

BOOK REVIEWS

Christianity and Comparative Religion, by J. N. D. Anderson. (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1970). 593 pages and bibliography and index. \$1.95. Reviewed by Paul M. Krishna, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Ill.

Every evangelical who sets himself the task of reviewing the religions of the rest of mankind has to tread a hazardous razor's-edge path. The very fact of his commitment to the finality and the all-sufficiency of the atonement accomplished by our Lord, involves a certain pre-judgment upon all the remaining faiths of mankind. And unless the whole effort is infused and inter-penetrated by the spirit of Christian charity and humility, it is bound to wreck itself and fail in its main purpose, which is not to win an argument at the expense of other religions, but to deliver precious souls, "staggering" as the late Winston Churchill once said in another connection "around the rim of hell."

The overall impression that one carries after a perusal of his *Christianity and Comparative Religion* is that Professor Anderson succeeds, in the main, in keeping his balance along this razor's edge. He recognizes the need to keep always in mind the much neglected warning of Professor W. Cantwell Smith:

"No one has understood the diverse faiths of mankind if his so-called explanation of them makes fundamental nonsense of each one." (*The Faith of Other Men*—W. C. Smith. New American Library, 1962.)

and this accounts for his success in this difficult venture.

Among the more important of the admirable features of this book are, firstly, the clarity with which such contemporary trends as syncretism, mysticism and experiential fads are dealt with and their pitfalls for Biblical Christianity pointed out. Secondly, the uniqueness of the Lord Jesus Christ is brought out with clarity. The technique of spelling out the finality of Christ under four questions, each forming a chapter, namely

- (a) A Unique Proclamation?
- (b) A Unique Salvation?
- (c) A Unique Disclosure?
- (d) No Other Name?

is highly effective and the reader sees the Majesty of the Lord Jesus and

His accomplished work, especially as in each chapter the main tenets of the non-Christian religions are dealt with in juxtaposition.

And thirdly, the beautifully charitable way in which he deals with the thorny question of whether or not the unevangelized are lost. The absence of that rigid dogmatism that flows from a hardened heart is indeed commendable, even though the author does not depart from the undeniable teaching of Scripture on this subject.

Perhaps the only thing that may be mentioned on the debit side is his approval of a statement by Stephen Neill (pages 79-80) to the effect that

“the heaviest blow at the traditional doctrine of karma was dealt by Mr. Gandhi, not by his teaching, but by the manner of his death at the hand of an assassin.”

A Hindu reading this will shake his head and only say that whoever said those words never understood the doctrine of Karma. He would, to cut out long argument, invite him to read the story of Harischandra, which one might say, is broadly the Hindu counterpart of the story of Job.

A Basic Bibliographic Guide for New Testament Exegesis, by David M. Scholer. (South Hamilton, Mass.: Gordon-Conwell Bookcentre, 1971.) 56 pages. \$1.00. Reviewed by W. Ward Gasque, Regent College, Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

This is the sort of handbook which has been needed for a long time. An excellent bibliographical guide has been prepared by members of The Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical Research (see *JETS* 13 [1970], 129-30), but it is probably too technical and too British-oriented to be of great value to the average American seminarian (even though essential for the aspiring scholar). The present *Guide* is designed as an aid for the student who is just beginning in Greek exegesis.

Fourteen sections are included: (1) Other bibliographical surveys; (2) texts of the N.T.; (3) texts of the O.T.; (4) concordances to the Bible and other related literature; (5) lexicons to N.T., other Greek, and Hebrew literature; (6) grammars to N.T., Greek and Hebrew literature; (7) bibliographic aids; (8) N.T. commentaries; (9) N.T. introduction, theology, history, and chronology; (10) geography and archaeology; (11) dictionaries and encyclopedias; (12) N.T. world: pagan, Jewish, and early Christian literature; (13) English translations of the N.T.; (14) principles of exegesis. Full bibliographical data are given, including reference to the most recent editions of the works recommended. (It is encouraging to note how many basic tools, even older ones, are still in print!) The entries are briefly, though helpfully annotated.

This work should be in the hands of every teacher of Biblical studies (to enable him to make certain that he is familiar with the best tools of his trade) and seminary or Bible college librarian (for use as a check-

list of the books which should be on his shelves), as well as on the desk of the seminarians for whom it is intended. Rightly used, it will save even more advanced scholars hours of wasted time and energy.

The author is to be warmly commended for his labor of love. One would hope that he is able to follow through with his ambitious plan to revise the *Guide* from time to time, and so keep it up to date.

Design for Discipleship, by J. Dwight Pentecost. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971.) 130 pages. \$3.95. Reviewed by Cyril J. Barber, Librarian, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Ill.

The church today is in need of clear-cut teaching on the subject of discipleship. There are some who, to counteract the teaching of "easy believism," have emphasized the need for a complete commitment to Christ at the time of conversion. Then there are those who have taught a doctrine stressing the need for a second work of grace. Pentecost falls into neither of these camps. He says:

In this series of studies the author has attempted to build a Biblical doctrine of discipleship, showing that to become a disciple one must receive a knowledge of divine truth, believe in the person presenting the truth, and then completely commit himself to the One presented. He then seeks to show the requirements the Lord Jesus Christ lays upon those who become disciples so that they may live as His disciples.

In developing his thesis, Pentecost establishes from the Scriptures how the word "disciple" underwent a change in meaning. At the time of Christ's early ministry it meant "to be a follower" of a scribe, or Pharisee, or religious teacher. Then, as time went by, it was used by the Lord Jesus to describe those who were convinced of His claims (cf. John 2:11; 8:31 "...then you are My disciples indeed"). Finally, the word was applied to those who were committed to Christ's cause (cf. Luke 9:18; 14:27).

From this premise Pentecost proceeds to show how the Biblical doctrine of discipleship affects the personal attitude, worship and service of the Christian. Pentecost supports his statements with solid exegesis and capable exposition. Here is doctrinal teaching at its best, and it is presented in such a way as to be intelligible to the man-in-the-street.

Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation, by John F. Walvoord. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971.) 317 pages. \$6.95. Reviewed by Dwight E. Acomb, Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, California.

This commentary on the book of Daniel is divided into thirteen parts. The first deals with introductory matters. Each of the succeeding parts treats one of the twelve chapters of Daniel. The commentary is done by sections varying in length from one verse up to ten verses or

more. The respective sections are prefixed by the King James text of those portions. Besides a bibliography of nearly two hundred works, footnotes devoted primarily to sources are found at the end of the volume. A limited number of footnotes along with comparatively few transcriptions of the original languages makes this commentary relatively uncomplicated even for the layman. Dr. Walvoord's style of writing is exceptionally readable and easy to follow.

The theological position of the book is, of course, premillennial, pretribulational, and dispensational. The author presents his own views clearly while, at the same time, giving quite comprehensive classifications of alternative interpretations of problem passages. This is extremely helpful, though, in some cases, he lists points of view which have long passed from the scene and have little or no influence today.

The author takes a strong stand against the critical theory of a second century B.C. date for the composition of Daniel. While Dr. Walvoord makes a few statements in this regard which may be considered intemperate by some he also provides data and sources for the support of the early date. In light of recent scholarship many of the old objections to the early date have been weighed and found wanting (see, e.g. Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Greece and Babylon*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1967). Dr. Walvoord is correct in emphasizing that the basic reason for the late date has been the problem involved with the possibility of predictive prophecy; to admit an early date for Daniel is tantamount to acceptance of that concept. The commentary betrays an excessive dependence on secondary sources in questions of history, culture, and the meanings of key words in the original text. In this regard the reviewer feels that at times he followed Leupold when he should have done more independent research or used more primary sources as reference.

At this point the reviewer would like to list several miscellaneous items that may be of interest to the reader:

(1) The reference to Genesis 11:28 on page 48 implies that Walvoord accepts a south Mesopotamian location for Abraham's ancestral home, Ur of Chaldees. The alternative theory of Cyrus H. Gordon places it in the north ("Abraham and the Merchants of Ura," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, XVII, 1958, pp. 28-31). As

the Chaldeans originated in that area before migrating to Southern Babylon at a date preceding Neo-Babylonian times, Gordon's view would make unnecessary the anachronism of the former.

(2) A reason cited by critics, but not mentioned by Walvoord, for equating the Daniel of Ezekiel 14:14, 20; 28:3 with the Daniel of Ugaritic literature and not with the sixth century B.C. Daniel is the mutual lack of a *yodh* in the spelling in contrast to that found in the book of Daniel.

(3) The sandwich structure of Daniel (Hebrew-Aramaic-

Hebrew) may be best understood in terms of comparative literary form seen elsewhere in the Bible and the Near East. Cyrus H. Gordon has pointed out similar structures in the Code of Hammurapi, where the prologue and epilogue are poetic while the laws themselves are prose, and in the book of Job (*The Ancient Near East*, Norton, 1965, pp. 83-84, 290).

(4) Walvoord discusses Sir Robert Anderson's attempts to reconcile Daniel 9:25 with New Testament chronology. He indicates a tendency in recent New Testament studies to consider dates later than A.D. 30 for the death of Christ, but omits references. For those interested, Ronald E. Showers has written an article suggesting A.D. 32, the very year demanded by Anderson's theory, ("New Testament Chronology and the Decree of Daniel 9," *Grace Journal*, XI, No. 1 [Winter, 1970], 30-40).

Numerous errata and inconsistencies were noted in the transcription of the original languages. The only Hebrew word on page 40 should have had a double *m* and the final *l* of *gadol* was omitted on page 239. The emphatics *teth* and *tsade* as well as the laryngal *cheth* were minus their sublinear dots on pages 39, 206, 207 and 237. The *aleph* sign was substituted for the *ayin* on page 292. The *beghadh kephath* letters do not seem to be indicated in the same manner in every case. Among the errors found was the table of contents entry for an index beginning on page 318. However, there are only 317 pages in the reviewer's copy.

In spite of trifling errata which mar the work, this volume is still the foremost premillennial commentary on the book of Daniel. The reviewer would recommend it to the student, pastor and layman alike.

The Thessalonian Epistles: A Call to Readiness, by D. Edmond Hiebert. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971.) 393 pages and bibliography. \$6.95. Reviewed by Cyril J. Barber, Head Librarian, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

What are the ingredients which go into the production of a truly worthwhile commentary? Nearly all would agree that the thoroughness with which the author recreates the historical setting, handles critical problems, combines exegesis with his exposition, and applies the truth of the Word to the needs of the present day, are the ingredients which combine to make a first-rate treatment.

This work by Hiebert comes as close as any other to fulfilling this ideal. A graduate of Southwestern Baptist Seminary (Th.D.), and presently professor of New Testament, Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, California, Hiebert has established a reputation for thorough scholarship with the publication of his earlier two volumes on New Testament Introduction and his commentaries on the Pastoral epistles.

In commencing his exposition of the Thessalonian epistles, Hiebert prefaces his remarks with fifteen pages of introductory material. He takes pains to recreate the first-century environment of Thessalonica and

provides an interesting account of the movements of Timothy during the founding of the churches in Macedonia.

Hiebert structures his comments around a very extensive outline developed from a careful analysis of the Greek text. His exposition is built upon a thorough exegesis. Greek words are transliterated for the sake of English readers. Word studies are included without ostentation, and these reveal the writer's familiarity with classical and koine Greek and the writings of the early Church Fathers.

The writer follows a premillennial interpretation of the eschatological portions of these epistles and makes the thrust of his exposition the need for *readiness* in the light of the Lord's imminent return. He also demonstrates that this watchfulness should be accompanied by holiness of life. Hiebert defends his views without rancor and uses the practical admonitions which accompany these eschatological passages to substantiate his interpretation. A valuable feature of this work is the way in which the author harmonizes the prophetic word.

Pastors will find that Hiebert's exposition abounds in practical, usable material. The outlines are particularly helpful, and his exhortation is relevant and meets the need of the human heart. Notable examples of this may be found in the writer's treatment of Paul's prayers and his familiarity with the attitude of the Apostle towards the new converts. The treatment given to the passages which contain Paul's encouragement of these new Christians as they face persecution or counsel because of errors in doctrine are particularly helpful.

Hiebert handles critical problems with seeming ease. He is charitable towards those who hold differing views. In substantiating his own theories he makes extensive use of the historical setting which gave rise to the writing of the epistles, draws heavily upon the exegesis of the text and/or the usage of the Greek words in question, and makes frequent appeal to parallel portions of the Scripture.

In evaluating Hiebert's work it can be said with confidence that he has provided pastors and teachers with a valuable theologically conservative exposition of these epistles. We now look forward with anticipation to the publication of his commentary on Mark's Gospel.

Imagination and the Spirit: Essays in Literature and the Christian Faith presented to Clyde S. Kilby. Edited by Charles Huttar. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971.) \$9.95. Reviewed by Loren Wilkinson, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York.

It would be hard to find a man more deserving of a *Festschrift* than Dr. Clyde Kilby, recently retired English professor at Wheaton College. Dr. Kilby (who was chairman of the department of English at Wheaton from 1951 to 1966) is that rare kind of teacher whose courses often become—for many students—initiations into a new life: places for finding a vocation. The nature of that vocation may be seen in these essays,

more than half of which are written by former students of Dr. Kilby. All of them ask, in one way or another, a question which was central in Dr. Kilby's view of literature and life: How is a man's imaginative perception and expression of reality to be related to what is ultimate in human life? Or, put more simply, these essays all ask the question: what does literature have to do with theology?

Not only do they ask that question; these articles go far towards providing cogent answers. For, despite the great diversity of its topics, this *Festschrift* exhibits a remarkable unity. The unifying theme is the answer often implicit in Dr. Kilby's questioning about the relationship of literature and theology. It may be summarized thus: the imaginative work of men is the flesh of which theology is the bones. Art is not an ornament on truth; it is the nourishing source of truth itself, much as God's art in creation and revelation may be called the source of all that we know.

The 19 essays are divided into five groups. The first, under the heading of "Art and Philosophy," contains the most theoretical essays in the book. Arthur Holmes, in a quick historical summary, shows that the various tensions between language and reality can be resolved by an adequate understanding of symbol. Owen Barfield presents a concise summary of the seldom understood philosophy of S. T. Coleridge. And Tom Howard, in an article titled "Mimesis and Incarnation," shows that the extremes of the idiosyncratic and the banal in modern art may be united and baptized by an Incarnational aesthetic.

In the second grouping, titled "Writers in the Christian Tradition," four critics explore the Christian elements in particular centers of the Western literary heritage: David Jeffery examines evangelistic themes in the Middle English lyric; Dean Ebner shows how Chaucer's Knight represents an archetypal human tendency to hide a sinful heart behind possessions; Charles Huttar shows that both Milton's Samson and Milton himself come ultimately to the Christian realization that in losing themselves they find themselves. And Robert Seigel shows the centrality of the theme of vicarious suffering in "Christabel," one of Coleridge's great mystery poems. These four essays in particular demonstrate well how (as Chad Walsh puts it in his introduction) "... a factual background (and for that matter, an experiential background!) in the Christian faith is a powerful tool in unlocking a vast amount of major literature."

In the third, and longest section of the book, titled "Inklings and Ancestors," are six excellent essays which add to the rapidly growing body of literature on that group of English writers sometimes referred to as "The Oxford Christians." That the emphasis of this book should be on these writers is appropriate, since Dr. Kilby's greatest contribution to his students, both through his writing and his teaching, is probably his articulate enthusiasm for the work of these men.

One of the articles, by Marjorie Wright, is on "cosmic order" in all

three of the "Oxford mythmakers": C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and J. R. R. Tolkien. Another article, by Glenn Sadler, examines the fantastic imagination of that great nineteenth-century influence on both Lewis and Tolkien, George MacDonald. Yet another article treats "Coinherence, Substitution and Exchange in Charles Williams' Poetry and Poetry-Making." Three of the articles are on C. S. Lewis. Daniel Kuhn traces the similarities between Lewis and William Wordsworth in their attempts to grasp the numinous. C. S. Carnell discusses Lewis' view of erotic love, and Walter Hooper presents a thorough analysis of the content and composition of the Chronicles of Narnia.

The fourth grouping honors Dr. Kilby's continuing interest in contemporary literature. Titled "Aspects of the Contemporary Scene," it contains an article by Calvin Linton on "The Classical Revival in Contemporary Poetry," one by Douglas Olsen on the role of the commonplace in the poetry of Howard Nemerov, an article by Robert Warburton on fantasy in the fiction of Bernard Malamud, and an article by Melvin Lorentzen on the "Christian fiction" of Flannery O'Connor. This section closes with a thoughtful discussion by Ward Miller of the traits necessary for both the doing and the teaching of creative writing.

The fifth section, "Dr. Kilby, the Man and His Writings," consists of a sketch of Dr. Kilby by Paul Bechtel and a bibliography of Kilby's work.

A thorough evaluation of any of these articles is of course impossible here. None of them is a hasty or shallow piece of writing. At least two—Huttar's 56-page article on Milton, and Hooper's 72-page analysis of the Narnia chronicles—are long enough and excellent enough to be books in themselves. All are worth the time of anyone interested in theology and literature, though each person will find his favorites. I thought Hooper's Narnia article—with its wealth of hitherto unpublished information (including a correlation of our time with Narnia time) and Barfield's article on Coleridge (which amounts to a lucid summary of Barfield's recent book on Coleridge as a philosopher, *What Coleridge Thought*) each to be worth the price of the entire collection.

The whole book—like Kilby's life—presents a triple challenge: to the writer, to the teacher of literature, and to the theologian. But perhaps the challenge to the theologian is greatest. In practice, if not in theory, orthodox theologians have had little room for art and imagination. Our theology needs more of a vision of (as Walsh says in his introduction) "...a God who had no necessity to do anything, but who decided to play at creating a universe in which beings in his own likeness could play their games too." The vision of men as the creatures of just such a solemn and mirthful God emerges clearly in this book.