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Book Reviews

I. Biblical Studies

THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA. Vol. I. Edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. William B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Fully Revised, 1979. 1006 pages. Maps pages. Cloth. No price set.

First published in 1915, the revised edition of 1979 perpetuates the name of the original work, but in most aspects recognized as essentially a new work. The first volume (A-D) covers 1000 pages plus an index and colored maps. This is the kind of material out of which church, high school, and college libraries are built and this encyclopedia is destined to a long and fruitful life in the hands of pupils of the Bible. Along with the associate editors, Everett Harrison, Roland Harrison, and William LaSor, beneath the articles are the names of such prominent persons as Archer, Freedman, Kaiser, Ladd, Payne, Ramm, Ridderbos, Samuel Schultz, Unger, Van Elderen, Waltke, and Yamauchi. No contemporary confessional Lutheran scholars are listed as contributors, though articles by W.H.T. Dau, Henry Jacobs, and Wilhelm Moeller are reprinted from the first edition. Along with the usual geographical and historical listings typical of Bible encyclopedias, there are articles on broader topics approaching minor treatises in length.

A casual paging through the encyclopedia shows the name of F. F. Bruce, the prominent Manchester conservative New Testament scholar, frequently beneath the longer exegetical articles. For example he is the author of "Acts of the Apostles," twelve pages or twenty-three columns of print. Here traditional conservative positions are followed, as Luke is recognized as the author. He is also the author of "Criticism" (pp. 817-825). A detached posture lets each reader see the procedures of the various methods used without being unduly influenced by the writer. Indeed this is most useful. Bruce is hardly negative about the use of Biblical criticism and sees its value if it brings us to know the Jesus of history who can be known as the Christ of the Bible. How Bruce bridges the gap between the Jesus of history and Christ is not made entirely clear.

The editor, Geoffrey Bromiley, responsible for the English *Kittel*, has himself authored many of the major theological articles. In the article on "Authority" (pp. 365-71) there is a hesitancy to state unequivocally that the Scriptures are the final authority available to men. The phrase, "God exercises His own authority," is plainly typical Reformed theology. In the same article the best form of civil authority is said to be exercised according to the Word of God. The touchy matter of Baptism (pp. 411-426) is handled by having separate articles expressing Baptist, Reformed, and Lutheran views — in that order! But in the article on "Baptismal Regeneration," the Reformed view is pushed and the Lutheran view is presented, tolerated, and then given a Reformed tinge by saying that in the final analysis it is the Spirit's work (pp. 428-9).

Bromiley's article on the "Descent Into Hell (Hades)" presents the various historical views, but leans toward Calvin's by stating that it "constituted the final point of (Christ's) identification with sinners" (pp. 926-7). A limited atonement of sorts is also supported (pp. 352-60). The quick availability of knowledge certainly recommends this encyclopedia. On the other hand the editor has made certain that the theological articles are almost without exception Reformed. It is regrettable that a Bible encyclopedia turns itself into a Calvinistic dogmatics in the major theological articles.

David P. Scaer

COMMENTARY ON GALATIANS. By Martin Luther. English translation by Erasmus Middleton. Edited and abridged by John Prince Fallows, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, 1979. Hard cover. 384 pages. \$10.95.

Next to the Scriptures, Luther's 1535 Commentary on Galatians is not only Luther's greatest exegetical legacy but, in the thinking of many, the greatest theological treatise of all times. In the area of salvation the subtlest heresy is salvation by faith *and* works. This heresy plagues every generation since the days of St. Paul. Though this book is an abridgement of the original and though it is written in the King's English (and uses the A. V. as a text), it is very readable, reflects Luther's style and contains the thoughts of the original of Luther. The book is recommended and well worth the price.

Harold H. Buls

A LAYMAN'S GUIDE TO INTERPRETING THE BIBLE. By Walter A. Hinrichsen. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, and Navapress, Colorado Springs, 1978. 231 pages. Paper. \$4.95.

"Biblical interpretation is more than just an intellectual game that theologians play; it's what opens up lives in Christ and makes them full." With this in mind, author Walter Hinrichsen brings the subject of Biblical interpretation down to a practical level in *A Layman's Guide to Interpreting the Bible*. This volume is designed to help lay people to interpret the Bible correctly by furnishing them with basic rules of hermeneutics. Incorporated into this help is the author's earlier 107-page book, *Understand, A Straight-Forward Approach to Interpreting the Bible*. In the latter volume Hinrichsen had outlined with illustrations twenty-four basic hermeneutical principles. This now constitutes section I — "How to Interpret the Bible."

To this basic section two others have been added, namely, section II — "How to Study the Bible" and section III — "Improving Your Bible Study Skills." In Part II, such methods as the analytical, synthetic, topical and biographical are discussed. Part III concludes with ways for the Bible student to improve his skills in the areas of observation, interpretation, correlation and application.

The author does not list a bibliography of books dealing with hermeneutics, the book method and methods for Bible study. Any person knowledgeable in these areas will know that the author has drawn heavily upon the labors and insights of authors and specialists in these fields of Biblical study.

Hinrichsen, a graduate of Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Michigan, and at present a worker with the Leadership Foundation, endeavors to help business and professional people maximize their potential for Jesus Christ in the context of their own business or profession. Laymen will best be able to learn from this book if they have the guidance of competent Biblical scholars who are versed in the knowledge of the original languages of Holy Writ. Pastors and divinity students will profit from the reading of this useful Biblical help.

Raymond F. Surburg

ECCLESIASTES. TOTAL LIFE. By Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. Moody Press, Chicago, 1979. 128 pages. Soft cover. \$2.50.

This is one of Moody's *Everyman's Bible Commentaries*. The publication of this commentary has as its antecedents in studies conducted at Wheaton College, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and Campus Crusader's Institute of Biblical Studies.

In the preface Professor Kaiser of Trinity Evangelical Seminary shows how timely the message of Ecclesiastes is for modern man, for whom life is a puzzle. For many life has lost its zip. "Man is made to feel cheap, commercial, dead, and machine-like. The basic worth and dignity of modern man are repeatedly denied when his humanity is deliberately overlooked and he is equated with the brutes and, worse still, with the machine. All the while, everything within that same man cries out for a larger view of the entirety of life" (p. 7).

Kaiser is convinced that a study of Ecclesiastes is the best antidote for restoring to men and women the loss of truth and personal dignity which so many have suffered. Ecclesiastes is the book to be taken seriously by those desiring to live meaningful lives *now*. "Ecclesiastes has as its central concern that basic hunger of men to see if the totality of life fits into a meaningful pattern" (pp. 8-9).

In his introduction the reader will find an excellent discussion of the questions of unity, integrity, authorship, time of writing, the relationship of Ecclesiastes to ancient Near Eastern wisdom literary genre. In opposition to many scholars, critical and conservative, Kaiser defends the Solomonic authorship of Koheleth and differs rightly from many scholars who have not grasped the true purpose of this inspired Scriptural book. The theological ideas are adequately presented as they relate to other parts of the Old Testament revelation.

The author has grouped his comments and expositions around four parts. 1. "Enjoying Life as a Gift from God," 1:1-2:26; 2. "Understanding the All-encompassing Plan of God," 3:1-5:20; 3. "Explaining and Applying the Plan of God," 6:1-8:15; 4. "Removing Discouragements and Applying God's Plan to the Lives of Believers," 8:6-12:14.

Although the commentary was written specifically for laymen in non-technical language, the professional theologian will find this commentary thought-provoking and helpful. A selected bibliography lists the major commentaries and journal articles that will prove further helpful in a detailed study of this wisdom book.

Raymond F. Surburg

ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE BIBLE. AN INTRODUCTORY STUDY.
By Donald J. Wiseman and Edwin Yamauchi. Zondervan Publishing House, 1979. 122 pages. Soft cover. \$3.95.

This volume is one in Zondervan's *Contemporary Evangelical Perspective Series*. The two chapters which comprise this volume have been selected from the introductory articles that make up volume I of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, published by Zondervan, 1979. The authors wrote these chapters in 1974-75.

Both chapters, the one dealing with the Old Testament and the other with the New Testament, were designed to provide an outline and overall view of the subject. Books listed in the bibliographies may be consulted by those wishing to pursue further the fascinating subject of biblical archaeology in depth and increase their knowledge of the interesting background materials which can aid in a better understanding of the text of Holy Writ. The study of archaeology adds a tangible dimension to people, places and events of long-past generations of Bible times.

Dr. Wiseman, Professor of Assyriology at the University of London, and Chairman of the British School of Archaeology in Iraq, states in his preface:

"While such extrabiblical knowledge is not essential to learning, or responding to, the messages of the Bible, it does help us to bridge the gap between the historical events recorded there and today and to see how relevant and reliable the Bible is for us in the modern world" (p. 2). Wiseman traces Biblical history from the beginning of time to and including the Hellenistic period (331-63 B.C.).

Dr. Edwin Yamauchi, Professor and Director of Graduate Studies, History Department, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, and author of *The Stones and Scripture*, treats of the archaeological discoveries in the eastern Mediterranean area, especially the texts in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin, which have helped people to understand the background of Jesus' parables, to have a better picture of St. Paul's cities, and to appreciate better the allusions in the Book of Revelation.

For those who visit the Near East and the Levant a knowledge of recent New Testament archaeological discoveries will enable them to distinguish the true facts from what is fictional relative places mentioned in the Gospels, Acts and the epistolary literature of the New Testament. In some instances discoveries have shown the erroneous character of New Testament literary criticism, as the work and discoveries of William Ramsey have shown.

The book is an excellent introduction to the field of Biblical archaeology and is highly informative.

Raymond F. Surburg

IS ADAM A "TEACHING MODEL" IN THE NEW TESTAMENT? By J. P. Versteeg. Translated by Richard B. Gaffin, Jr. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1978. 67 pages. Paper. \$1.75.

This monograph is a slightly abridged translation of "Is Adam in het Nieuwe Testament een 'leermodel'? *Woord en Kerk. Theologische bijdragen van de hoogleeren an de Theologische Hogeschool der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland bij de herdenking van het vijfenzeventigjarig bestan van de Hogesschool* (Amsterdam: T. Holland, 1969), pp. 29-70.

Versteeg has undertaken to examine one of the central points in the views of H. M. Kuitert and other theologians. Kuitert has adopted the view of many modern higher critical scholars who deny the historicity of Adam, the father of the human race. Evolutionary science has a diametrically opposite view about the origin of the human race. The specific question with which Versteeg deals is this: Do the sacred Scriptures characterize Adam as an historical person in whom the history of mankind began or is Adam merely a model, used in a framework of teaching, a model which is without historical significance? The answer to this question has far-reaching consequences! A person's view of sin, redemption and the Redeemer is closely connected with that person's view of Adam.

Kuitert expressed his position regarding Adam in his book, *Do You Understand What You Read?* For Kuitert it is important that the biblical writers be seen within the framework of their own time. "The time-bound dimension of Scripture," says the Professor of the Free University of Amsterdam, "is . . . essential to its very character." The Dutch professor claims that just as the "firmament" in Genesis 1 is not to be taken literally, so one should not find a first set of parents in Genesis 2. Kuitert claims that the question of the historicity of Adam does not enter in a discussion of Romans 5:11-21 or in I Timothy 2:14. Kuitert contends that the parallel in Romans 5 between Adam and Christ is used for the purpose of "illuminating the meaning and scope of Jesus Christ and his work. Adam serves Paul by helping the apostle preach Jesus."

Versteeg in six chapters deals with: I. The Concept "Teaching Model;" II. The Data of Romans 5:12-21; III. Other New Testament Data; IV. Rabbinic References to Adam; V. A Distance Between Intention and Significance? and VI. Consequences.

Not only Kuitert but a number of other Dutch and other Continental theologians are discussed in this apologetical monograph. Those who reject the historicity of Adam have embraced a hermeneutic which does violence to the intended meaning of both the Old and New Testaments.

Raymond F. Surburg

II. Doctrinal Studies

THE PRINCIPLES OF THEOLOGY: AN INTRODUCTOIN TO THE THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES. By W. H. Griffith Thomas. Introduction by J. I. Packer. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979. Paper. 548 pages. \$8.95.

Dr. Thomas, an Anglican theologian, has a career that covered Oxford, England; Toronto, Canada; and Dallas, Texas where he was associated with the founding of the famous seminary there. *The Principles* leaves no doubt that Thomas was a great theologian and it is regrettable that the author could not live to see the publication of his major work. While acknowledging a debt to Luther and the Lutheran Confessions, the Thirty-Nine Articles are seen within the mainstream of the Reformed and not the Lutheran faith. Archbishops Cranmer and Parker who spearheaded the Reformation during the reign of the Tudors learned more from Geneva rather than from Wittenberg. The characteristic Calvinistic emphasis on divine sovereignty is not a mark of Anglicanism. It does permeate its understanding of the sacraments, especially the Lord's Supper. Article 29 with its denial that the wicked participate in eating the body of Christ is said to be specifically anti-Lutheran and the Formula of Concord is said to condemn explicitly the published confessional Anglican view (p. 407). Lutherans have been tempted to see in Anglicanism the Anglo-Saxon form of their own faith. This is always a mistake with grave consequences. Issues of polity more than theology divided Anglicans from Reformed groups in Great Britain.

The Principles is part of the Canterbury Book Series dedicated to the publication of "contributions of authentic Anglican thought and theology." The reviewer certainly joins in wishing well any soundly Biblical revival in the Anglican communions. Dr. Packer, who provides the preface, might have been unnecessarily irritating in identifying the planting of "a sceptical and subjectivist new hermeneutic on English soil" as Bultmann's "Lutheran music." Different words might be chosen for the next printing which will not offend Packer's many Lutheran admirers who see in Bultmann nothing of authentic Lutheranism.

David P. Scaer

THE GOD WHO CARES: A CHRISTIAN LOOKS AT JUDAISM. By Frederick Holmgren. John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1979. 144 pages. Paper. \$4.95.

This book by Frederick Holmgren, Professor of Biblical Literature at North Park Theological Seminary, is described in the news release about this book, to be a long-awaited answer to the need for a sound introduction to the Jewish tradition. In the preface the author states: "This volume is addressed to Christians who are unfamiliar with the teachings of Judaism. It reflects the work of both Jewish and Christian scholars but it is a nontechnical presentation of some

central themes in ancient and modern Judaism. The book has in mind the lay-person and student, but it also addresses the pastor who has been given only a cursory introduction to Judaism in seminary" (p. 7).

Chapter 1 contains a brief history of anti-Semitism, beginning with the New Testament and ending with the twentieth century. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 deal with the understanding of Law, Mercy and Sacrifice in the Hebrew Bible. In chapters 6 and 7 Holmgren looks at the teaching of the Law in the light of passages from rabbinic literature. Chapter 8 considers the nature of modern Judaic Law in the light of Abraham Joshua Heschel's writings. Chapter 10 deals with the two-fold problem of the Jewish-Christian relationship: 1) the temptation of Christianity to caricature Judaism and 2) the possible contribution the Christian faith can make to human living.

The author tries to show what elements Judaism and Christianity have in common; he emphasizes the strong Jewish character of the New Testament. Holmgren endeavors to show the beauty of the Torah and other Christian writings.

No Christian can be proud of the fact that Christians down the centuries have persecuted and killed Jewish people. It was not in harmony with New Testament teaching to force Jews to become Christians. Jewish people have suffered unjustly at the hands of Christians. However, Holmgren and other New Testament scholars take the position that the New Testament has misrepresented the Judaism of the first century. The Gospel of John is accused of containing many anti-Semitic statements. The grossest and worst lie of the New Testament, supposedly is, that the Jewish Sanhedrin condemned Jesus to death and demanded of Pontius Pilate that Christ be crucified. Many of these anti-Semitic assertions are supposedly later interpolations. Holmgren cites the Gospel of John as containing anti-Semitic statements (p. 18). Matthew 23 is explained in such a way as to interpret it to mean, that Jesus did not pronounce those harsh statements against the Scribes and Pharisees. Romans 9-11 he misinterprets in his endeavor to paint a picture that the Jews will not be lost, claiming that no objective exegesis will find such views in these three chapters.

The understanding of the Old Testament which various New Testament writers give (cf. the Epistle to the Hebrews) as to the true nature of Judaism is ignored. Jesus' assertion that no person, and that would include physical descendants of Abraham, can be saved apart from faith in him (John 14:6) is placed side by side with the statement of Abraham Heschel: "Do Christians readily believe that it is God's will that every synagogue throughout the world be closed?" and the Christian reader is left to make a choice. But John 3:16 clearly states that whosoever believes in Christ will be saved and he who does not believe is condemned.

In dealing with historic Judaism Holmgren completely ignores the Jewish belief in a coming Messiah, who was foretold in the Old Testament. This reviewer believes that Holmgren does not believe in the deity of Christ, for in writing about Jesus he asserts "we do not want to deny — indeed, that in Jesus Christ we have discerned the presence of God." (p. 140). Christ was the God-Man not merely a human individual in whom God's presence was found. What Holmgren has been advocating for both the Old and New Testament is a religion of work righteousness. The doctrine of justification by faith is never hinted at or spoken about. The contention that Judaism is just as viable a religion as Christianity is a conclusion that the Christian reader is left to draw from this book.

Raymond F. Surburg

THE UNIVERSE NEXT DOOR. By James W. Sire. Inter-Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois. 1976.

The intent of James Sire's book is indicated by its subtitle: "A Basic World View Catalog." His purpose is to describe the various world views operative today, and to help us communicate with others who may not share our world view. The book contains seven chapters on the current options as Sire sees them: Christian Theism, Deism, Naturalism, Nihilism, Existentialism, Eastern Pantheistic Monism, and the New Consciousness.

The last two of these chapters are perhaps the most valuable. Sire has performed the valuable service of summarizing the eastern approach to religion and life. The importance of understanding eastern thought for the Christian apologist/evangelist can hardly be overestimated in America today. Ignoring something doesn't make it go away. Sire believes the movement toward eastern thought was brought on by the rejection of middle class values in the sixties and a general dissatisfaction with technology, coupled with gross injustice in society which was perceived by many to be intensified by western religion. Followers of eastern religions are looking for a meaningful approach to life which seems to be without meaning. Their route is to see "good" and "evil" as part of the essential "oneness" behind the universe.

Arising out of the same concerns is the interest in the New Consciousness, which Sire sees as a western version of eastern religion. Included under this category are: parapsychology, drug-induced states of consciousness, and the rise of the occult. Here Sire provides an excellent summary of Carlos Castaneda's "systematics" of the occult in his writings, which trace his study, apprenticeship, and final acceptance of the sorcery of Don Juan, his Indian teacher.

If there is any disappointment with this book, it could be that Sire has not undertaken a more vigorous Christian apologetic. For example, though he touches on the doctrine of angels in his chapter on Castaneda, much more could have been done in showing that orthodox Christianity has always taught a "universe next door" in that there is more to reality than meets the eye, *i.e.*, the coterminal (and according to modern physics, interrelated) worlds of the spiritual and the physical.

It is evident that the Christian in his witness today must assume an apologetic role. No longer can we be content to "share the message" and then leave contemporary man to "just believe." This approach was perhaps possible before the popular acceptance of rationalism and naturalism, but not today. How would we respond to a naturalist, for example, who would reply on hearing the Gospel: "That's very interesting, but I don't believe there is a God" — or an existentialist who says: "That may be true for you, but not for me"?

Sire betrays a bit of Reformed bias in his optimistic view of man's ability to "decide" to believe in God, though he claims impartiality on the issue (pp. 36-37). His positive contribution to the apologetic task, however, is that he enables us to see the inner inconsistencies of the prevalent world views and to show how the claims of the Word of God meet the reality of the world as it is. Once we have removed the rationalistic roadblocks many have erected, we can the more clearly present the claims of the Gospel, which alone is the power of God for salvation.

"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Romans 10:17) Only after we have dealt with the issues raised by other world views will we be able to effectively present that Word so it can be truly heard by modern man.

Sire has highlighted the challenge to the Christian apologist: "How shall they hear without a preacher?"

Harold L. Senkbeil
Morris, Minnesota

BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY. Edited by Claude Geffre and Mariasusai Dhavamony. The Seabury Press, New York, 1979. Paper. 126 pages. \$4.95.

Vatican II opened the doors of dialog for Roman Catholicism not only to the Christian denominations but also to other religions. The essays coming from Catholic discussions with Buddhists are described by the editors in the introduction as a "theological evaluation of another religion" in the light of Christian revelation (p. x.). Buddhism is defined more as a philosophy of life rather than a religion. Essays developing out of dialog situations tend to be more positive and thus less critical in their evaluation and these are no exception. The essays are grouped under three headings: suffering and liberation, theology, and reports of the actual dialogs. The latter group suffers from the usual housekeeping reporting which is the disease of churchly discussions.

The essayists have accepted the general understanding of Vatican II that God is at work in other religions and thus there are lessons to be learned (p. 95). This assumption may open the door too wide! The Reverend Mervyn Ferdinando, who is deeply involved in both the theological and administrative aspects of the dialogs, clearly distinguishes Christianity as a religion of revelation from Buddhism as a method of self-liberation (p. 90). He identifies the Buddhist antitheses to Christianity as "no God, no Faith, and no God-salvation." He then startlingly concludes with this positive judgment. "This antithetical experience about God and the world, about the All, is most disturbing and most rewarding for the human soul (p. 95)." Working from the premise that God works in other religions, he can perhaps come to no other conclusion. But how can Christianity which is based on a personal revelation of God in history benefit from a religion which recognizes neither God nor revelation? One essayist, Andre Bareau provides an historical sketch of the Buddha and dispells common myths. Several essayists (Boyd, Dumoulin, Vos) get into the actual practice of Buddhism, which seems a vastly complicated form of self-hypnosis.

As the Christian churches are faced with an invasion of eastern thought, even if they are not specifically Buddhistic, these essays are a general and digestable introduction. The writers' expertise are above question. One clear fact comes through. In Christianity Christ serves as the object of worship and teacher and not only as a model. The Buddha serves only the latter function. Buddhism is pietism without God. Some forms of Christianity would feel very comfortable with this.

The western culture is already suffering from the scourge of nihilism. Whether this is internal deterioration or an eastern import is debatable. Paul Tillich was greatly influenced by nihilistic eastern thought and brought it into Christian theology. The 'God is dead' theology of the 1960s had more in common with Buddhism than Christianity with the only adjustment that Christ was made to serve in the Buddha role. A more sobering note could have been added to these informative and enlightening essays if one had been included handling from an historical aspect the transfusions of eastern (Buddhist) thought which have already taken place into Christianity.

David P. Scaer

I BELIEVE: A STUDY OF LUTHER'S SMALL AND LARGE CATECHISMS. By Bjarne W. Teigen. Lutheran Synod Book Company, Mankato, MN, 1979. 29 pages. Paper. \$1.25.

This is the fourth in the five booklet series by Dr. Teigen to help lay persons in particular commemorate the Lutheran Confessions. Teigen is lucid in his writing style and he is comfortable with the historical details surrounding Luther's composition of his catechisms, so that the reader is drawn into the reformer's mind. This should be the most successful of the five, as Teigen is at home in the thought of Luther. The 16th century reformer comes alive in the 20th century writer. Teigen knows and breathes Luther. The latter quality brings the subject matter to life. Of the eleven chapters, five are devoted to the commandments reflecting the proportionate space given by Luther to them in the Large Catechism. The last chapter handles private confession, prayers, table of duties and the ministerial acts of marriage and baptism. All topics in the last chapter with the exception of private confession, are marked with subtitles (pp. 26-7). Why the omission? In speaking about not admitting some to communion, Teigen uses the familiar phrase, "close communion." As uncomfortable as the term "closed communion" is, it is theologically more proper and more properly conveys what the church intends to say. "Close communion" has a regrettable chumsiness about it and breathes the church supper mentality of Schleiermacher. Each of the eleven chapters has a set of questions to make the booklet eminently and immediately useful for group study.

David P. Scaer

OUR LIFE IN GOD'S LIGHT. ESSAYS BY HUGH T. KERR. John M. Mulder, Editor. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1979. 349 pages. Soft cover \$7.95. Hardbound \$12.50.

Hugh T. Kerr is Benjamin B. Warfield Professor Emeritus of Theology Princeton Theological Seminary. The volume contains mostly thirty-five articles by Hugh Kerr, originally written for *Theology Today* the theological journal which replaced *The Princeton Theological Review*, in 1930. These Kerr articles can give the reader a vivid picture of religious reflection of the past thirty-five years, a period of time which saw such theological giants as Reinhold Niebuhr, Paul Tillich, Karl Barth, and John A. T. Robinsons. This epoch of 20th century theological history also witnesses such different issues as situation ethics "death of God" theology as well as the theologies of hope and liberation.

Students of theology appreciated Kerr's volumes, *A Compend of the Christian Religion by John Calvin* and *A Compend of Luther's Theology*. Mulder, Assistant Professor of American Church History at Princeton Theological Seminary, had grouped the essays and editorials around four major topics: I. A. Critical Theology; II. An Articulate Faith; III. A Futuristic Ministry and IV. To Lift the Human Spirit. After a *response* by Dr. Kerr, there is a bibliography of books cited in this volume and a list of the writings of Professor Kerr.

A reading of these writings of Kerr will show that the Princeton Seminary after 1930 was considerably different from the old Princeton Theology and those who believed that theology was not adjustable to the spirit of the age but that there were fixed theological truths can appreciate why scholars like Machen, Allis, Van Til and others found the atmosphere of the new Princeton stifling and believed that the Neo-orthodoxy that was being promoted was not the theology of Benjamin Warfield, Green, Hodge and other former stalwarts of Princeton.

The whole enterprise of theology is reinterpreted in the articles which have appeared in *Theology Today*. The gospel is not a definite message but is portrayed as a message which must be made palatable to modern man. In the interest of the evangelistic approach Scriptural teachings must be made appealing by rejecting basic biblical teachings. In reading this volume, the reviewer was reminded of Paul's statement that Christians "should no longer be children, tossed up and down, and blown by every wind of teaching, tricked by the craft of men in the snares of misleading error; but holding the truth in love, we shall grow up in every part into him who is our Head, even Christ."

Our Life in God's Light will be a good aid in showing how theological opinions and views have been constantly shifting in the last four decades.

Raymond F. Surburg

III. Historical Studies

THE ARABS: A SHORT HISTORY. By Philip K. Hitti. Revised Edition. Gateway Editions, Ltd., South Bend, Indiana, 1970. 274 Pages. Paper. \$4.95.

Dr. Philip D. Hitti, the Dean of Middle East Historians in America, initially wrote a *History of the Arabs* in the 1940's. That became a classic — in terms of investigation, narration, and interpretation and attained a warm reception among Orientalists. Macmillan and Princeton University both made it available to the reading public. Now Gateway Editions of South Bend, Indiana, has rendered a valuable service to a new generation of American students of the Middle East by publishing this revised edition of *The Arabs*. Certainly this volume — with its judicious statements, succinct text, and readable style — will render yeoman service — as a college, university, and seminary textbook, as a primer on Arab history and culture for informed citizens, as a resource for pastors and teachers.

In 274 pages Dr. Hitti does the almost impossible — he provides a survey of Arab history — in its three great dimensions — politics, religion, and culture — from the days of Abraham to those of Nasser. The nineteen chapters explain the origins of Arabs, Muslims, and Semites, introduce "The Original Arab, the Bedouin," probe conditions in Arabia on the eve of Muhammad, report the life and labors of the Prophet, explore the theology, piety, and mysteries of the Quran and Islam, then narrate and interpret the rise and spread of Islam in the Middle Ages, with especial attention to Spain (which along with Sicily and Syria was one of the three avenues for the introduction of Arab thought and letters into Europe), review everyday life in the days of the Abbasids, evaluate Arab science and literature, as well as other dimensions of Saracen Civilization, give an exploration of the many contributions of High Islamic Culture to the Feudal West, and then sum up the Crusades, the impact of the Turks, Mongols, and Franks, the influence of European Imperialism, and the prospects for the future on the eve of the Arab Renaissance and, perhaps, a Resurgence of Islam.

I recommend this book very highly — to the beginner — it is a fine text with which to begin the fascinating story of the Arabs — and also to the expert, for it is a model of how to write, as well as a stimulating review of the subject.

C. George Fry

TALES OF PERSIA: A BOOK FOR CHILDREN. By William McElwee Miller. Illustrated by Lily Melton. Dorrance and Company, Philadelphia, 1979. 145 Pages. Cloth. \$5.00.

In 1979 Dr. William McElwee Miller celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of his going to Iran as a missionary. During his ministry of more than half a century Bill Miller has done many, many things, and there is no indication that he is allowing retirement to slow him down. Having recently authored books on both the Muslim and Bahai faiths, Dr. Miller now turns his attention to writing stories for children. This small book of 145 pages contains some twenty-three real life stories from Iran drawn from the experience of Dr. Miller and his coworkers. Each story is illustrated handsomely with the drawings of Lily Melton. Suitable for children of all ages (is anyone ever too old for a good story book?) these **TALES OF PERSIA** tell us why Bill Miller left his native Kentucky to go as a missionary to Iran, how Islam began, how Gasem was converted as a result of reading the paper in which his lunch was wrapped, why Sang became an evangelist and tract missionary, how the Bible can now speak in Persian, why Rostam was happy, and much more. Written in simple yet stirring language, **TALES OF PERSIA** can be read by parents to their young children, or used as a gift for children (about fourth or fifth grade) who prefer to read alone. Each story concludes with a suggested Bible lection, indicating how the book can be used as a devotional guide. I, personally, am glad that Bill Miller recalled with what delight he listened to his mother read to him as a boy in Kentucky the **TALES OF A GRANDFATHER** by Sir Walter Scott, and that he decided then to draw on his wealth of memories of a lifetime in Iran and write these **TALES OF PERSIA** for boys and girls and grown-ups in America who have a concern for bringing Christ to the East. The result is an edifying, informing, and inspiring book.

C. George Fry

THE ARABS: PEOPLE AND POWER. By the editors of **ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA**. Bantam/Britannica Books, New York, 1978. 268 Pages. Paper. \$2.50.

The Arabs are on the march. Not since the Middle Ages have the Arabs occupied such a prominent place in the political, economic, and religious life of the planet as they do today. Daily headlines about OPEC meetings, PLO activities, the adventures of Sadat, Qaddafi, Yamani, and Assad, and the resurgence of Islam all remind us of the amazing Arab renaissance that has occurred since World War II.

Many in the West were taken by surprise by this rebirth of the Arab East. It is difficult to realize that Jidda (in Saudi Arabia) will have the world's largest airport (bigger than Manhattan island), that Abu Dhabi (on the Arab or Persian Gulf) probably has the highest per capita income of any country on earth, and that the Quran may very well be the most widely read book on our planet in 1980. The shocks are only beginning. More seem in store.

As a result, Westerners are seeking information about the Arabs fast. This slick paperback is one of many new books on the market designed to meet that need.

Prepared by the editors of *Encyclopedia Britannica* for Bantam Books this 268 page paperback attempts in ten chapters to introduce the Arabs, explain their origins and characteristics, interpret their religion, expound on their rapid century of expansion (632-732, from the death of Muhammad to the Battle of Tours) from a peninsula (the largest on earth) to a tri-continental empire (Europe, with Spain and Sicily; Africa from Morocco to Somalia; Asia from Sinai to Sinkiang), recount the many Arab contributions to global civilization (ranging from sugar and syrup, both Arab words, incidentally, to surgery,

chemistry, astronomy, philosophy, and agriculture), account for the Arab "Dark Ages" (centuries of slumber in the wake of Crusaders, Mongols, and Turks), and to narrate the "Arab Awakening" (to use George Antonius' term).

That is quite a task. There are over 100,000,000 Arabs living in 21 (or 22 countries, if one includes Palestine), ranging in wealth from Kuwait (with a per capita income of \$10,000 per year, one of the highest in the world) to North Yemen, a pocket of abysmal poverty (with perhaps the lowest per capita income on earth). Furthermore, Arabs are much divided — in politics (from conservative monarchies to radical republics), in religion (being both Sunni and Shiite), and in custom (both sophisticated urbanites and preliterate bedouins).

Perhaps no one volume could meet the challenge. The result in this instance is a "mixed bag." Coverage is "spotty" (I would have preferred more on the Ottoman and European Imperial periods). Interpretations in several instances could be challenged (as p. 117, Iraq is said to be the most successful of the European mandates in the Middle East; why?). The style is uneven (it seems heavy and pedantic; just like "homework"). A sense of momentum often is missing (but, after all, any book by committee can end up "choppy"). But the editors have included a lot, in brief compass, with maps, pictures, and up-to-date facts.

For the busy pastor, teacher, or lay leader seeking a quick source for facts and figures, this will be a helpful tool. It can also be employed as a survey of Arab history. For the persistent and determined reader, *The Arabs: People and Power* will provide rewards.

C. George Fry

ISLAM: A WAY OF LIFE. By Philip K. Hitti. Regnery/Gateway, Inc., South Bend, Indiana, 1970, 198 Pages. Paper. \$4.45.

This book originated as a series of public lectures delivered in 1967 at the University of Minnesota where Dr. Philip K. Hitti, "the Dean of American Orientalists," was a visiting professor. Correctly identifying Islam as a religion, a state, and a culture, Hitti proceeds to devote a third of the book of each of these three dimensions of the Muslim "Way of Life."

The inclusiveness of each section of the volume is commendable. In the section on religion Hitti treats Muhammad as a man and as a prophet, introduces the Quran, surveys Muslim Beliefs and Practices (though he has come up with a somewhat original listing of Muslim Dogmas, adding "Sin" as a sixth belief alongside God, Prophecy, the Quran, Angels, and the Judgment), studies Muslim theology and law, and gives a sympathetic introduction to Sufism (Muslim mysticism). The unit on the state is a quick moving survey of Arab Muslim history from Abu Bakr (632, the first Caliph) to the fall of Baghdad (in 1258 to Hulagu the Mongol). Particularly charming was the part on Islam as a culture, containing discussions of Arab science, literature, philosophy, and art, with generous indications as to the impact of Saracen Civilization on the West. A conclusion evaluates the reciprocal impact in modern times (since Napoleon I) of the West on Islam.

This is a valuable book. It is succinct, crisp in style, gem-like in brilliance, covering much material in a brief compass. As an introduction to Islam, it will remain a classic for years to come. Regnery/Gateway is to be commended for making this text available again in a popular addition.

Even classics, however, have flaws. This is a study of *Arab* Islam, for Turks and Persians are pretty much omitted (unless they wrote in Arabic in the days of

the Arab Empire) and only passing reference is made to Islam in India, Indonesia, and Black Africa. The number of Muslims given on page 2 as 450,000,000 needs updating; it is now 750,000,000. Since Muhammad was apparently illiterate, it would be better to speak of his "oracles" rather than his "writings" (p. 15). Some Old Testament scholars would question the statement that Wisdom was a Hebrew goddess (p. 26). Evangelical readers will regard the differences between Islam and Christianity as more fundamental than one is led to believe at certain points (cf. pp. 39, 40). A typo on page 82, stating that the Arabs crossed the Pyrenees for the first time in 918 ought to be corrected to 718. The passing aside that "creativity based on nothing takes place only in theology" (p. 131) while "cute," is out of keeping with the author's otherwise objective style. Finally, in the concluding section, there is no anticipation of the current revival of Islam and the rejection of Western values in some Muslim states.

This book is like a fine Persian carpet. Of course it contains imperfections (for only God is without flaw). The eye, however, falls not on the defects, but the compelling design and the arresting color. As an introduction and interpretation of Islam, Hitti's text remains a treasure.

C. George Fry

VOLKSKIRCHE — KIRCHE DER ZUKUNFT? Various authors. Heft 12/13 of a series *ZUR SACHE: Kirchliche Aspekte Heute*. Lutherisches Verlagshaus: Hamburg. 1977. Paper. DM 12.80.

This series of essays was presented before the VELKD (Vereinigte Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche Deutschlands), not the same as EKID, which represents the Landeskirchen proper. More conservative opinion can be expected from some members of VELKD. The editors of this double issue are the chairman and business manager of this society, von Wenzel Lohff and Lutz Mohaupt. The contributors are highly stationed people, representing high church offices and various institutions, including also Dr. Manfred Roensch of Oberursel, the seminary of the Lutheran free churches.

The principal topic under discussion is given in a subtitle, "Guidelines from the Augsburg Confession for Today's Understanding of the Church." Is the *Volkskirche* (national church) the church of the future? The question has become more pressing since this reviewer discussed it with several Oberkirchenräte in Germany twelve years ago. A German author describes the *Volkskirche* with the words ". . . und ihr Netz zerriss," (and her net broke). In consideration of the fact that some political parties carry a plank which advocates ending state support of the churches, the leaders of the *Volkskirche* saw themselves facing a frantic situation without support from the national income tax. The churches have recently enjoyed great prosperity.

The studies do not propose that they can resolve the question, but they hold that it must be taken up. Some thematic sentences will show the trend: The church of the Gospel is an open church. Reformation doctrine is its orientation. The church of faith is present in the church of experience. The church of the Gospel is the church of justification. The church as an institution is the church of Christian liberty. The sending of the church places it into God's world. The *Volkskirche* renews itself in the life of the congregation. In doctrine and life it must be recognized that the *magno consensu* of CA 4 has been abandoned, and righteousness is sought in works. The above statements represent the published report of a theological committee of the VELKD.

Prof. Dr. Dietrich Roessler writes from a sociological viewpoint: A theory of the formation of a religious society is at the same time a theory of society in

general . . . The church of the AC is the *Volkskirche*. It is this in the sense that there is no difference between society and church membership. The church is the religious institution for society as a whole . . . The church is in no sense a *societas perfecta*. Society becomes the church, and the difference between the "two kingdoms" vanishes. Dr. Joest speaks differently: The "two-kingdom" doctrine should not be cast aside as a theory that failed to prove true. He also says that the Confessions find the office of the ministry in the universal priesthood . . . Graf Reventlow writes 14 fair theses, but adds the note: The literal understanding of the Messianic prophecies as pointing to Christ is no longer tenable in today's scholarship. Juergen Becker hauls out the full complement of historico-critical reflections as co-referent against Dr. Joest. According to Becker the N.T. does not suggest a oneness of the church; the variations are too great in soteriology, in ecclesiology, and eschatology. He finds differences in the doctrine of justification between Paul and Matthew, James, and the Book of Revelation. He holds that the Reformation could make its case against medieval Christianity only by emphasizing the "Syrian-Antiochene" use of "evangel" and the special Pauline tradition.

Albrecht Peters, Manfred Roensch, and Hans-Martin Mueller write on spirituality, pietism and piety. In Peters the difference between Luther and the *Schawermer* is diminished. Roensch writes a wholesome and informative article on piety before pietism, but he hardly contributes to the discussion of the future of the *Volkskirche*. In Mueller the tension is between certainty and openness. The *Kerngemeinde* (the faithful few) wants certainty, while the *Randgemeinde* (escaped through the broken net) pursues openness in total de-institutionalization and de-theologization.

O. Stahlke

FAITH AND FREEDOM. Toward a Theology of Liberation. By Shubert M. Ogden. Abingdon, Nashville 1979. 128 pages. Paper, \$3.95.

Dr. Ogden is at Perkins School of Theology and director of Graduate Studies in religion at Southern Methodist U., Dallas.

According to Ogden the multitude of theologies of liberation proclaimed today, various ethnic theologies, women's theology, black theology, third world theology, etc. are a subphase of social gospel theology. They fail to develop a full picture, such as the term 'theology' implies. They might better be termed a 'rationale' for action in a certain area, since they are concerned with an action, with justice, with humanistic objectives. Ogden considers the "polemic against so-called academic theology" by these theologies of liberation as quite inadequate and out of order. Their view of redemption and emancipation is too restricted or provincial. So far this reviewer is able to agree with the author.

The source of Ogden's judgment is quite different, however. He explains, "why I myself am no longer able to give the reply that Protestant theologians have traditionally given." To Ogden "all religious assertions are existential assertions." "Faith in God is existence in freedom." "Faith as primarily belief about God has no warrant whatever either in Scripture, or, more importantly, in the apostolic witness." He makes the sharpest distinction between faith in God and faith about God. His authorities are David Hume, Alfred North Whitehead, and Charles Hartshorne. In a proper, "genuinely postliberal theology" a process theology must be embraced, with a "process philosophy" lying behind it. On this ground Ogden criticizes especially Juan Luis Segundo ("Our Idea of God"), a theology showing "signs of still being very much under the influence of a metaphysical understanding of God that has played a fateful role in Christian

theology." Ogden proceeds to "bretcherize" not only the Scriptures, but also the nature of God and the doctrine of redemption.

This is a small paperback, but it is a "humdinger" with a wallop of postliberal theology, explicit and easily recognized.

O. Stahlke

JEWS AND JUDAISM SINCE JESUS. AN INTRODUCTION. By Harriet L. Kaufman. Kaufman House Publishers, 386 Terrace Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1978. 88 pages. Paper. \$3.95.

The book is designed to give church groups, both Christian and Jewish, a better understanding of Judaism. The book is not intended to be a history of Judaism nor a complete introduction to Judaism. The volume ignores most Jewish holidays, festivals and customs. It is not written to be a text in comparative religion. Ms. Kaufman states that she avoided "measuring Judaism and Christianity against each other. My purpose in designing these teachings aids was only to introduce my students to Judaism. My classes affirm both religions." (from the foreword)

The author claims: "Judaism was a living, loving and diverse religion during Jesus' life and it remains so today. The reality is missing from most published histories and American Christian education materials" (p. 1). The volume is organized to have the following: a Glossary, a Chronology, Historical Outline, Bibliography and Maps. The Glossary sets forth basic concepts in the context of life. Each section begins with a definition. Sayings and folktales are presented to give additional insights in to the *Am Yisrael*, the Jewish people. The definition and application are not to be separated says Ms. Kaufman, "because Jews sanctify this life as their acknowledgment of God's dominion."

In the parallel Chronology events in Western and Jewish histories are placed side by side. Major events in Jewish life are cited which indicate the vigor and faith of Jews throughout the centuries.

The Outline gives the story of key personalities, events, and beliefs they generated, and how they shaped Jews and Judaism. The Outline emphasizes the different ways Jewish people were taught by their religious leaders to adopt the ancient oral and written laws to insure physical survival and religious fidelity.

An annotated bibliography list books which deal with the whole field of Judaism as well as the subject of Christian-Jewish relationships. The Maps indicate how widely the Jews have been dispersed among the world's nations and how through Jewish merchants ideas and letters could be exchanged.

A great deal of interesting information has been crowded into eighty-eight pages. Christian users can learn much from a study of this study-book.

The book contains a rather lengthy section, entitled "Antisemitism." Kaufman defined the term as follows: "Antisemitism is the modern expression for the historic hatred of Jews and Judaism and those acts provoked by that enmity." The history of Antisemitism is begun with Antiochus IV, 175-164 B.C. and followed up into the twentieth century. In speaking about Jesus the author claims that he essentially followed Pharasaic teaching. Jesus proclaimed himself the Messiah, a claim which some Jews accepted. After his death, his followers claimed that he was raised from the dead. Kaufman says nothing about who was responsible for the death of Jesus. The books she refers to in the bibliography and recommends are those that claim the New Testament has misrepresented the facts and that the New Testament has been responsible for Antisemitism on the

part of those Christian churches who have accepted the clear statements recording the historical fact that Christ was condemned to death by the Sanhedrin and that this body and other Jews insisted that Christ be crucified. Facts are facts and wishing them not to be true does not make them untrue! If the Gospels, the Epistles of Paul and the Book of Acts record them as historical facts and they are not true, then the N.T. would be a book of lies and fraudulent. How can Christians place their faith in a Bible that contains historical fiction, yea, even lies?

That Jews and Judaism have suffered at the hands of Christians in post-Biblical times no one denies or defends. One can oppose the theological beliefs of another religion without, however, persecuting people for their religious beliefs. But true Biblical Christianity insists that there is no salvation for any person apart from Christ, no matter what his color, sex, race or educational status might be.

Raymond F. Surburg

IV. Practical Studies

THE SECRET OF SOUL WINNING. By Stephen F. Olford. Moody Press, Chicago, 1978. 121 pages. Paper. \$2.50.

Olford writes in a good simple style and is easy reading. He approaches evangelism (soul-winning, to him) in a broad sense that includes what you do and say to people in church, at the rear of the church, etc. He tends to leave no stone unturned. He does make a few interesting statements that are missed in other books. Instead of stating that we do have some inherent power to "win souls for Christ," he states that Christ is the only real soul-winner and we are not. He does, however, develop that since we are in Christ and Christ in us, we have the tools to be real soul winners. His approach is a bit refreshing in that it does not play down the actual role of the indwelling of God in His people. It also serves to encourage those in the faith to realize what they have and to make good use of it.

All that being said, he comes back and sees Baptism as something less than a sacrament. This is unfortunate since the Great Commission tells us we are to disciple other nations via baptism and implies a great miracle that occurs through it. He gives us beauty in being in Christ, but takes it away by playing down one of the means of becoming "in Christ."

There are some sections in his book that could have been omitted, in my opinion, but I also feel that he could have expanded on chapter nine (something seldom alluded to) since it views us as Christians who are constantly plagued with sinful desires (many books point out that once we're in the faith, we somehow lose any semblance of sin . . .). Of recent books, although there are theological differences, I find this one a bit refreshing!

Robert H. Collins

EVANGELIZATION IN THE WORLD TODAY. Concilium. Edited by Norbert Greinacher and Alois Müller. The Seabury Press, New York, 1979. 123 pages. Paper. \$4.95.

The book features various scholarly authors speaking to the topic of evangelism. The book seems to base itself on the "Cordeiro Report" of the Bishop's Synod held in Rome in 1974, where evangelism was defined as "proclaiming the joyous message of salvation to all men through words, deeds and life itself." The question of whether the "traditional" method of evangelism is

apropos or not is taken up as well. Can one say that the nations that have been evangelized have an identity of their own other than what was brought to them by missionaries? The vital question of evangelizing and retaining an identity is brought out nicely.

Different authors present various views that assume that the way the Church did its evangelizing (or enculturating) in the past was not correct. There is a subtle assumption that perhaps the Church should focus more on people as we find them and not disrupt their culture. Some authors go far enough to say that the true God *can* be found among non-Christian faiths and in some instances it would be best to acknowledge this and get on with the order of being brothers to these people. What is now considered conversion is not given prominence.

The fallacy it brings forth is that to preach Christ is not to change a culture *per se* (that is, from what it was to become Western), but in preaching Christ many changes will occur in one's culture no matter how it is viewed. Since religion and culture are so closely interwoven, it can hardly be assumed that in doing evangelism you can retain the old culture (along with the old religion) in "peaceful coexistence." This book lives up to its purpose in examining and critiquing modern day methods of evangelizing, but also fails miserably in seeing how a "now" Jesus would have His word taken to all people. Far too much of the book is philosophical and not theological. There are, however, moments of pleasure in reading it providing one does not forget the purpose of why it was written. Far too much guilt for past evangelism efforts penetrates the book and far too little of what Christ, and not modern "experts" says, dominates its thought.

Robert H. Collins

HOW TO WITNESS SUCCESSFULLY: A Guidebook for Christians to Share the Good News. By George Sweeting. Moody Press, Chicago, 1978. 127 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

Sweeting writes with a very simple and readable style and allows the reader to get multi-usage out of it (private, groups or Sunday School). His basic assumption for the successful witness is that this person must be a Christian and convicted in his heart. As he develops this, he tends to make the power of the Word contingent on the speaker and not in itself. It is very true that believers make good witnesses, but it is equally true that whenever the word is proclaimed (regardless of the motive of the speaker), God is at work (Is. 55:10, 11) effectively.

It should be made clear that the author does have a book that is simple and clear to the average person. Since he addresses the man-on-the-street and not theologians, his language is quite appropriate . . . even if this writer finds it objectionable theologically. He does make the same mistake as many other writers have done (re: evangelism) in seeing John 4 (woman at the well) as *the method* of evangelism that Christ hands us, rather than *a method*. He's a bit weak, if not totally silent, on how to witness to people who have no knowledge of Jesus as Savior. One chapter on "Presenting the Gospel" contains some "signs" that do everything but allow you to see how God comes to you. It's more like how you must find Him! This is already a frustration among believers and would even be worse among those outside the faith.

The idea of getting decisions isn't new, but it does raise the question on whether evangelism is man's effort to save, or God's. If it is God's, man is a proclaimer and sharer, not a coercer. His views see man as assisting in the process of conversion. Much of the same is reflected in his chapter on getting a verdict, something about which he remains nebulous in defining, but insistent on doing.

Readers will get something from the book, perhaps a lot, but the title is a bit misleading as if witnessing has it failure moments. This writer missed the real definition of what a witness really is which could have helped matters a lot.

Robert H. Collins

THE FAITH LETTERS. By Helmut Thielicke. Trans. by Douglas Crow. Word Books, Waco, Texas. 194 pages. \$7.95.

One never knows when an awakening of Christian thought and life will occur in Lutheran sectors of Germany. Remember the mission societies of the nineteenth century?

Out of a group of pastors who met with Thielicke in Hamburg to study their texts for forthcoming sermons, a wider concern developed. Thielicke had been involved in his own efforts in adult Christian Education since 1934 when he switched from more abstract philosophy and theology to communication of basic Christian beliefs and practices to the masses. His "Didactic Sermons" over the decades have made him world famous.

Now, in October 1971, he involved an organized study and communication group in Hamburg to lead discussion groups at St. Michael's Church. About one third of the 2,000 plus who listened, remained for study and discussion.

The "Project Group" which organized the discussions spun off into prison work, counselling, dissemination of Thielicke's lectures to other churches in distant cities, etc. Thielicke notes. "The flood of subscriptions climbed so high that after scarcely eighteen months their circulation was already a quarter of a million" (p. 9).

Thielicke's format is that of a "letter." Simple language. Sincere. Filled with feeling. Spiced with Thielicke's sense of humor. (When they went to visit prisoners, posters in prison referred to them as "heavenly jokers").

Subjects of the "letters" include "The Secret Quest for God," "God as 'Father' — The Limit of Our Concepts," "Man Suffers — Has God Failed," etc. Thielicke's Project Group puts a strong case for Christian faith over against the resistant secularism of our culture.

The Faith Letters has already appeared in five languages. It should *provoke* thought for various study groups in parishes, on campuses, etc.

The last chapter describes the *methods* the Group uses to stimulate Christian-oriented discussion and expand its spheres of influence and outreach. The formulation of stimulating, vital *questions* and the *structure* and *comprehensiveness* of religious thought in the body of the book, together with this last chapter on *methods*, make this a valuable addition to one's library of useful theological books.

Harold H. Zietlow

GLORY IN THE CROSS: A STUDY IN ATONEMENT. By Leon Morris. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Reprinted in 1979 from the 1966 edition. 94 pages. Paper. \$2.50.

Leon Morris has written comprehensively on the biblical passages relevant to the cross in two other books, *The Cross in the New Testament* and *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*.

In this little paperback, *Glory in the Cross*, he makes firm appeals for the *inclusive* biblical statement of atonement. He shows that all of the emphases on

the atonement in the New Testament are relevant in the current human situation.

This book is an apologetic for the *complete* doctrine of the atonement in the New Testament. Morris upholds the views that the "Savior" dies on the cross to save us, that sin demands retribution, and, the wrath of God. Therefore, the atonement is important to God as well as man.

The spiritual sickness of man has to be *forgiven* before the physical symptoms are treated, as seen when Jesus forgives the sins of the paralytic and then heals him (Mk. 2:5).

Like P. T. Forsythe, Morris stresses the *judgment* of God and the efficacy of the cross. We can no more negotiate our way into heaven without the cost of sin *being paid* than we can negotiate with the ticket gatekeeper at the football game to let us in free. Christ paid for our sins.

Sin "must be expiated . . . The Son of Man must suffer . . . for our sins" (p. 45). "The New Testament sees the cross as God's *complete* answer" (p. 81, italics mine). Morris covers all the doctrines of the atonement in a helpful and practical manner, and in the last chapter appeals for our affirmative "response" to its saving message for us.

His book encourages preaching the cross. "Preaching that exalts Christ crucified can still be dynamic, the very power of God unto salvation for everyone who believes." "There is glory in the cross" (P. 94). Good book to buy and read for preparation for Lent.

Harold H. Zietlow

THE TROUBLE WITH THE CHURCH: A CALL FOR RENEWAL. By Helmut Thielicke. Trans. by J. W. Doberstein. Baker Book House. Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1978. Paper reprint of 1965 Harper and Row edition. 130 pages, with index and bibliographical notes. \$2.95.

This book deals mostly with preaching. Thielicke contends that the laity is not sick of preaching, but impatient with *poor quality* preaching.

Thielicke also fumes over liturgiologists who do not consider the congregational audience when introducing and using antiquarian liturgies.

While Thielicke aims his attack at the state church practices of West Germany, his critique fits the American scene as well.

Some good advice for preachers which you will find developed in this book: (1) Don't try to cover too much in one sermon. (2) Scrutinize your use of words. (3) Scale your sermon content to the needs of your congregation. (4) Sermons should edify and educate the audience *via* the popularization of doctrine. (5) Integrate sermon and liturgy so that liturgy communicates the continuity of the eternal truths while the sermon applies these truths to current needs. (6) Count on substance in your sermons. Don't rely on gimmicks. Work hard on your sermons. If you're willing to renew your preaching, this book will help. Thielicke tries to help the modern church preachers with hope that renewal will result. Conditions may be discouraging now, but he feels they can be improved. Basis for his hope: "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

Harold H. Zietlow

HARVEST OF FAITH. By Paul D. Lang. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1979. 96 pages.

THROUGH CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE. By William A. Lauterbach. Con-

cordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1979. 96 pages.

These two volumes, published in large print, are especially designed for older Christians. Here are two excellent devotional books that adult Christians will enjoy, especially those who have been raised on substantial Christian fare in their earlier lives, on sound catechism instruction and good textual Biblical preaching. Pastor Paul Lang in his Preface to the 33 devotions wrote:

Life is happy and thrilling when we have something for which to live, not only for today and tomorrow, but for eternity. The future is the ultimate purpose, the important goal. Happiness now and in the future comes from God. To Him we must go for true peace and happiness. We are most happy when we trust in God's grace and love through Christ Jesus. Then we have forgiveness, peace, and hope. Life is worth living and hopeful when we pray and live every day in union with our gracious and loving God.

Pastor Lang's devotionals will help the older Christian, the retired Christian with the Spirit's aid to a harvest of faith. Each devotion, based on a Word of God, is concluded with an appropriate hymn verse.

Pastor William Lauterbach, a prolific and successful devotional writer, has provided 41 helpful devotions. In the first devotion the author explained the title of his book, *Through Cloud and Sunshine*. In it Lauterbach stated:

Cloud and sunshine, that is the Lord's pattern for our lives even as it is for the weather. Both are necessary and important, and in proper balance they supplement each other and enhance the value of life. Just as all sunshine and cloudless skies produce sparse vegetation or barren deserts, so continual clear and cloudless days in life tend to wither mutual deeds of love and sometimes shrivel and destroy faith. On the other hand, prolonged periods of storm and clouds without break in the skies, be it in weather or in the course of our lives, can cause gloom and discouragement. But when sunshine, clouds, and rain are sent in proper proportion, grass will grow upon the hills, orchards and vineyards will bear abundant fruit, and fields yield bountiful crops to provide food for man and beast, and all creation will rejoice in the wonderful blessings of God.

In line with this observation Lauterbach has written the devotions he offers in this book; by means of them the elder reader can face the peaks and valleys of life with God's help. Readers will find the devotions in both of Concordia's books helpful and inspiring.

Both authors have a number of excellent writings to their credit and thus write from a background of successful experience.

Raymond F. Surburg