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Book Reviews

I. Biblical Studies

INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Adam W. Miller. Warner Press, Anderson, Indiana, 1976. 224 pages. Paper. \$1.75.

The original title of this book was *Brief Introduction to the Old Testament*. This paperback version now appears in a series called "Portal Books." The publishers state that this book was prepared "in response to the requests for a book on the part of ministers and church school workers that would serve as a companion volume to the *Brief Introduction to the New Testament*. It was written to be used in courses on the Old Testament for church workers, although the publishers believe that it could serve for an elective course, or that it might be employed in "in-service ministerial training institutes, as well as for individual study."

The book surveys each of the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and tries to show how each book fits into the total Testament, and treats especially such questions as these: Who wrote the book? When was it written? Under what circumstances? To whom? Why?

The publishers state that in order to make this a readable book critical discussions have been eliminated as much as possible. While Dr. Miller, dean emeritus of the graduate School of Theology of Anderson College, occasionally mentions the conservative stance on Biblical issues, his presentation mostly follows the typical higher critical position on most matters on which there has been and still is a sharp cleavage of opinion. The majority of references are to the critical literature and the student using this book and pursuing the suggested readings would most likely adopt the stance the writer appears to have embraced.

Raymond F. Surburg

SERPENT SYMBOLISM IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Karen Randolph Joines. Haddonfield House, Haddonfield, New Jersey, 1974. 127 pages. Paper. No price given.

This appears to be a doctoral dissertation and concerns itself with making a linguistic, archaeological and literary study of the serpent motif in the Old Testament and correlating this data with the vast amount of raw material which Near Eastern Archaeology has presented to students of the history of religions.

In the preface of this work Joines explains mankind's fascination with serpents as follows:

The serpent has always fascinated mankind. Although unique in lacking visible motor organs, this limbless and cylindrical creature moves stealthily and mysteriously with marvelous and graceful ease. Simultaneously, antipathy and fear for the serpent have equalled respect for it. Its slender fangs can puncture the flesh of a strong man, and he is no more. Conversely, the serpent represented life. It glides from the earth—it is the living essence of the soil; it annually sloughs off old skin cells, an image of its former self-it represents recurring youthfulness; its

penetrating eyes sparkle with unusual lustre-it signifies superhuman wisdom. This is the serpent-a strange synthesis of life and death, an object of both intense animosity and reverence.

Archaeological finds show, as Joines points out, the use of serpent symbol in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Canaanite Baalism. In the Near East the serpent was employed as the symbol of both life and fertility, of chaos and death. According to our author, in the Old Testament serpents are referred to in Genesis 3, Isaiah 6, Numbers 21, and II Kings 18, passages which allegedly "permit a glimpse of a rich cultic background behind the pages of the Old Testament" (p. 100). These four passages, Joines claims, permit "a few rays of light to form a vast area beyond." In this book Joines has attempted "to intensify these beams by describing the discoveries of archaeology from this vast area."

The manner in which the serpent has been used in the four Old Testament passages are summarized by Joines as follows: "At the very heart of the cultic serpent symbol was the significance of life, the basic element of the Old Testament passages listed above. This symbolic significance of the serpent was so familiar to Israelite culture that the Old Testament used it to objectify the sinful impulse of mankind (Genesis 3), to signify the sovereignty of its divine King (Isaiah 6), to assert the recurrence of life (Numbers 21), and to articulate the fecundizing power of Yahweh (II Kings 18)" (p. 100).

The conclusions of this study are possible because of the use of the historical-critical method with its anti-Scriptural presuppositions. According to the New Testament it was Satan, the Devil, who used the serpent to tempt Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. When in Numbers 21:4-9 the chapter is understood as dealing with historical facts, the meaning comes out radically different from that meaning offered by critical Old Testament scholarship. In John 3:14-15 Jesus said: "And just as Moses lifted high the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, in order that everyone who trusts in Him may have eternal life." The seraphim of Isaiah 6 are not recognized as an angelic order, and thus an erroneous interpretation is given to this Isaian passage.

The volume contains much valuable information about serpent usage and symbolism in the Near East; but it does not recognize the unique nature of the Old Testament and of the dealings of Israel's God, Yahweh, nor does it recognize that the New Testament frequently sheds important light on Old Testament passages.

Raymond F. Surburg

THE MESSIANIC HOPE. A DIVINE SOLUTION FOR THE HUMAN PROBLEM. By Arthur W. Kac. A Cannon Press Book. Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1975. 355 pages. Paper. \$3.95.

Arthur W. Kac, M.D., a Hebrew Christian, whose medical speciality is radiology and who is a member of several scientific societies, has authored a volume that honors Christ. It is the thesis of this volume that the solution to man's real problem lies outside the secular orientation which dominates and controls twentieth-century thinking in Western civilization. *The Messianic Hope* claims correctly that only God has the answer "and that he has persistently, over centuries, tried to pound that fact into the heads of a particular people—the Jews; and a particular book, the Bible is the record of that instructional process." From both the Old and New Testaments he presents and discusses the Messianic passages, which set forth the concept of the Messiah.

From the Pentateuch to the book of Revelation the author emphasizes the centrality of the Messiah, the Christ, foretold in many passages in different Old Testament books, and shows their fulfillment in the New Testament Scriptures. A valuable feature of this book is the listing on page 355 of references to the Messiah in various rabbinic writings which are cited in Dr. Kac's presentation.

Dr. Kac does not discuss the Messianic hope in the Intertestamental period; however, he calls the attention of the reader to its existence in a number of pseudographical books. Thus he remarks: "The Messianic Hope holds a prominent place in many of these writings, especially in the Book of Enoch, the Assumption of Moses, the Apocalypse of Baruch and 4 Esra. It was observed by one of the great Jewish scholars that while these writings may have broadened, they have not deepened, the Messianic ideas of the prophets" (p. 117).

Here is a volume to be added to those volumes on Messianic prophecy written by Hebrew Christians like Delitzsch, Edersheim, Saphir, Kliegerman. Those individuals studying the subject of Messianic prophecy will find here a portrayal of the Messianic hope that differs radically from that produced by the outstanding Hebrew scholar Joseph Klausner in *The Messianic Idea in Israel* (The MacMillan Company, New York, 1955).

Raymond F. Surburg

NEW LIGHT ON THE GOSPELS, By Clifford A. Wilson. Foreword by F. F. Bruce. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1975. 128 pages. Paper. \$1.25.

NEW LIGHT ON NEW TESTAMENT LETTERS. By Clifford A. Wilson. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1975. 125 pages. Paper. \$1.25.

The author of these two "direction books" of Baker Book House was formerly director of the Australian Institute of Archaeology and is presently the director of Word of Truth Productions, Ballston Spa, New York. Both of these volumes are concerned with showing the light that Near Eastern Archaeology casts on the Gospel records and various of the New Testament epistles. The purpose of these two volumes is not to prove the truth of the Gospels or the New Testament Epistles but to show that the Gospels deal with real places and real events. Dr. Bruce in his foreword to *New Light on the Gospels* claims:

Even today too many readers of the Gospels cannot rid themselves easily of the idea that there is a certain unreality about their contents, that the characters whom they portray walk, as someone has said, with their feet six inches above the ground. The following pages show how perfectly the persons and incidents of the Gospels fit into the place and time to which they belong. It is precisely because they are so matter-of-fact and down-to-earth in their depiction of the ordinary ways of life that the Gospels make greater impression when they tell how, in a real human life spent amid those ordinary ways, God acted decisively and once for all for the redemption of mankind (pp. 5-6).

Dr. Wilson has drawn heavily on the Greek papyri uncovered in utilizing especially the works of Grenfell and Hunt, G. and J. Moulton, Deismann, and others. These two little books are excellent for Sunday school teachers and Bible class leaders. They would be good additions to any church library. Both Books were originally presented in the form of weekly broadcasts over the international radio station HCJB located in Quito, Ecuador.

Raymond Surburg

IN SEARCH OF GOD'S IDEAL WOMAN. By Dorothy R. Pape. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois. 370 pages. Paper. \$4.95.

Dorothy Pape has served with the China Inland Mission and The Evangelical Alliance Missions. At various times she has been a resident of England, China, Japan, and Canada, and at present is teaching along with her husband in Bibelschule Brake. The volume purports to be "A Personal Examination of the New Testament." While the author deals with the New Testament passages which touch upon women, she has referred to every verse and reference pertaining to the subject in the Old Testament, as may be seen from her introductory chapter and the listing on page 367 of Biblical passages discussed, citing some seventy passages from the Old Testament.

Mrs. Pape spent four years in researching and writing this thought-provoking volume. It is a book with which many associated with the Woman's Liberation Movement will be unhappy, and at the same time those who believe that women's ordination is not Scriptural will also find it unacceptable because of Mrs. Pape's handling of those Pauline passages that do not permit women to serve as pastors. Inasmuch as Mrs. Pape has been preaching to men for years, this book may be said to be an *apologia pro vita sua* for her own life and ministry.

Listening to a Jewish chaplain speaking on "the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31" was the occasion for her determining to find God's Ideal Woman. She asked herself the following questions: Who is God's ideal woman? Does God really have such a concept? With these questions in mind she read through the entire New Testament and examined the concept of woman in the Gospels, Acts, and the Epistles. She carefully examined each text that in any way bore on these questions. She claims that she did not shirk any of the difficult passages, which would include the verses in I Corinthians and in I Timothy which prohibit women from functioning as teachers and preachers in the public church assembly.

Mrs. Pape's book is well researched and richly informative, and she has gathered much excellent material relative to the favorable position of woman as described in the New Testament, as well as acquainting the reader with the excellent achievements of twentieth century women in the areas of missionary endeavor and Bible teaching. Those who read and study Mrs. Pape's book will probably conclude that the author would leave all areas of church work, including the pastorate, open to women.

Whether one agrees or disagrees with Mrs. Pape ultimately is a hermeneutical issue. In 1 Timothy, Paul in giving instruction about public prayer and worship wrote to his pastoral associate Timothy: "Let a woman learn quietly in entire submission. I allow no woman to teach, or to exercise authority over a man; but let her keep quiet"(2:11-12). The author argues that these restrictions are not meant for all time! That is the crux of the whole issue.

In her concluding chapter "Does God Have an Ideal Woman?" Mrs. Pape summarizes her findings about woman in the Old and New Testament Scriptures. She writes: "This book certainly is not meant as an authoritative statement on doctrine, but as useful data for those who are wrestling with the problem of the position of woman in the church in these days when she is no longer legally merely the 'property' of a man nor considered ceremonially unclean. We hope that real experts in the original languages of the Bible will study afresh the earliest manuscripts available and without prejudice or preconceived ideas state all the possible meanings of the text and that theologians will evaluate isolated principles in the light of God's known practices" (pp. 358-359).

This reviewer seriously doubts that this is a matter for the experts to settle. The Pauline texts are clear, not only in the original but in translation. There are only two alternatives: Either Paul was not recording the will of God and

was expressing his own Jewish prejudices about women, or he is setting forth God's position which is based on the reality of the orders of creation.

Raymond F. Surburg

CREATION, CHRIST AND CULTURE STUDIES IN HONOUR OF T. F. TORRANCE. Edited by Richard W. A. McKinney. T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1976. 321 pages. Cloth. \$5.60.

This is a *Festschrift* in honor of T. F. Terrance, issued in the year that Professor Torrance of New College, Edinburgh, has been elected moderator of the Church of Scotland. For the past twenty-five years Torrance has taught and influenced students from all over the world at New College.

The editor of this *Festschrift*, Professor Richard W. A. McKinney of the Department of Theology, University of Nottingham, asserts about Professor Torrance in his preface:

His influence during this period, on the successive generations of students who have come to study and do research at Edinburgh, has been considerable and more than matches that of his many famous predecessors and contemporaries at New College. Those who have entered into his lecture theatre, his seminar room or his study have benefited immensely from the experience. There they have encountered challenge and insight, encouragement and provocation. There, irrespective of their own particular views, they have learned to admire and respect an eminent and learned theologian.

Bryan Gray has furnished a bibliography of the published writings of Torrance (1941-75) on pages 307-321, which testifies to the fact that the New College theologian is a prolific writer.

The *Festschrift* contains twenty essays by a group of theologians from different countries, confessions, disciplines, and interests. The inclusion of British, Scottish, Irish, German, and American scholars shows the influence of and respect for Professor Torrance. The editor informs his readers that the theme of the volume, *Creation, Christ and Culture* has endeavored to take into consideration concerns of Torrance but also at the same time permit international scholars to make positive contributions to the issues of contemporary critical theology.

The essays in this volume will be consulted by specialists in the areas of the Old Testament, the New Testament, systematic theology, philosophical theology and practical theology. It is a volume which the average pastor will not purchase, partly because of the price and partly because of its irrelevancy to the pursuit of the practical ministry.

Raymond F. Surburg

II. Theological — Historical Studies

THE POLITICS OF HOPE. By Andre Bieler. Preface by Dom Helder Camera. Translated by Dennis Pardee. William B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1974. 152 pages. Paper. \$3.95.

This explicit defense and presentation of the theology of hope was written at the request of the Association of Evangelical Theological Seminaries of Brazil

and offers nothing recognizably new. The theology of hope works on a number of basic tenets which more or less show up in the writings of its followers. Here are some that emerge in Bieler's presentation: history is the place of revelation; Christ's appearance in history as a model of what all humanity will be like; some type of glorification of society through scientific advancement; the breaking down of racial, ethnic, national, and religious boundaries to establish this society; the church as a catalyst in this process, especially through suffering; political involvement of the church; the church's influence on society so that even unbelievers benefit; some kind of world government and amalgamation working through the United Nations. All of these principles emerged at the Evian meeting of the Lutheran World Federation in 1970. (See my *Lutheran World Federation Today*, CPH, 1971.) Six years later they are still with us. The survival of the theology of hope is astounding since the history that it pretends to read is saying something diametrically opposite to what the theologians of hope claim. Where is this global unity fostered by the church's message? Equally astounding is that Eerdmans published this book. In my hope-filled opinion the theology of hope will hopefully come to an end soon.

dps

WRESTLING WITH LUTHER. An Introduction to the Study of His Thought. By John R. Loeschen. Concordia, St. Louis, 1976. 185 pages. Cloth. \$9.50.

Fortunately Luther himself was not as complicated, either in thought or in writing style, as his interpreters often are. He could take the profound things of God revealed in the Scriptural Word and put them in clear, unmistakable terms. This in fact was his strong suit, translating and interpreting precisely and idiomatically. As a result, the cognitive, substantive content of what he had to say, and the way he said it, managed to leave its lasting impact and imprint on the world.

But Luther's interpreters are something else again. Some, it is true, come closer than others in fair, objective treatment. Loeschen is among these. Many commendable things can be said of his work. For one thing there is little question that he has devoted many years of serious study to his subject. This is no superficial piece of work. He does not audaciously claim to have covered all of Luther's vast production, a task which but a handful of scholars have ever actually attained to. Probably the strongest temptation Luther scholars face is that of "using" Luther to further their own preconceived notions. Honesty and objectivity demand that Luther be allowed to speak for himself. One dare not set his own presuppositions into Luther's thinking. The Reformer simply was too clear, consistent, balanced, unambiguous for mistaking his dictums on any given area or subject. Loeschen scores well. His strong point unquestionably is that he, first of all, recognizes this consistent, harmonious beauty in Luther's theological thought, that his "theology is holistic and extraordinarily systematic" (in spite of the fact that he did not particularly devote himself to what might be called the systematic theological enterprise), and then, secondly, that Luther "almost invariably spoke in twos," using "dialectical pairs as a kind of linguistic or intellectual shorthand" (p. 16). The fact is, of course, that Luther discovered all of these characteristics in Scripture itself, out of whose content he literally lived as few men before or after him. The question, "In relation to what?," is always working in Luther's mind as he deals with the things of God revealed in God's Word, or the things of man, or the things around man. Thus Scripture - and so Luther - never speaks merely of man, but of man in relation to God, and *vice versa*. *Coram*

Deo, "before God," is the way man must see himself, the sinner before God, his Creator and his Redeemer.

Some of the dialectical "twos" Loeschen feels especially accented by Luther are:

coram deo and coram mundo

regnum dei and regnum mundi

Law and Gospel (*Lex et Fides*, or *Lex et promissio*)

sinner and saint (*simul justus et peccator*)

incurvatus in se and ingressus in Christum

righteousness of the Law and righteousness of faith

God hidden and God revealed (*Deus absconditus and Deus revelatus*)

God in His unsearchable and unreachable majesty and God close at hand in His own chosen masks or veils, the *larvae Dei*

Again drawing from Luther, Loeschen rightly notes that many of these braces or pairs are never just simply to be understood under all circumstances as disjunctive, but also at times properly conjunctive.

What is offered here is a distillation of Loeschen's doctoral thesis. By itself that is neither here nor there; but one could wish that the author might have lessened his own dialectic somewhat, so that Luther's razor-sharp dialectic might have stood forth more brilliantly and unencumbered. But all in all it is a very careful, thorough piece of work, generally fair and faithful to the Reformer's stance. Occasionally the author's own preconceptions seem to stand forth stark and naked, as in the flat and totally indefensible dictum - one that goes against the grain of everything that Luther ever stood for - that "as important as the appeal to the objectivity of God's Word is in Luther's theology, he never identifies that Word with the written text" (p. 105). Loeschen did not learn this from reading Luther! This is the dialectic of liberalism in neo-orthodoxy's cloak, the Yes - and - No theology which says, "Yes, the Bible is the Word of God; No, the Bible is not the Word of God," the result of which has been liberalism's total failure to locate the Word of God. Luther's *sola Scriptura* was never a formula which divested itself from the Biblical text as the *de facto* Word of God! Every Luther scholar, whether he agrees with Luther or not, has to admit this. Aside from this stricture the book has much to recommend itself to the student of Luther.

E.F. Klug

EXCEPT THE CORN DIE. By Robert J. Koenig. Published by Robert J. Koenig, 420 Sunrise Avenue, Giddings, Texas, 1975. 474 pages. Paper. \$4.75 plus postage.

I am constantly amazed at the enormous amount of creativity represented among the clergy of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. An outstanding example that has just come to my attention is the Reverend Robert J. Koenig of Giddings, Texas. A graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, where he obviously was permanently infected with the history virus (or else re-infected), Koenig also holds an M.A. degree, has taught school, lectures and preaches widely, and has served congregations in Missouri and Texas. Fortunately, Koenig became fascinated with the story of the Saxon immigration to America. In part this interest was inspired by geneological concerns. Koenig has ancestors who made the great trek from the shores of the Elbe to those of the Mississippi for the sake of conscience. Coupled with this was a deep sense of dedication to his Church, and sense of the real uniqueness of the Missouri Synod. The courage of those Saxon forefathers who were

determined "to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience regardless of the sacrifice involved" appealed to the churchman in Koenig. Then there was the drama of the saga itself. Just try to imagine the Lutheran exodus! Hundreds of people were transported from a settled life in Central Germany to the near-wilderness conditions of the American Midwest. Surely that is a narrative that excites the imagination! Completing the picture was the author's search for meaning in the past, a love of writing, the ability to spin a good tale, and a message of theological import to share with his fellow-Lutherans. Koenig was a man under necessity—he quite literally had to tell the story of the Saxon migration.

It all began in 1953. That year Dr. Walter Forster's book, *Zion on the Mississippi*, appeared. Koenig read it and "the conviction began to grow on me that there was a historical event that had all the makings of a plot for a most readable novel built into it." In minutes snatched from the busy routine of a parish pastor's life, Koenig began to collect his materials. Little did he realize what sacrifice was going to be involved. Extensive research (both in libraries as well as "down home among the folks" in Perry County), wide correspondence (including contacts in East Germany), constant writing and rewriting, the struggle to recreate for the reader the lost world of the last century (in two different cultures, Germany and America), the attempt to describe conditions quite alien to our own (a rural, not an urban society; a country that was agricultural, not industrial; a people of poverty, rather than affluence; a time of persecution, not toleration), and the presentation of realities of everyday life in the 1830's not merely in Dresden, Berlin, Bremen, New Orleans, and St. Louis, but also in a score of German and American villages, as Niederfrohna and Stephan's Landing (and not merely on the land, but on the high seas; in the age of Concorde, when Europe is but two hours removed, it is hard for us to understand a time when it took two or three months to go from New York to Bremen). Koenig diligently searched diaries and letters for those specific details that give the portrait of the past concreteness and credibility.

Even more challenging was the responsibility of giving accurate and insightful characterizations of a very colorful cast of pioneers. To begin with there is the ever enigmatic Martin Stephan. Here is the powerful and persuasive Dresden preacher who became the leader of "the Awakened" in their migration from Saxony to Missouri, whose episcopal pretensions, sexual irregularities, and financial follies nearly brought the whole company to temporal and eternal ruin. And then there is the astounding C. F. W. Walther, the theologian of the exiles, and Herman Walther, the poet-preacher of the pilgrims, and Heinrich Loeber, a Pastor's pastor, and many, many more from a Fuerbringer to a Buenger. Comprehending these personalities alone is a task to dazzle the mind.

On top of this we have two fictional figures introduced into the plot. The intention is to democratize the novel, so that we see not merely the prominent, but the ordinary people, not only the preachers, teachers, and lawyers, but also the common folk. So two young people enter the tale—imaginary in name and career—but very representative of the ordeals and ideals of the average emigrant. Karl Rengsdorf is one of these. A miller, day laborer, china wares dealer, he struggles against disease, poverty, loneliness, the loss of his family on the sunken *Amalia*, finally to triumph over adversity by the grace of God. The other is the lovely dark-eyed Louise Neuhof, whose beauty was an inspiration to young Rengsdorf, a temptation to old Bishop Stephan, and whose fall into sin and restoration to grace illustrate the power of the Gospel to mend lives.

Pastor Koenig is also a theologian. So he had more in mind than merely "a most fascinating and inspiring journey into the past." A text was needed, and it was provided by John 12:24, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." The theme of death and resurrection, central to Christianity itself, is at the heart of this

story—in the lives of the individuals involved and in their experience collectively as a Christian congregation. As the story moves from the inception of the idea of emigration in 1834 to the point where the Church seemed established in the New World after the Walther-Marbach debates in 1841, the message becomes increasingly evident until it is articulated in the words of one of the pilgrims on the day of the Altenburg Debates, this was “the Easter Day of our sorely tried congregation.”

Having produced a 474-page manuscript (which is good fiction, not bad history, and pretty good theology—and what more do you want?), Koenig soon faced his own ordeal. Nothing is so frustrating as to bring your offering to the Church and have it refused. For reasons not quite clear to me Concordia Publishing House rejected Koenig’s gift. The apparent reason was that “it was impossible for CPH to publish it at a price that prospective buyers would want to pay.” Koenig, however, like his Saxon forebears is a stubborn man who would rather fight than switch. He marched back to the old typewriter (there is a picture of it on the back cover), prepared his own copy, and published it himself by the offset method. As Koenig informed me, “Thus far the book can be obtained only from me, the author, publisher, and distributor, mailer, manufacturer, and stamp licker, or from the East Perry Lutheran Historical Society at Altenburg, Missouri and the Saxon Lutheran Memorial at Frohna, Missouri.” Now that is determination!

I not only commend Brother Koenig for a work of supererogation, I recommend his book to you for a great number of possible uses (with Walther League, in the church library, the adult discussion group, the women’s circle, a class on Synod history—use your imagination). Yes, I know there are typing errors, a few misprints, sometimes a ship’s name not underlined, and other minor matters that one might mention. (But who of us is without sin and how many of us have typed copy for offset after a fourteen-hour day of parish responsibilities?) The author freely admits in a brief “Epilogue” that he has taken a few liberties with the past when necessary, but none that would distort the contours of history (after all, do you really want to read the full transcript of the Altenburg Debates?) or confuse the reader.

All in all, I am amazed. I have never met Pastor Koenig, but I hope that I get to hear him preach sometime—and I look forward to another book from his typewriter. I suspect it too will be like the present volume, spellbinding. As Dr. Ellis Nieting of the Iowa District West wrote, “once I got started reading it, I had trouble putting it down.” Not only was I enthralled, but I found the author’s sense of the providential direction of history inspiring. The Saxons came, with “the Utopian dream of an isolated, cloistered colony in which ministers could watch over and carefully regulate the lives and thinking of their docile lambs. . . .” That died but in its place came “a dream of a lively, energetic church, reaching out, not only into St. Louis . . . but into every area of the country, yes, of the whole world where sinners saved by Jesus Christ could be found.” That is good history, good theology, and as valid in the 1970’s as in the 1840’s.

C. George Fry

REINCARNATION, EDGAR CAYCE & THE BIBLE. By Philip J. Swihart. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1975. 58 pages. Paper. \$2.25.

The InterVarsity Fellowship of Great Britain and the United States has endeavored and continues to help college and university students to evaluate from a Christian perspective various religious, social, political, and sociological developments as they occur. Dr. Philip J. Swihart, chief psychologist at Midwestern Colorado Mental Health Center, compares the teachings of Edgar

Cayce with the Bible. Dr. Swihart deals with the following questions specifically: Does each soul live many lives? Does the soul return time and time again to take on new bodily forms? Does each soul have a thousand faces? Is Jesus Himself just one of many incarnations of the Christ Spirit? Will each of the readers of this book return in another body?

The belief in reincarnation is a part of the tremendous interest in the occult and the supernatural that has characterized recent years. The concept of reincarnation is an old one and has been traditionally associated with Eastern Indian religions. The reincarnation concept, completely foreign to Western Judeo-Christian beliefs, the author claims "has enjoyed increasing acceptance in America, even among those identifying themselves as Christian." The man most responsible for its popularization in America is Edgar Cayce, who claims that through trance-like states he received messages or "Readings" which were then stenographically recorded. The danger for poorly informed Christians has been that Cayce and his devotees have made serious efforts to accommodate Reincarnationism to Christianity, as well as to relate Asian ideas to the Christian nature of God and man.

After the presentation of a bit of history, Swihart compares the various Christian doctrines and the doctrines of the "Readings." The well-informed Christian reader will quickly realize the incompatibility of reincarnation and Christianity.

Raymond F. Surburg

FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN AN ERA OF CHANGE. Edited by Marvin J. Taylor. Abingdon, Nashville, 1976. 288 pages. Paper. \$5.95.

The editor of this symposium on Christian education is Dr. Marvin Taylor, one of the associate directors of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada. This volume has been preceded by a long series of Abingdon publications. *Studies in Religion* appeared in 1931, and this was followed in 1950 by *Orientation in Religious Education*. Under Taylor's editorship there then appeared *Religious Education: A Comprehensive Survey* in 1960 and *An Introduction to Christian Education* in 1966. Ten years later the current volume endeavors to update the whole field for pastors, students, and religious specialists. The statement with which Taylor opened his 1966 volume, "One of the most significant characteristics of the contemporary Christian education movement is change," also holds true for current religious education in the United States and Canada.

In this symposium the reader will find contributions of men and women educators, some of whom are professors at Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Church of Christ, Congregational, and Roman Catholic schools of theology or seminaries. The ecumenical movement is represented by a number of authors. Theologically speaking, the approach of the majority of the contributors is either neo-orthodox or liberal. One of the contributors is affiliated with a conservative seminary. Lutherans will find no article contributed by one of their own. The 21 articles deal with the past, the present, and the future of religious education. Dr. Taylor has supplied a bibliography of books dealing with some phase or other of religious education between 1966 and the present. Books by Lutherans are conspicuous by their absence.

Compared with the previous volumes in this series the reader will find "obvious change is represented in essays dealing with such current topics as education and women, black theology, simulation games, the Third World, and evangelicalism. Other chapters deal with the more traditional subjects, such as

religion, Roman Catholic education and ecumenism, and higher education." In the introduction Taylor correctly notes that, with so many different contributors, this symposium does not set forth a unified educational basis for education, but at best a number of different philosophies of education.

The editor calls the attention of the reader to a shift in terminology that has taken place in the various contributions, one which involves a shift from "Christian education" to "religious education," a term "made standard by the religious education movement in this century." During that span of time when there was a postwar theological renaissance, inspired by neo-orthodoxy, there was an emphasis placed on a distinctly Christian heritage, wherein "certain theological themes assumed a new dominance in the church's educational thinking." Currently there has been a return to the term "religious education," which the symposium's authors use more frequently, indicating a return to the old theological modernism that has taken control of the Department of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches.

The title of this book is *Foundations for Christian Education in an Era of Change*. That change must constantly be faced by the church no person will deny. But not only are we living in a constantly changing world, but unfortunately the theologians are also constantly changing their minds. This practice, in the final analysis, ends up in a frustrating situation where that which the Bible says is unchangeable is subjected to change. Thus uncertainty replaces the teachings that are certain.

Raymond F. Surburg

BIBLICAL APPROACH TO THE MUSLIM. By J. Elder. International Headquarters, Houston, Texas, 1975. 95 pages. Cardboard. \$2.00.

A CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSE TO ISLAM. By William M. Miller. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Nutley, New Jersey, 1976. 178 pages. Paper. \$2.00.

These two volumes dealing with the Christian approach to Islam have many features in common. Both wish to help Christians to be interested and concerned about missionary work to the world of Islam. Those who have labored in the area of Muslim missions know that the response to the Christian message has not been blessed by God with great numerical success. And yet both Elder and Miller, who have given many years of service to missionary endeavors among the devotees of Muhammed's religion, are convinced that the Christian church has the obligation as a part of the Great Commission to try to evangelize among the 450,000,000 followers found in Asia, Africa, America, and the Malayan Archipelago.

The volume by Elder was prepared for Leadership Instruction and Training International, whose headquarters are in Houston, Texas. Elder's volume is specifically designed to be used by would-be missionaries and evangelists to the Muslim world. Its main purpose is to enable one to witness more effectively to Muslims for whom Christ died. The followers of Islam constitute one of the largest groups to reject Jesus Christ. Elder claims that "many Muslims are fanatically anti-Christian, an attitude which stems more from popular feeling during the Crusades than from Muhammed's teachings." Those who wish to do missionary work among Muslims must break down the walls of hatred and misunderstanding which have been erected over the centuries. To work effectively among Muslims, it will be necessary to be acquainted with Muslim beliefs, practices, and misconceptions about the Lord Jesus Christ and Christianity.

Both volumes give a brief history of Islam and present an account of the doctrines and practices of Islam. Both volumes show the inadequacy of

Quranic teachings to meet man's deepest needs. The majority of chapters in Elder's apologetic volume set forth those doctrines in the Quran in which Muhammed's Bible differs from the teachings of the Old and New Testaments (chapters 3-8, pp. 24-88). By contrast, Miller takes up the difficulties as well which the Christian missionary or evangelist faces when dealing with Muslims (chapter 5, pp. 87-106). In chapter 6 of his book Miller, who was a Presbyterian missionary in Iran from 1919 to 1962, shares with his readers some of his successes among Muslims in Iran and Afghanistan. In chapter 7 Miller suggests a methodology for presenting the Gospel to Muslims. Miller's last chapter argues that despite meager results thus far, still it is the duty of the Christian Church to evangelize the Muslim world, leaving the results to God. Miller gives a short two-page bibliography; the book by Elder contains no bibliography. Those interested in missions will find both volumes useful; so will students interested in the study of comparative religions.

Raymond F. Surburg

III. Practical Studies

PASTORAL COUNSELING. By Jay E. Adams. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1976. 155 pages. Paper. \$3.75.

One should not be deceived by the title. This is a book on what Lutherans call Pastoral Theology. Written from an evangelical posture the author stresses the necessity for the Christian pastor truly to exercise in his ministry a care of souls. He goes a long way to refresh the attitudes of the pastor and enables him in a programmatic way to sharpen old skills, while at the same time supplying him with some new ones.

Adams encourages the practice of evangelical discipline within the Christian congregation. He demonstrates the effective application of law and Gospel in a variety of counseling situations. He also suggests techniques and provides a variety of approaches in a number of counseling situations typical of the parish ministry.

The author writes from the presupposition that God in His Word has provided the pastor with all that he needs to shepherd—"counsel"—his flock effectively. He cautions strenuously against an eclectic approach in which the pastor would adapt Rogerian, Freudian, or Skinnerian methodology to the methodology set down in Scripture. He defines this scriptural methodology as "nouthetic," that is, a direct confrontation with and application of Law and Gospel. In his introduction Adams gives his analysis of the Rogerian, Freudian, and Skinnerian schools, pointing out their unscriptural principles and declaring them in method and theory antithetical to Christianity.

Perhaps this reviewer is misreading the author on the following point, but I do not think that we can so glibly dispose of the "professionals" (psychologists and psychiatrists) who deal with, for instance, deviant behavior. In other words, this reviewer believes that there are times when the situation demands operating at a psychological depth requiring a competence beyond that of the average parish pastor. In such cases, in my opinion, referral must be made. Discretion is obviously imperative in the referral process. Know the professional to whom you refer your people.

The parish pastor will find much in this book of practical help and value. Although the book walks on its own feet, it does build on two former publications of the author, *Competent to Counsel* and *The Christian Coun-*

selor's Manual. Since the price of these materials is modest, you may wish to read and use them in conjunction with the book under review.

Norbert H. Mueller

THE IRRITATED OYSTER AND OTHER OBJECT LESSONS FOR CHILDREN. By Harvey D. and Patsie A. Moore. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1976. 79 pages. \$3.95.

The parish pastor is always on the lookout for source material for sermon ideas and insights. This is no less true of what is commonly referred to as a "children's sermon" or "object lesson," which has become an integral part of the worship program in many congregations. Included in this volume are 37 different "object lessons" touching on such subjects as irritations, race relations, faith, resisting temptation, the need for Bible study, and living out what we confess. The material is treated simply, concretely, and succinctly. However, for the evangelical preacher, there are some severe limitations to this book. Although each lesson begins with a scriptural citation, this in no way assures that the material is textual. The authors use a purely topical approach. Even more to be regretted is a complete absence of the *kerygma*. The authors have avoided any gospel thrust. It is even devoid of "implied" gospel (which is no gospel at all). In such presentations as "Dead or Alive," "The Unseen Power," and "Complete Trust" where the renewing power of the redemptive act of Christ seemingly is demanded, the gospel is studiously avoided. Because of this fact the volume consists in little more than moralizing and exhorting to ethical living. The pastor will find a storehouse of ideas here; but if he wants to use this material, he will have to rework it so that it comes out of the gospel orientation typical of Lutheran theology and practice and which must stand at the heart of a Lutheran pastor's preaching and teaching.

Norbert H. Mueller