology by Protestant liberalism. In the early centuries Christianity's belief in the incarnation reshaped Hellenistic conceptions of the physical world, making possible the growth of science in the first place. Now modern science, having overthrown Newtonianism, can liberate theology from having to adapt itself to this closed, necessitarian universe, which

adaptation was the objective of much nineteenth-century liberalism. Because of the incarnation the physical world must be as much an arena for Christian theology as for science, and historically the former has often shaped the basic paradigms of the latter. Today a divorce between the how and the why would be disastrous for both science and theology, as science, in its investigation of reality in the infinitely small and in the infinitely great, is approaching the boundary questions of existence where, in the words of Einstein, "we must ask not only why Nature is thus, but also why Nature is not otherwise." To balance Hummel's well-written introduction to the interaction of science and theology this reviewer recommends *Christian Theology and Scientific Culture* by T. F. Torrance.

Bruce Hedman

University of Connecticut, West Hartford

*Interpreting the Psalms.* By Patrick D. Miller, Jr. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986.

After reading the sorts of discussion that fill learned journals and monographs, one is sometimes tempted to ask, "So what?" *Interpreting the Psalms*, however, is one book that goes a long way in bridging the gap between the professor's podium and the preacher's pulpit.

Miller introduces his book by saying, "It is in the conviction that the psalms belong both at the center of the life and worship of Christian congregations and in the midst of the personal pilgrimage that each of us makes under the shadow of the Almighty, that I have written this book" (p. vii). His pastoral interest is echoed deeply throughout. The "audience is most obviously pastors and teachers" and interested laypersons. Miller writes in a way that is clearly informed by the most recent scholarship but not cluttered by it.

The first half of the book concerns "General Approaches" to the Psalms, the second half expositions of selected psalms. Chapter 1 treats the "Current Issues in the Interpretation of the Psalms" under four headings: "The Function of the Psalms in Ancient Israel," "Reinterpretation of the Psalms" (i.e. their reapplication during the OT period), "The Psalter as a Collection," and "Literary Study of the Psalter." He summarizes the work of the major contributors (Gunkel, Westermann, Mowinckel, etc.) in a way that is penetrating and yet understandable and interesting for novices.

An aspect of form-critical and sociological research that Miller thoughtfully applies to modern Church concerns is that of E. Gerstenberger and R. Albertz (pp. 6-7). Their books argue that the "laments of the individual" reflect "healing ceremonies" in which individuals in need are both prayed for and rehabilitated within their "primary social sphere." In ancient Israel this would have been the extended family or clan; today it would mean "families, circles of friends, groups with common interest or needs." Traditionally we have thought only of either the individual or the larger social group ("church, community, nation"). Recent research, however, indicates that "individuals live their lives 'above all in the small world of the primary group' rather than in the larger . . . sphere of community of people." Such work underscores the importance of smaller groups for personal identity and growth. Ritual is also seen to play a significant role in this healing process reflected in individual lament psalms.

Chapter 2 explores "how and why the psalms open themselves so readily and in so many ways for our appropriation, speaking both *for us . . . and to us*" (p. 21). His two principal suggestions lie in the Psalter's continued liturgical use in the Church and in its use of "expressions or images that reflect typical human experiences" (p. 23). Miller notes that psalms, although typical, "are highly and deeply personal."

Chapter 3 touches on the poetry that the Psalms are, and it does so in a way distinct from most treatments in commentaries. Far from being a discussion of the mechanics of poetry or of methods of extracting meaning, it is an appreciation of the medium of poetry itself. "The Psalms are poetry. They are rhythmic and expressive. They walk around a thought, say it one way here, another there" (p. 29). A welcome emphasis is that their beauty is an integral part of their meaning, not simply an embellishment. Miller focuses on parallelism but also touches on wordplay, repetition, inclusion, refrains, irony, ambiguity and metaphor. This reviewer wishes, however, that he could have gone beyond phrases and lines of poetry to some of the larger poetic structures.

Chapter 4 has two aims: (1) to show that psalmic language is metaphorical and thus open to diverse applications, and (2) to identify OT narratives whose terminology and situations echo lament psalms and may thus serve as illustrations where such laments would be applicable. The metaphorical and stereotypical language of the laments, rather than being a frustration to interpreters trying to discover their original setting, should be welcomed since it opens the psalms to various applications. Indeed it is this feature that has made the psalms such a fitting vehicle for the cries and cheers of generations. His second aim is to show what the psalms "are capable of talking and praying about" (p. 52). "The interpretive task is not tied to the search for a single explanation for a particular lament [i.e., the ever-elusive *Sitz im Leben*] but can center in opening up, through different stories and moments, examples of the human plight that may be articulated through the richly figurative but stereotypical language of the laments" (pp. 62-63). For example, Miller notes strong correspondences in the language, motifs and situations reflected in Psalm 6 and the story of Hannah's barrenness narrated in 1 Samuel 1. This study shows, for example, how language of sickness need not be literal but may point to something such as emotional anguish. Likewise the "enemy" in lament psalms need not be a potential murderer but may be, for example, a rival wife, as in the case of Hannah versus Peninnah.

In the hymns of the Psalter, discussed in chap. 5, Miller sees "the fundamental themes of Israel's faith" (p. 78). The aim of the interpreter here is not to concretize, as with laments, but to spell out the faith sung in these hymns. While Miller does not attempt to do this in any systematic way, he does touch on several noteworthy points. For example, the praise of God in the Psalms is ultimately a "testimony for conversion" (p. 68) since the call to praise Yahweh extends to all the earth. He also brings to the reader's attention that God's power is transforming power, especially as it overturns the status quo: The poor are filled, and the rich are sent away empty.

Miller's expositions of selected psalms (Psalms 1, 2, 14, 22, 23, 82, 90, 127, 130, 139), while written on a more popular level, are certainly informed by thoughtful scholarship. They are especially helpful in that the exegesis is not simply linguistic or historical but also theological. For example, while discussing the psalmist's attempt to move God to intervene in Psalm 22 Miller engages with the theological problem of whether humans can influence God and of how this is consistent with "Not my will but thine be done" (p. 103). Miller also moves beyond the confines of the OT horizon to how Psalm 22 is to be read in light of Jesus' "fulfillment" and, perhaps more significantly, to how Jesus' work is to be read in light of Psalm 22. Reading the Bible in this latter direction (an emphasis of B. S. Childs) helps us to see that the work of Jesus deals not only with human sin but also with human suffering. Concluding the book is a bibliography with annotations that are substantial and insightful.

I found *Interpreting the Psalms* more suggestive than thorough. For the person wanting a learned introduction to the Psalms I would recommend Westermann's *The Psalms: Structure, Content, and Message* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1980), which presents the basic psalm types, their patterns and meaning. This is not to detract from Miller's work. For anyone wanting to read of recent Psalms scholarship in a nutshell and see how it can be

helpful for their contemporary use, this book is a must.

Finally the disappointment must be noted that substantial portions of the book have already appeared in journal articles. In fact four of the five chapters that make up the first part of the book have been published elsewhere (though here slightly "revised"). The buyer feels somewhat cheated: Is it a new book he is buying, or a collection of reprinted articles?

Craig C. Broyles

Trinity Western University, Langley, BC

*Ecclesiastes: A Practical Commentary.* By J. A. Loader. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986, 136 pp., \$6.95.

*Ecclesiastes* is the third volume in a new series of paperback commentaries entitled *Text and Interpretation*, having been preceded by *Job* (A. van Selms) and *Revelation* (L. van Hartingsveld). The aim of this new series is to provide practical and concise explanations of each book of the Bible that will be of value to pastors and laypersons alike.

Sixteen pages are devoted to introductory matters. Preferences are stated for a non-Solomonic authorship ("any date prior to the fifth century B.C. is out of the question. . . . The middle of the third century B.C. [is] the most probable time of origin" (p. 30), a rendering of *Qôhelet* as "the Assembler," and an assessment of the book that declares that human life apart from Christ is meaningless. In the view of the author the design of the book is cast in a persistent tension between polar opposites from which deliverance can only be found in accepting Christ.

One strong feature of this work is the discussion in the introduction and reference in the body of the commentary to twelve different literary genres. These discussions are very helpful.

Less helpful, from this reviewer's perspective and own contribution to commentary on this book, is the classification of *Ecclesiastes* as a "royal fiction" (p. 19). Even more annoying is the constant conclusion that the Preacher comes to "negative results" time and again. For example, Eccl 3:21 teaches that there is no difference in the eternal destiny of humans or animals, or 7:11-14 holds that "man is simply the prey to the arbitrariness of God" (p. 86).

To overcome the constant negativism of his conclusions Loader has the unexplainable exegetical habit of making what I would call a Christological jump, for suddenly Christ is introduced as our new Christian answer over against the Preacher's arguments, which no longer hold. This happens so frequently in this commentary that one begins to wonder: "Why not just suspend all study of such a stupid, morbid book of negativity and go directly to the NT for our spiritual nurture?" At best such exegesis is little more than a moralizing of the text; at worst it raises the ghost of Marcion.

Finally we must object to the strong textual positions assumed by Loader. For example, the epilogue (12:9-14) is obviously not the work of the Preacher (p. 133) since it uses the past tense and third person. But what manuscript evidence can we offer for such delegation to a secondary status? Indeed Loader concluded that the ideas of 12:13-14 are "precisely [those] that the Preacher opposed; thus this section cannot possibly be viewed as the sum of his thoughts" (p. 135). But has not the exegete allowed his own assumptions to set the agenda for the teaching purpose of the entire book of *Ecclesiastes* when the stated purpose of the book is rejected purely on internal grounds without even a hint of external evidence? We think he has.

In our view *Ecclesiastes* has a much more positive thrust and sets forth a theology of culture and life as gifts of the living God that are realized when we are driven by the

vacuum of our hearts to come to know the living God (3:11).

Walter C. Kaiser, Jr.

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

*Song of Solomon*. Everyman's Bible Commentary. By Paige Patterson. Chicago: Moody, 1986, 124 pp., \$5.95 paper.

With the volume of literature, particularly commentaries, that has appeared relative to the Song of Solomon in the past decade one might well ask whether another contribution is necessary or even desirable. It is the very elusiveness of this little book—its susceptibility to an enormous range of questions and viewpoints concerning authorship, canonicity and meaning—that justifies ongoing study, however, and so this offering by Patterson is by no means redundant. Moreover much of the recent attention to the book has been either technical to the point of exhaustion (e.g. M. Pope), fanciful to the point of incredulity (Pope), or fixated on one aspect such as human sexuality to the point of myopia (e.g. J. Dillow). A happy exception to this is the excellent commentary by G. L. Carr, a work that Patterson strangely omits in his bibliography.

Patterson is extremely sensitive to the need to communicate profound truth with uncluttered clarity, an objective in which he succeeds most admirably. He also writes with authority while at the same time avoiding a dogmatic, close-minded approach to issues that are debatable. His style is lilting, almost poetic, a factor that makes the reading a joyful adventure rather than a necessary evil.

After defending Solomonic authorship with the standard conservative arguments, Patterson lists the traditional schools of interpretation—allegorical, dramatic, wedding song, liturgical or cultic, secular love song, strictly literal—and rejects them all in favor of his own, which he labels “literal-analogous.” By this he means that “the physical love expressed in Song of Solomon is not only noble and sanctified, it also illustrates the nature and permanency of the relationships existing between the saint and his Saviour and between the church and her Lord” (p. 21). While one might quibble with the term “analogy” (as opposed to “metaphor” or even “type”) its use in the commentary is certainly defensible.

More specifically Patterson holds to the two-character interpretation, the personae being Solomon and the unnamed maiden commonly described as Shulamith (misspelled “Shulamith” throughout). Though this view is not without its problems (e.g., lack of reference to the hero in terms of royalty or majesty), the author makes a good case for it. It certainly avoids the arbitrariness with which some exegetes introduce characters with little or no textual justification other than to fit a preconceived notion as to the overall structure and meaning of the story.

While this reviewer accepts Patterson's analysis of the Song for the most part, there are a few places where it does not seem to be correct.

First of all, he separates 1:14 from 1:12–13, attributing the latter, correctly, to the maiden but suggesting that v 14, with the next three, is a speech of Solomon addressed to the maiden. This is impossible since *dôd*, “beloved,” is used throughout the book to refer to the male whereas the female is addressed as *ra yâ*, “beloved.”

The same should be said of 1:16, which is not addressed to Shulamith by Solomon (p. 42) but vice versa, as is clear from the masculine pronominal suffix (*hinnekâ*) and the use of *dôdi*, “my beloved.” Again, the addressee in 2:14 is not Solomon as Patterson proposes (p. 53), for the suffixes are feminine. Verse 14, therefore, is the conclusion of a Solomonic speech commencing in v 10 and is not a response to vv 10–13.

Other points that should be made are as follows: Concerning Solomon's pastoral

pursuits in 1:7 Patterson suggests that Shulamith is referring to literal flocks to which Solomon was attending (p. 37). While this is possible it is also appropriate to consider that kings in Israel and the ancient Near East were commonly described as shepherds so that their pastoral duties were in fact governmental affairs and not agricultural.

With reference to 6:8–9, where Solomon avers that out of sixty queens and eighty concubines Shulamith is “one,” Patterson infers that their relationship must be monogamous at the time of the writing of the Song (p. 98). If indeed Solomon was the author of the Song, and there is no reason to deny it, this cannot be a statement of monogamy, for Solomon had at least one wife even before he became king. This was Naamah of Ammon, mother of Rehoboam, who was 41 years old when he succeeded Solomon (2 Chr 12:13). Since Solomon reigned for forty years, Rehoboam’s birth preceded Solomon’s monarchy, and of course his marriage to Naamah was even earlier. The word *’ahat* (“one”) means only “favored” or “unique” here.

Finally, future reprints should be aware of “Shalamith” for “Shulamith” (p. 35), “epitomy” for “epitome” (p. 51), “Yamuk” for “Yarmuk” (p. 68), “complimented” for “complemented” (p. 69), “that” for “than” (p. 87), and “*hôtâm*” for “*kaḥôtâm*” (p. 116).

These criticisms aside, this little book is highly recommended as perhaps the best nontechnical commentary available on the Song of Solomon. It will serve the preacher, teacher, and well-informed layman as an excellent tool for the recovery of the meaning of this much neglected portion of God’s Word.

Eugene H. Merrill

Dallas Theological Seminary

*An Introduction To The Old Testament Prophetic Books.* By C. Hassell Bullock. Chicago: Moody, 1986, 391 pp.

This is the second introduction to a section of the OT by the author, his earlier work being an introduction to the poetic books of the OT (Moody, 1979). The book begins with a 26-page introduction that briefly outlines OT prophecy and the prophets including origins, history, culture and canonicity. The first two pages provide the reader with the plan of the book, which is a chronological discussion of the prophetic books. This is achieved by grouping chronologically related prophets according to three political periods of history—neo-Assyrian, neo-Babylonian and Persian—each forming a separate section of the book. This provides the basis for comparison of contemporary prophetic works while interfacing them with relevant historical developments.

Bullock begins with Jonah, which he considers to be one of the oldest prophetic books. A key point for the author is the transitional nature of Jonah, which he sees as spanning the nonliterary and literary prophets (terms he interchanges with preclassical and classical, although he favors the latter). Following Jonah the prophetic books of Amos, Hosea, Micah and Isaiah, the classical prophet “par excellence,” are introduced as prophets of the neo-Assyrian period.

Zephaniah, who according to Bullock was in the “vanguard” of the Josianic reform, is the first prophet of part 2, then Habakkuk, a transitional prophet between the neo-Assyrian and neo-Babylonian periods, and Jeremiah, who “represented a prophetic plateau” (p. 185) as a “prophet to the nations.” Attention is next turned to Nahum, dated to just before the fall of Nineveh; Ezekiel, where Bullock emphasizes the merging of prophecy and the cult; then Obadiah, dated a little after the fall of Jerusalem. It will surprise some to find Lamentations concluding this section of prophets from the neo-Babylonian period. Bullock’s justification, in addition to its location with the major prophets in the Christian canon, is his understanding that by content and purpose the “book truly stands in the prophetic tradition” (p. 264). While Bullock feels that Jeremiah

could have been the author he equally stresses the possibility of its anonymity.

Prophets of the Persian period include Daniel, accepted as a sixth-century prophet; Haggai and Zechariah, prophets related to the reconstruction of the temple; Joel, for which Bullock feels there is much support for a postexilic date; and finally Malachi.

Bullock tackles the usual matters of date, unity and authorship after a brief statement about the prophet himself. Each discussion is concluded with a summary of the message (and/or theology) of the prophet and a thorough outline.

Greatest emphasis is given to each of the sections entitled "Literary Nature and Plan/Analysis," which includes discussions of form, structure, style and related subjects. These sections are the heart and strength of the book as Bullock covers a wide spectrum of critical matters and views emphasizing issues germane to each book. Bullock is well read in this area as attested by ample footnotes and the 35-page bibliography (arranged by prophetic books at the end). He is quite conversant with various schools of criticism but evidences the greatest amount of interaction with the results of form criticism.

Generally speaking Bullock accepts and defends the unity of each book while recognizing the possibility of various units being brought together by some kind of editorial activity. Again, he generally feels that the prophet could have been the author but allows for anonymity in some cases or final composition by another individual (a disciple) in others (e.g. Hosea). Bullock also feels that the prophet could have acted as his own editor in emphasizing the close proximity of the oral and written stages of the material.

Throughout the book are comments on various subjects that are often excellent and worthy of attention. Bullock gives visibility to prophetic eschatology, especially in relation to the date/unity of a given book. He suggests that more work needs to be done here but is clear on this dimension in the eighth-century prophetic announcements of Israel's future. Another area of continual attention is the oracles to foreign nations. While Bullock agrees with many that these were primarily for Israel and not the nations, he cannot but notice Jeremiah's call to the nations, suggest the possibility of Isaiah's speaking to Ethiopian ambassadors, and hint at the messenger of Obad 1:1 addressing various nations. Form, content and purpose are all part of the ongoing discussion, which is both informative and helpful.

At times modern views are taken to task. Bullock is not satisfied with those who understand various prophetic works as liturgical compositions, nor is he supportive of the view that Israel observed an annual autumn enthronement festival.

Sections summarizing the message of each prophetic work are the weaker part of the book. Bullock, who says that "prophecy had its origin in the call of Yahweh" (p. 15) and that "the prophets found their legitimacy and valid credentials first of all in Yahweh's call" (p. 17), does not fully realize the potential of these observations. Some will take issue with his position that the prophets were not social reformers but theological reformers (p. 25), a view that seems to unnecessarily limit the definition of function. Some topics do not have the focus they merit in such a work. There are ample indications of the prophetic announcement of the day of the Lord and good comparisons of prophetic usage, but more discussion of the scope and intent of this great prophetic theme would be helpful. Much visibility is given to the Messiah and messianic age, especially in expected sections of Isaiah, Daniel or Zechariah. But more synthesis is needed.

There are few typographical errors in the book, and the format is clear but encourages some repetition between sections. Charts (especially on literary structure) are included, and Hebrew words are usually followed by English equivalents.

While little attention is given to some areas (e.g. archeology, NT usage) Bullock manages to pack much into this one-volume introduction. In the final analysis he truly succeeds in introducing the prophetic books to the reader, especially the many critical issues related to the prophetic corpus.

Bob Spender

*New Testament Words in Today's Language.* By Wayne A. Detzler. Wheaton: Victor, 1986, 407 pp.

If you have ever wished you had a reference book that had more substance than Vine's but was more practically and homiletically focused than Kittel or the *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, you were probably in Detzler's mind when he wrote this volume. Aimed at Sunday-school teachers, pastors and Bible students rather than scholars, the book covers more than two hundred key NT words. For each word Detzler gives the Greek word(s) behind the English, discusses its basic meaning, and surveys its Biblical usage. This material is gleaned from *TDNT*, etc., and Detzler does a consistently competent job of boiling down the homiletically relevant essence of those heavier discussions for more popular consumption. He concludes each article with a section called "Illustrations"—usually juicy quotations from the gamut of Church history, either using the word in question or commenting on the general concept. These are generally aptly chosen, and they give the book a quality unusual in reference works: It makes good browsing material.

One hesitates to criticize the book—it is such fun to use, for one thing, and the idea of performing a marriage between serious scholarship and sermonic effectiveness is a good one. But the marriage does not always quite work. It is not always clear what the relationship is between the illustrations and the development of the meaning and usage they are supposed to illustrate. Then too the quality is uneven: On some pages the illustrations sparkle, but the section on the word "dispensation," for example, is given over to a rather pedestrian explication of Scofield's sevenfold schema. Problems also arise from the fact that, rather than emerging from Detzler's own reading of classical Christian literature, the illustrations are simply gleaned from a series of other anthologies of illustrations (listed on p. 7). The effects of this procedure are sometimes disconcerting: C. S. Lewis is paraphrased in what looks like a quotation, several quotations from Shakespeare are taken out of context and made vehicles for the intentional fallacy, etc. The method of compilation guarantees that such errors will be present. A final irritation is Detzler's propensity to explain his illustrations.

But such curmudgeonly grumbings should not put off the reader with a need for a work of this kind. My bottom-line comment is the fact that I keep taking it from the shelf during my own sermon preparation.

Donald T. Williams

The First Evangelical Free Church, Marietta, GA

*Matthew as Story.* By Jack Dean Kingsbury. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986.

For many students of Matthew today, the first book read at a technical level will be (or has been) Kingsbury's *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), and it was mine. After ten years of further reflection Kingsbury offers to many of these same students another comprehensive treatment of Matthew, though this time from the literary-critical angle and with less detail and scholarly apparatus than his previous studies. Since I have not read as much in literary criticism as perhaps I should, it was with great delight that I opened this book and was not disappointed.

As mentioned above, the book needs to be carefully distinguished from his previous study. It is not a composition-critical analysis but, with the new developments in literary and narrative criticism, an attempt to subject the first gospel to these newer methods. And the author provides for his readers a readable introduction to narrative criticism as it applies to Matthew. After discussing such matters as the "story" and "discourse" of

the first gospel with admirable clarity Kingsbury surveys the entire gospel, using his previously and largely unaltered structural proposal. He then treats of two theological themes (Jesus as Son of Man, the disciples of Jesus), showing how they are to be seen in light of his narrative study, and traces what he thinks are the contours of the *Sitz im Leben* of the first gospel.

Some of the more noteworthy and suggestive features are his clear discussions of the events, characters (Jesus, disciples, Jewish leaders, crowds, minor characters) and setting of Matthew. In particular, few have noticed the plot and development of tension in Matthew with respect to the Jewish leaders, and this is traced by the author quite carefully throughout the narrative, especially in 11:1—16:20. Kingsbury demonstrates—convincingly, I think—that the tension escalates toward repudiation and is finally climaxed, paradoxically, in the cross (see pp. 73–77). The reader of this volume will often gain insights into Matthew's plot and narrative flow by paying close attention to details.

Despite these positive observations several questions remain, and I turn my attention now to these. First, before one can accept the hermeneutics involved in narrative criticism one must discuss the issue of genre, an issue—so it seems to me—absolutely crucial for determining how far one can go into narrative studies of the gospels. What this means is this: One may be able to detect some very interesting features of Matthew when using narrative criticism (say, for instance, Kingsbury's suggestion that a chiasm of persons is formed in 4:18–22; 4:25; 5:1–2; 9:2–13 with the same in 22:46; 23:1; 24:1–3), but can one be reasonably sure that such was intended by the author? In other words, if Matthew's gospel is more on the level of kerygmatic biography (and I do not think Matthew is a simple chronicle of the life of Jesus [see P. L. Shuler]), then some things are in the order that they appear because they happened in that order. Narrative criticism teaches us some things, but it must demonstrate that the authors of the first century—in particular, Matthew—and the readers of the first century operated with such a sophisticated view of literature.

Along this line I found myself wondering if it was indeed probable that Matthew wanted his readers to consolidate every mention of crowds into one homogeneous group that began with wonder and praise but that in the end repudiated Jesus along with the Jewish leaders (cf. pp. 23–24, 86). In other words I question whether the author has not confused a term (“crowds”) with different referents (“various groups of people in Galilee and Jerusalem”) and so found a development that in fact is no more than a term that was utilized for more than one set of people. Thus those who reject Jesus in the passion narrative are not those who praised him in Galilee, nor for that matter do we need to equate those who praised him at the entry with those who rejected him at the crucifixion. This all touches on the matter of genre. Is Matthew not biographical and historical to some degree and not just a narrative about Jesus? Literary criticism will inevitably draw attention to static characters, but if literary critics are not also historians some conclusions will be historically insensitive.

My biggest criticism of Kingsbury's book does not pertain to his conclusions but to his method (literary criticism) and its value. The author spells out at the outset that this book is not a repetition of his previous monograph but is instead a new book, built upon a new method. “When viewed,” he states regarding the redaction- and literary-critical methods, “from different angles, the same Gospel admits to different analyses. . . . The application of a new method has cast the contents of Matthew in a strikingly new light” (pp. vii–viii). The problem I see here is quite simple: There is very little in this book that is substantially different from what he has argued in his previous book and articles, which were written quite apart from literary criticism. To be fair it must be said that certainly Kingsbury has changed his terms greatly, but the method has not led him to any substantially different conclusions. He still argues for the same structure, the same Christology and the same theologies of kingdom, ethics, and salvation history. In other

words, though the method has changed, the results have changed only in form. (Admittedly this will be the greatest delight for the author since he has found his previous conclusions confirmed from a different angle.) For instance, we are now told that Matthew's perspective is "God's evaluative point of view" and that Matthew's reader is of different sorts: "implied reader" and "real reader." Now it is not my intention to argue that narrative criticism is not valuable, because I think it is—though it does seem overrated. It does, however, seem to me that a new method should produce some new results, and I found few. Again, let me emphasize that this criticism says almost nothing about the contents of Kingsbury's new book; it merely questions the long-term value of the new approach for yielding new insights into Matthew.

But let me reiterate that this book will be found useful for both students and scholars of Matthew, for in many ways it attempts to read Matthew on Matthew's own terms and does so quite successfully. It is my hope that Kingsbury's essay will incite new discussions about literary analyses of Matthew and will enable students of Matthew better to grasp his Subject.

Scot McKnight

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

*The Trinity in the Gospel of John. A Thematic Commentary on the Fourth Gospel.* By Royce Gruenler. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986, 159 pp., \$9.95.

Sociology and theology have embraced at numerous times and in striking ways. This currently popular interest has led to a variety of developments. For instance, some writers have long been exploring the liberating social implications of the gospel, while others have been reconstructing the social world of the NT and in particular the environment of the apostle Paul. If sociology is to be a principal concern of the late twentieth century, it comes as no surprise to find theologians—especially process theologians—examining the "social nature of God."

Gruenler is no stranger to these developments. Formerly a patron of the process school, he returned to evangelicalism with a fresh appreciation for Biblical theology (see his *The Inexhaustible God: Biblical Faith and the Challenge of Process Theism*, 1983). Yet in doing so he brings a viewpoint that is, to say the least, unconventional.

The volume under review is not what you might expect. It is not a systematic Johannine theology, nor is it an exercise in conventional exegesis. It is Gruenler's first volume of a promised trilogy of books that will explore the social character of the Trinity as evidenced in the NT. Because the fourth gospel proved to be exceptionally fruitful in uncovering the social dynamics of the Trinity, John deserved an entire volume. Within this gospel, Jesus' discourses are used to disclose how the Father, Son and Spirit generously defer to one another within their "Triunity." Gruenler writes: "The Gospel of John intimates that each of the persons of the Trinity willingly, lovingly, and voluntarily seeks to serve and please the other. This does not diminish the distinctive roles of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but highlights their co-inherence as interacting persons" (p. xvii). The key terms that recur with frequency are "disposability" (being a servant at another's disposal) and "generosity." They characterize the members of the Godhead and in turn become a mandate for the Church. Hence the social nature of the world is to be rooted in the *prima facie* social character of God. And this is disclosed in the Johannine discourses of Jesus.

Three sorts of critics may feel eager to dispatch this book with zeal. First, NT scholars of a less-than-conservative bent will of course swallow hard when they learn that these Johannine discourses have any historical merit. Happily Gruenler has included a lengthy

appendix justifying his approach (pp. 141–152; cf. also pp. 1–8). Second, some systematic theologians may become concerned about the effect this study has on the delicately balanced trinitarian formulas of diversity and unity. The author is aware of the sins of those who like Apollinarius upset the formula and devotes a cautious preface to this end. But if there is genuine reciprocal “disposability” and deference, does this mean that the Father defers to the Son and Spirit? It may be only with difficulty that complete reciprocity can be supported in Scripture. A third assault might even come from the ranks of Johannine scholars who might feel inwardly troubled at Gruenler’s hermeneutics. The author examines the sayings of Jesus with care and sensitivity and finds there theological evidences that may not have been intended.

Nevertheless as with all pioneering efforts one must not quibble about particulars but keep in mind the larger contribution. Jesus’ discourses indeed reveal a divine community of love, respect and service. Social interaction and responsiveness hallmark its health. We in turn can use these social indicators to show us our own health before God and one another. Are we voluntarily subordinate and deferential? Would John 7:18 typify our health? Gruenler examines both sin and wholeness through the one lens of “disposability”: Sin desires to be hidden and private rather than social and responsive, wholeness is typified by generosity and openness. These are good and meaningful thoughts. It is to Gruenler’s credit if he can anchor a model for such spiritual well-being in the community of the Trinity.

Gary M. Burge

King College, Bristol, TN

*Jesus: Lord and Savior.* By F. F. Bruce. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1986, 228 pp., \$7.95 paper.

F. F. Bruce is a household name to the readers of *JETS* because he is one of the most prolific evangelical authors in recent decades. This book, like others he has written, displays a wonderful ability to make complex topics understandable. It is one of the volumes in The Jesus Library series, all of which seem to be designed to make the complexities of Christianity understandable to those without scholarly degrees in Biblical studies. In his preface Bruce expresses the hope that his readers will find themselves confronted with the question: “Who do you say that I [Jesus] am?” The book achieves this end and a number of others. Jesus is brought into the reader’s consciousness with clarity, and he is challenged by the obvious love and devotion that the author has for the Savior and for the Word of God.

This is not a “life of Christ.” Rather, it is a vigorous and forthright presentation of the Biblical teachings about Christ. In a very real sense it is an apologetic aimed at the skeptical expressions about Jesus of Nazareth that have been bandied about in the past twenty years (pp. 14–15).

Bruce rigorously defends “the faith once delivered to the saints,” but he does not shy away from critical questions. He is restless with “discordant answers” that “differ not merely from the New Testament witness to Jesus but from the account of him approved by the majority of modern historians within whose field his life and time fall” (p. 14). He therefore employs his vast reservoir of knowledge and experience as a Biblical scholar to gently, and subtly at times, reaffirm the gospel message (cf. pp. 102, 136–138, 157). The text is laced with historical and geographical facts that naturally fall from his pen.

The book contains twenty chapters, the first twelve of which weave together the gospel accounts of the life and ministry of the Lord into a simple and beautiful tapestry. Having begun with “The Jesus of History and the Christ of Faith” in chap. 1, Bruce proceeds

through the next eleven chapters to present the beginnings of Jesus' ministry and his work with his disciples. Even though there is no attempt to tell the story chronologically, he draws on the gospels to cover Jesus' ministry, teaching and suffering. Four chapters are devoted to "Jesus' Last Meals" and his arrest, crucifixion and resurrection. In chap. 12 the resurrection of Christ is affirmed without question: "The crucifixion and the resurrection are necessary to each other. There can be no gospel without both, for neither is meaningful without the other" (p. 120).

Following a chapter about Jesus' relationship with the parties of his day, in which he distances Jesus from the Sadducees, zealots and Essenes and shows some common sympathies with the Pharisees, Bruce moves on to teach the reader the Scriptural grounds for several doctrines pertaining to Christ. In these chapters he raises certain critical questions in passing, but he never loses sight of his objective. Doctrines such as the deity of Christ (chap. 15), the incarnation (chap. 16) and the universality of salvation (chap. 17) are expounded with a broad cross-referencing of Scripture. Chapter 18, titled "The Coming One," may focus too heavily on realized eschatology to satisfy some readers, but Bruce clearly supports the bodily return of Christ as well.

The thoughtful reader is struck with the deep spirituality of the author. The book is a devotional experience and an inspiration. One who is sensitive to the Spirit cannot fail to grow and mature in his faith from such a clear and inspirational exposition of "the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith" (p. 11).

Readers will include new Christians eager for affirmation of their faith and pilgrims wishing for a clear statement about the credibility of the faith from one of the twentieth-century giants of the faith.

Robert D. Pitts

Taylor University, Upland, IN

*Christ's Call to Discipleship.* By James Montgomery Boice. Chicago: Moody, 1986, 169 pp., n.p.

This is a disturbing book. It should be, considering its title. Boice expounds seventeen sayings of Jesus in fourteen chapters. The chapters are divided into four sections covering the meaning, path, cost and rewards of discipleship. Each chapter is laced with Scriptural illustrations and personal anecdotes. The style is very readable and nearly preachable. By reading this book a preacher might gain much homiletical inspiration.

But Boice did not write to inspire homilies. He means to disturb us. It is rather easy to become comfortable in the daily routines of life. Boice's book makes me uncomfortable because I often find myself falling short of our Lord's commands, especially in the area of inner obedience and commitment. I know that my heart is often not what it should be. Boice has written to challenge American Christians to a full-blown commitment. As a fellow preacher I know that Christ's call to discipleship needs to be continually reiterated. For this Boice is to be commended.

But the book is disturbing in another way. What does it mean to be a Christian? Is a Christian one who believes, or one who obeys, or one who believes and obeys? Boice would choose the last, and almost in an absolute sense. "Those who are genuinely Christ's sheep obey His call from the beginning and enter into a life characterized by obedience" (p. 18). "[Are we] willing to pay the painful costs for the prize of salvation?" (p. 118). "Not only is the one who looks back unfit for kingdom service, he is not even a citizen of the kingdom" (p. 126). Such statements are found throughout the book. What disturbs me is the absolute way in which Boice understands obedience as necessary for being a Christian.

It seems rather dangerous to make such broad and basic theological statements based upon a limited portion of Scripture such as the synoptic gospels. Unarguably, one of the great themes of the synoptics is discipleship. But this theme must be correlated with Johannine and Pauline thought. In John there seems to be a "secret disciple" motif (John 7:50-51; 12:42-43; 19:38) that stands in contrast to the absolute statements of the synoptics. And Paul calls the disobedient Corinthians "saints." Even Boice claims that Lot was saved (p. 131). In other words, it seems to me that while justification is absolute, sanctification develops by degree. And our degree of sanctification has no bearing on whether we are Christians. A question seems to be: "Are the synoptics *kérygma* or *didachē*?" Although it leaves some interpretive problems, it seems to me that in the synoptics Jesus is calling true believers to greater—in fact, to absolute—discipleship. This is the message American Christians need to hear.

Daniel H. Johnson

*Jesus According to a Woman.* By Rachel Conrad Wahlberg. New York: Paulist, 1986, 100 pp., \$4.95 paper.

In nine chapters Wahlberg discusses Jesus' interaction with women and his stories of women. Her approach is innovative, energetic and thought-provoking, though often she tries too hard to find positive, equalizing interpretations about women. This weakness is an overcompensation for the Church's negative treatment of women in the past. Wahlberg accepts the view that much of the Biblical material expresses the cultural biases of the time (e.g. patriarchy).

One of Wahlberg's contributions is that she points out the dynamic personality traits of the women we see in the gospels. She notes the Syro-Phoenician woman's daring and quick wit, the initiative and devotion of the woman who anointed Jesus' feet, the spiritual and intellectual understanding of Mary and Martha, the bold and effective witnessing of the Samaritan woman, and the faithfulness of the women who were the first witnesses of Jesus' resurrection.

Wahlberg's insights into the story of the woman who anointed Jesus' feet illustrate the freshness of her approach. She sees three implications traditional interpretations have overlooked: (1) Jesus viewed the ministering woman with acceptance and pleasure and considered Simon the insensitive host; (2) Jesus passively receives what the woman actively gives; (3) sexual purity was not a prerequisite for ministering to Jesus (to Simon and the religious community, her sinfulness would have made her a nonperson).

In the familiar story of Mary and Martha, Wahlberg's comments add to our understanding of these two women and the dilemma women face. Like Mary, Martha also longs to be with Jesus. But "her *duty* in the kitchen comes before her *desire* to be with Jesus" (p. 80). Women are torn between the serving life and the intellectual life. "Society tells them [women] to be homemakers, but considers it 'not working.' The church tells them to be servants—but offers this Luke story charging the serving Martha with being too 'busy about many things'" (p. 82). It is a no-win situation.

Wahlberg suggests that the two sisters should not be seen as an either-or choice for women. Both women related freely with Jesus. He discussed theology with both, and each showed her understanding in spiritual matters.

Wahlberg rightly emphasizes Jesus' high regard for women and their abilities, the significance of women's activity and the vital personalities of the women in the gospels, and thereby gives a better sense of their worth as active members of God's kingdom. However, she implies conclusions beyond the evidence of the gospel texts, partly because they are not balanced by the rest of the Biblical material, which is discounted as being

the result of patriarchal conditioning. Though Jesus may have chosen women as his first message-bearers of the resurrection perhaps in order to demonstrate his high opinion of them and to accredit their witness in the eyes of the male disciples (as Wahlberg suggests), it seems too much (in light of the usual texts such as 1 Tim 2:11–14; 1 Cor 14:34–35, but also considering that they were sent only to the Christian community) to state that Jesus is endorsing women as preachers in the sense that Philip, Paul and Peter were.

Another example of overcompensation is Wahlberg's explanation of the parable of the lost coin. She indicates that woman as God-figure is one of the positive images Jesus offers of women (p. 72) and questions the traditional identification of God in masculine terms (p. 31). Though Jesus' use of this image supports the facts that God in his being is neither male nor female and that women are in his image, the point of the parable is not God's being or gender. It is his concern for the lost.

There were some other problems for this reviewer. Wahlberg misunderstands the OT divorce laws. She claims (p. 22) that the woman's cooperation in the act was not considered, but in Deut 22:25–27 her attitude is considered in a way that gives her the benefit of the doubt. According to Wahlberg the man was only stoned if the woman were a betrothed virgin, but the man was also to be stoned if the woman were married (22:22). If the woman were not betrothed or married, neither was executed; they were to marry (without the option for divorce, 22:28–29), unless the father of the woman absolutely refused (Exod 22:17—this "out" was for the protection of the woman).

Wahlberg also seems to project twentieth-century attitudes back into Biblical times. In her discussion of the laws concerning cleanness, particularly menstruation, she uses emotion-laden terms: Women were "ostracized in cruel ways" (p. 35); they felt "disgrace" during periods of uncleanness; "the ultimate humiliation was the sin offering" after menstruation and childbirth; "women were condemned to a feeling of being soiled and unworthy most of their adult life" (p. 37); "it is horrible to contemplate the almost constant negative feelings a woman must have had about herself" (p. 38). There is no Biblical evidence that women felt shame. The woman with the constant flow of blood had many factors contributing to her timidity in speaking up (Luke 8:47), such as Jesus' being a well-known personage, speaking before a large crowd, making Jesus unclean with her touch, fear of being rebuked. This woman's condition (constant uncleanness) was not the norm. As Wahlberg states, menstruation is a normal process, and in OT perspective the clean/unclean laws were to teach the people about God's absolute holiness. Women of Biblical times may have accepted and understood these two concepts.

In the story of the Syro-Phoenician woman, Wahlberg interprets Jesus' behavior in a way that stretches one's thinking. She suggests that Jesus could be reflecting the prejudices of his day, even speaking unkindly (p. 17)—an interpretation that is simple and fits the facts. In making her case Wahlberg relates the verse "Jesus grew in wisdom." Yet Jesus is the sympathetic, sinless one (Heb 4:15); he never sinned. Wahlberg recognizes these qualities in Jesus in her study of the Samaritan woman. She writes that Jesus was "a compassionate person who saw human beings rather than labels or categories" (p. 72).

Written to inspire women, this small book contains mind-expanding ideas, some helpful, some questionable. It should be read with careful reference to the texts and to the rest of Scripture.

Susan T. Foh

*Ultimate Questions: A Theological Primer.* By Clyde F. Crews. New York: Paulist, 1986, 169 pp., \$6.95 paper.

In many ways this book could be described as a Roman Catholic version of Francis

Schaeffer's cultural apologetic. That is to say, it is an attempt by a Catholic theologian to show that the ultimate questions of being and existence, as asked by the great thinkers of our modern world, are best answered by the Christian worldview.

Crews divides this book into four units, each consisting of several chapters. In the first unit Crews presents the reader with the ultimate questions as classically put forth and how they are expressed in the major academic disciplines (the sciences, literature and the social sciences). The second unit, entitled "Thoughtful Responses," examines the growth of secularity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and how several thinkers (Marx, Darwin, Freud, Sartre, Skinner, Lorenz) attempted to answer the ultimate questions without reference to God or to religious belief. In unit 3 Crews presents several of the classical responses to the ultimate questions as they are advanced by the differing religious traditions in both the east and the west. This unit also contains a chapter dealing with definitions of religion as given by a number of prominent thinkers. It provides an excellent overview for an introduction on this topic. Unit 4, "The Christian Response," consists of four chapters and presents the Christian answer to the ultimate questions.

The strength of this book as an introductory text lies in the author's ability to present difficult thought lucidly to the undergraduate. Crews does a fine job of presenting capsulized (and may I add remarkably accurate) overviews of the most influential thinkers in history (Freud, Marx, Sartre, etc.).

In the final unit of this text Crews writes that "the world cannot answer its own fundamental questions," and "it is precisely at this point that Christianity begins its religious and philosophic task" (p. 124). In other words Christianity has the answer to man's deepest longings. In another place, however, Crews states that "the major churches of Christianity do not deny human and spiritual growth to those not consciously within the Christian family" (p. 119). If he means by this that all the major churches teach that one can receive eternal salvation apart from consciously receiving Christ, there is no doubt that he is incorrect, for it is indeed the case that several churches deny that one can be saved apart from a conscious acceptance of Jesus. On the other hand, if he means by this that people in other religions are capable of accurate spiritual insight apart from special revelation (a view advanced by Thomas Aquinas), there is no doubt that this is taught by a majority of the Christian churches, not to mention the Scriptures (Romans 1).

With the exception of his overemphasis of the role of the Church in personal salvation (pp. 137-169—to be expected from a Roman Catholic author), this book is a fine introduction to theology from the perspective of that branch of philosophy that asks those "ultimate questions"—namely, metaphysics.

Francis J. Beckwith

Fordham University, New York, NY