BOOK REVIEWS

History, Archaeology and Christian Humanism, by William F. Albright (McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1964), 342 pp., $6.95. Reviewed by John H. Stoll, Associate Professor of Bible, Calvary Bible College.

For more than forty years the name of W. F. Albright has been linked with Biblical Archaeology. This volume is the first in a series planned to cover areas of his research which have been inadequately represented in his past publications. The book is in no way a repetition of what has already appeared in previously published volumes, though it does supplement them in many respects.

In these fifteen chapters one surveys a wide range of subjects culled from Dr. Albright's vast knowledge of many fields. He talks with familiarity on science, philosophy, religion, history, archaeology, etc., etc.

Part one consists of General Survey, and the first chapter, "Toward a Theistic Humanism" sets the keynote for the book. The author shows the inadequacy of modern atheistic humanism with its debilitating effect upon man's religion, and also how recent theistic humanism does not come close to a Biblical view of man and God. Albright clearly sets forth the historicity and validity of the Old Testament story, and that only the truth of the Bible is the answer to man's need. He closes the chapter by saying, "This Christian drama of salvation can never be displaced nor can it be antiquated, for it represents the ultimate reality of life, to demonstrate it should be the profoundest aim of Christian humanism" (p. 61).

Part two surveys the areas of the Near East, Islam and the religions of the ancient orient, political adjustments and authority in the Near East, and functions of organized minorities.

Part three discusses some scholarly approaches. Albright examines the humanism of James Breasted, well known archaeologist, Gerhard Kittel and the Jewish Question in antiquity, Arnold Toynbee and his interpretation of history, and Rudolf Bultmann on history and eschatology. The author incisively discusses each of these, and his growing conservatism in light of the Bible and archaeology, at times causes him to be at odds with their interpretations of history and philosophy.

For the conservative thinking Christian, part four entitled, "More Personal" will probably be the most suggestive and profitable. For a man as eminently qualified and well known as Albright to speak out as forthrightly in behalf of the Bible as the Word of God, will fortify the evangelical scholar in his constant struggle to show the validity of the Bible story.

Albright is frank, clear, and at times impatient with liberals and neo-orthodox who often fail to justify their arm-chair theories in the light of archaeological facts. The author states, "In the center of history stands the Bible" (p. 291), and "It is quite impossible to understand the New Testament without recognizing that its purpose was to supplement and ex-

plain the Hebrew Bible. Any attempt to go back to the sources of Christianity without accepting the entire Bible as our guide is thus doomed to failure" (p. 296).

Dr. Albright charges present day Protestantism with a peril of becoming engulfed by a new phase of Gnosticism (p. 297) unless we "turn again to the Bible, and draw new strength from the sources of Judeo-Christian faith" (p. 297). "To all who believe in the eternal value of the Old and New Testaments, it is clear that God has been preparing the way for a revival of basic Christianity through enlightened faith in His word" (p. 297).

The final chapter of the book is an autobiographical sketch which is quite interesting. Dr. Albright was born of Methodist missionary parents in South America and drew away from his evangelical environment when he went to college. His boyhood interest flourished while in college, primarily in the fields of history and archaeology. For more than forty years he relentlessly pursued these areas and today is probably the world's outstanding contemporary archaeologist.

Many years of research, by his own admission, have brought him a long way back to the spiritual truths which he accepted in his youth. His closing thoughts are, "Without religious inspiration, history has little practical meaning for life, and philosophy is in constant danger of becoming a sterile intellectual exercise or even a formal training in militant cynicism" (p. 312), and "To discard fundamental Christian doctrine because of the fact that we cannot fully understand its meaning goes much too far" (p. 322).

The reviewer cannot commend this book too highly. Though there are sections which require considerable prerequisite understanding, it can be read with great profit by all who are interested in these areas of learning.

A Survey of Old Testament Introduction, by Gleason L. Archer (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964). 508 pp., $6.95. Reviewed by Samuel J. Schultz, Professor of Bible and Theology, Wheaton College.

Two impressions are conveyed to the careful reader of this scholarly volume. The linguistic and cultural context of the Old Testament era is cogently brought to bear upon the Scriptures at the time of their composition. The testimony of the Biblical text itself supported by evidence presented by relevant data affords a more consistent view of the Bible than the theories of those adhering to a liberal or Neo-orthodox position.

A graduate of Harvard University, Suffolk Law School, and Princeton Seminary with fifteen years of teaching experience as Professor of Biblical Languages, Dr. Archer offers penetrating insights into the interrelationship between the language, literature, and general culture of Israel and the other people in the Fertile Crescent. Israel is regarded as a nation equal to or even superior—being the recipient of divine revelation—to the surrounding nations.

Pentateuchal criticism is incisively analyzed. Pertinent is the exposure of the theories and presuppositions that are basic to the literary partition of the Pentateuch into four main documents—a position which still prevails even though the evolutionary structure of Israel's religion has been largely abandoned. Appropriately the author questions some of the basic presup-

positions of Form Criticism regarding oral tradition which is projected as the basis for the documents. Quoting Kenneth A. Kitchen, Egyptologist at the University of Liverpool, he asserts that often scholars fail to distinguish between the complementary function of written transmission (i.e., down through time) and oral dissemination (i.e., making it known to contemporaries). These have often been confused as oral tradition wrongly overstressing the oral element in Near Eastern transmission.

Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is cogently projected on the basis of the Scriptural evidence integrated with historical and archaeological data. Since this viewpoint is frequently misunderstood by those who do not regard the Scriptures as historically trustworthy, it would have aided current discussion on this subject if Mosaic authorship had been defined more extensively in this text. The case for Deuteronomy as a document of the Mosaic era would have been greatly strengthened by a summary of Meredith G. Kline's contribution in his recent book *Treaty of the Great King* published by Eerdmans in 1963.

Timely is this volume in the current discussions of inerrancy as it affects Biblical scholarship in the classroom and the pulpit. As a preferable alternative to the theories reflected by current scholarship which regards the Old Testament as merely a human product, Dr. Archer without apology projects the Bible as a reasonable objective authority in the light of relevant data.

The Christian Year Sermons of the Fathers, edited by George W. Forell (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1964), 349 pp., $6.50. Reviewed by Donald M. Lake.

The historian of Christian thought is faced with the question of methodology throughout his research. One particular problem always has been the amount of importance to assign to the sermons of significant figures in this history. Too often volumes of sermons are simply homiletical crutches for the weary pastor. *The Christian Year* will not only provide the desired stimulant but will contribute some rather valuable insights into the practical side of the theology of these "Fathers."

Almost as worthy as the sermons themselves are the editorial insights of Professor Forell. Theologically, preaching is effective only as it is "the work of the Holy Spirit" and as it addresses the men and women of our time "under the authority of the canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testaments" (4, 5). But preaching is never simply the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus or the biblical writers, it is "also an art and one of the humanities." It must display an involvement in the past: "a condition of the creative process in all of the humanities" (4). This involvement "is not an effort to imitate the past but to understand it and learn from it in preparation for the expression of one's own artistic vision in one's own personal idiom" (4). According to Professor Forell, two errors or extremes need to be avoided: on the one hand, the tendency of "evangelicals" to preach their own conversion experience, but also the equally dangerous "liberal" tendency "to repeat constantly and publicly their own struggle for emancipation from some orthodoxy" (4-5).

With these criteria in mind, the editor has skimmed the homiletical cream from the milk of Christian thought over the past fifteen hundred years.

> Since the authors range from Pope Leo the Great to Jonathan Edwards, and from Bernard of Clairvaux to Friedrich Schleiermacher, they are obviously not "orthodox" according to any ecclesiastically recognized canon of orthodoxy. Nevertheless, the sermons here submitted have one thing in common: they are the work of preachers, and the men who preached them, each in his own way, were very serious about the task of preaching (3).

The volume is organized according to the Sunday gospel lessons of the Western Church and cover the first part of the liturgical year from Advent to Pentecost. A second volume of sermons is to follow. Included among the representative figures are John Chrysostom, Luther, Calvin, Charles Kingsley, John Keble, Phillips Brooks and others. The liturgical structure of this volume will be helpful for those who preach within this tradition; however, the liturgical structure will hinder none whose preaching is biblical but fits a structure all its own.

From the perspective of the historian of Christian thought, one will be impressed by two noteworthy features of this volume. We need, on the one hand, to be reminded of an historical-ecumenicity that exists in Christianity: our history is not as diverse as our denominations might indicate. This volume illustrates rather clearly the *evangelical* nature of the Church and its message: unity in the Gospel. Equally impressive is the surprise awaiting the student who expects to find in the sermons of Schleiermacher the same kind of "theological paralysis" which characterizes his theology. One wonders, in the case of Schleiermacher at least, why his preaching did not carry a greater influence upon the structure of his theology. But it should also make the student hesitant about isolating his theology from his preaching. This volume of sermons can be read with considerable profit!

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Zen Buddhism: Selected writings of D. T. Suzuki, edited by William Barrett. (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1956), A90, xx plus 290 pp., $.95.
The Way of Zen, by Alan W. Watts (New York: Mentor, 1957), MP 476, 224 pp., $.60.

Reviewed by J. Oliver Buswell III, Covenant Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

Neither of these writers takes the Evangelical point of view, but they are qualified scholars who seek to interpret Eastern thought to Western readers.

The word "Zen" means "meditation." It is a kind of insight into the true nature of being—an insight which comes as a flash and not as a conclusion from a rational process. "Zen in its essence is the art of seeing into the nature of one's own being . . ." (Suzuki p. 3). "Satori (the Zen experience of insight) may be defined as an intuitive looking into the nature of things in contradistinction to the analytical or logical understanding of it" (Suzuki p. 84f).

In his introduction to Suzuki (p. xI) Barrett says, "A German friend of Heidegger told me that one day when he visited Heidegger he found him reading one of Suzuki's books. 'If I understand him correctly,' Heidegger remarked, 'this is what I have been trying to say in all my writings.'"

There is, of course, much on which Zen and Heidegger's existentialism differ, but Zen may very well be ranked as a kind of existentialism.

Many sayings of the masters of Zen seem to teach a view resembling modern western "process" philosophy. Zen offers an escape from the illusions of being. We must not think of the latter as teaching the substantive existence of Mind as against Matter. The denial of a mind or self is just as emphatic as the denial of matter. " 'The true Self is non-Self' . . . there is no ego, no enduring entity which is the constant subject of our changing experiences" (W. p. 56). "There is not the mind on the one hand and its experiences on the other; there is just a process of experiencing in which there is nothing to be grasped, as an object, and no one, as a subject to grasp it" (W. p. 61 f). ". . . what will happen to me when I die is . . . like asking what happens to my fist when I open my hand, or where my lap goes when I stand up" (W. p. 64). Further expressions of the non-being of the mind, or self, will be found in Watts, pp. 103, 120, 124, 131, 160, 162, 193 and in the Suzuki chapters on "The Zen Doctrine of No-Mind" and "Existentialism, Pragmatism and Zen."

Paradoxes abound in the sayings of the Zen masters, many times amounting to formal contradictions. ". . . Zen abounds in such graphic irrationalities. . . . To put it in logical formula it runs like this: 'A is at once A and non-A. . . . Heaven is Hell and God is Devil" (Suzuki p. 115). The Zen masters sometimes regard logic as irrelevant, and sometimes openly repudiate it. See Suzuki pp. x, 9f, 15, 19, 32, 119f, 134ff, 137, 163, 182, 187, and Watts p. 88.

Finally, Zen does not teach an ascetic mode of life, but rather a relaxed attitude toward all natural impulses. Again and again in both Suzuki and Watt the masters are quoted as defining Zen in most ordinary terms, "When I am hungry, I eat. When tired, I sleep." The way of Zen is said to be "Your everyday mind." Nothing really matters!

Maimonides: A Review Article by J. O. Buswell III

This learned Jewish philosopher of Medieval times (1135-1204) is of considerable importance to students of Christian theology. Born in Spain, his active years were spent in Cairo under the rule of Mohammedan potentates, by whom he was generally held in high regard.

Maimonides was learned as a physician and philosopher in the classical Greek tradition, but his chief interest seems to have been in the vindication of the philosophical monotheism which he regarded as the principal message of the Jewish Scriptures. His most important work is now available* in a beautifully printed new translation from the Arabic original, by the Professor of General Jewish Philosophy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

"There are things that are common to all three of us, I mean the Jews, the Christians, and the Moslems," says Maimonides, "Namely, the affirmation of the temporal creation of the world, the validity of which entails the validity of miracles and other things of that kind" (p. 178). But when he mentions the Christians, he uniformly raises philosophical objections to the doctrine of the Trinity.

He has no consciousness of the Messiah and the Spirit of God, each as Jehovah, yet objective to Jehovah, as reflected in the Jewish Scriptures.

He knows nothing of the Deity of Jesus, as God manifest in the flesh. He has reacted so far in his philosophical theo-monism that he not only denies the possibility of Triunity, but he even denies that God has any essential attributes whatsoever. God is "One," he says, "by virture of a true Oneness, so that . . . He . . . has in no way and in no mode any essential attribute . . . just as it is impossible that He should be a body, it is also impossible that He should possess an essential attribute" (p. 111).

This unrelated God of whom nothing can be known, literally, is of course the Unmoved Mover of Aristotle, and not the God of the Bible.

But these matters are of vital importance to students of Christian doctrine. Through Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), — a devout Christian who was born too early to read Calvin's *Institutes,*—a teacher whose philosophical theology was inconsistent with what he really believed in his heart, the timeless, characterless, abstraction called "God" has moved into Christian, even Protestant, Theology, and, for some devout souls, inconsistently has taken the place of God our Heavenly Father.

Those of our friends who are perplexed by the concept of a God who is "fully realized," who has "no potential," God who does not know yesterday from tomorrow, should realize that this notion is not Biblical. Extensive reading in an Aristotelian philosopher like Maimonides might identify, and so clear away a lot of philosophical rubbish from the minds of students of Theology.

Maimonides is good reading. There are brilliant insights on the Torah and the Talmud, in the midst of highly artificial speculative scholastic reasonings.

**The Guide of the Perplexed,* by Moses Maimonides, newly translated from the Arabic by Shlomo Pines with Introductory Essay by Leo Strauss (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, n.d.), cxxxiv plus 658 pp., $15.00.

PRESUMPTUOUS CLAIMS OF EDUCATORS*

The extravagant claims of educators in the American horizon gives Mr. Rushdoony the title and theme for his new book on the history of education in America.

In addition to the main body of the text, which is written from a Christian point of view, the book contains a forty-page appendix giving brief sketches of the life and work of a large number of American educators. There is also a good eighteen page double-column index.

One does not have to agree with all of Mr. Rushdoony's evaluations to gain genuine value from his work.

**The Messianic Character of American Education,* by Rousas J. Rushdoony, Philadelphia, Penn., Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1963), xiv plus 410 pp., $6.50.