

CONCORDIA
THEOLOGICAL
QUARTERLY

CTQ

Volume 42 Number 1

JANUARY 1978

| | |
|--|----|
| An Evaluation of the Australian Lutheran "Statement on Homosexuality" Robert W. Schaibley | 1 |
| Observations and Reflections on the Giant Psalm Raymond F. Surburg | 8 |
| Highlights of the Lutheran Reformation in Slovakia David P. Daniel | 21 |
| Theological Observer | 35 |
| Homiletical Studies | 39 |
| Book Reviews | 80 |
| Books Received | 99 |

CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
LEBANON, MO.
FT. KENT, INDIANA



94878

Book Reviews

I. Biblical Studies

TWO TESTAMENTS: ONE BIBLE. By D.L. Baker, Inter-Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois 60515, 1977. 554 pages. Paper. \$7.95.

This volume by D.L. Baker, Secretary of the Tyndale Fellowship of Biblical Research, constitutes Dr. Baker's doctoral dissertation at the University of Sheffield. Its complete title reads: "Two Testaments: One Bible. A study of some modern solutions to the theological problem of the relationship between the Old and New Testaments."

The New Testament contains the account of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, said by the New Testament to be the only person who can save mankind from eternal death. The Christian Church in the last 1875 years has relied very heavily upon the teachings contained in the New Testament. If the New Testament is so important, representing as it does the climax of God's revelation to mankind, does the Christian Church need the Old Testament? What is the relationship of the two testaments to each other?

Today this relationship between the Old and New Testaments is a fundamental problem of Biblical research. Baker notes that in this century there have been published a number of exegetical studies dealing with various aspects of the problem, as well as many general publications treating with the problem as a whole. In his summary on page 5 Baker informs his readers that "it is the concern of this thesis to understand a much-needed analytical and critical study of these modern solutions."

By preliminary research Baker settled on eight different solutions given in the massive literature available in books and journal articles, although not all of the eight he believes are mutually exclusive. In Part I the author has presented the Biblical and historical backgrounds of these eight proposed solutions. After that he subjected each of these to critical scrutiny, analyzing, evaluating and comparing them. In Part II the Old Testament solutions of van Ruler and Miskotte are stated, evaluated and generally rejected "because of undue priority they give to the Old Testament, though creating a certain indecisiveness, leads to an inadequate appreciation of the New Testament's contribution to the relationship." Part III offers the "New Testament" solutions of Bultmann and Baumgaertel, which Baker "reluctantly rejected."

In opposition to many other scholars Baker holds that a satisfactory solution is to take the two Testaments in one Bible and to refuse to yield to the temptation of placing one Testament above the other. Or to assert that one Testament is more important than the other.

Part IV attempts such Biblical solutions, which the author claims constitute the most important part of his dissertation. He deals at length with the Christological approach of the Old Testament by Visscher, which in his opinion has been improperly criticized and which he "rehabilitated" in this study. After a discussion of various views as to the use of typology in the Old and New Testaments, Baker develops his own view and employs it in setting forth the relationship of the New Testament to the Old Testament. Thereafter, the so-called "salvation history" approach of von Rad is given and those of his associates, and their position, with some reservations, is accepted. A discussion of the idea of the tension promoted by continuity and discontinuity, a truth often ignored and not mentioned, concludes this study.

Indexes and a supplementary bibliography have been added. There are 136 pages of bibliographical information, a section of the book which will prove helpful to students studying various aspects of Old Testament theology and religion. While Baker wishes to be comprehensive in his listing of books and articles treating with the various aspects of the interrelationship of the two

testaments to each other, he missed many pertinent articles which are to be found in *The Springfielder* and in *The Concordia Theological Monthly* and earlier Lutheran literature appearing in America. Some articles the author did not see but accepted the interpretation of others. At times Baker is willing to make concessions to higher criticism, which are unfortunate.

Raymond F. Surburg

THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Walter W. Stuenkel. Concordia Publishing House, 1977. 136 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

This book is designed to be a companion volume to *The Books of the New Testament*, edited by Herbert T. Mayer (Concordia 1969). The purpose of Dr. Stuenkel's volume, former president of Concordia College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is to help lay persons to gain a better understanding of the 39 books of the Old Testament. This volume is not geared for professional theologians, but employs nontechnical language to review all 39 books in chronological order and place them in their proper historical context. Stuenkel provides the reader with background material for each book as well as giving an outline for each Old Testament book. If a book has some famous passage or is known for some distinctive features, these are especially mentioned.

It appears that the materials used in this book were part of a course at Concordia, Milwaukee, one of the junior colleges of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, entitled: "The History and Literature of Israel". The book is dedicated to several thousands of students of Concordia College, with whom the author enjoyed the study of the Old Testament from 1953-1976.

Isagogical questions pertaining to Biblical books, whether they be found in the Old Testament or in the New Testament, are answered differently by Biblical scholars, depending on whether or not they accept or reject the presuppositions and conclusions of the historical-critical method. In the LCMS the historical critical method began to be employed beginning about 1955 and thereafter seemed to gather up momentum and within a decade it became the ruling interpretative methodology at St. Louis Seminary till the exodus of February, 1974. It is, therefore, not surprising that the junior colleges and other terminal schools this same methodology was fostered and promoted.

On page 13 Stuenkel takes cognizance of this situation, when he wrote: "For the last several centuries scholarly research has concerned itself far more with authorship and authenticity than the canonicity of Old Testament books. Many arguments advanced in this area have disturbed faithful Christians. They contend that the proposed solutions undermine the authority of God's Word. It should be pointed out also that many assertions of scholars are mere theories or hypotheses or suppositions for which there is no incontrovertible evidence." Stuenkel continues by asserting: "Obviously, this little volume is not designed to discuss in detail all the theories of literary criticism, form criticism, or redaction criticism, but because the Old Testament is especially the object of much of this learned criticism, the issues deserve some brief comment for the benefit of the readers" (p. 13).

In his volume for lay people Stuenkel places side by side the critical views and the traditional ones on given books, without in many cases stating which view is correct. He presents the Four-Source Documentary Hypothesis without showing the untenability of this position for a Bible-believing Christian. The reader can make up his mind which of the two divergent views he accepts. In citing evidence for Mosaic authorship as found in the New Testament he failed to cite the most conclusive passage for Mosaic authorship, namely John 5:46: "For if you believed Moses you would believe me also, for he wrote of me. And if you do not believe *his writings*, how will you ever believe me."

In connection with the discussion on Isaiah, again both the conservative and Biblical views are presented together with the higher critical. Arguments pro

and con are given and again the reader is left the impression that he may choose the position that may strike him as plausible. Thus Stuenkel wrote: "Regardless of conjectural theories of authorship, the entire Book of Isaiah is inspired by the Holy Spirit and, therefore, totally God's Word of truth for all time. The New Testament quotes Isaiah by name some twenty times and these quotations refer to both sections" (p. 80). If the New Testament designates passages from Isaiah 40-66 as having been written by Isaiah, how can a Christian scholar then not necessarily reject the critical position that denies to Isaiah the entire Book? On the Book of Daniel both the critical and conservative arguments, which are significantly different, are given and then the reader is told: "For a thorough discussion of arguments supporting either the earlier or the later view of the time of writing, the reader is referred to the pertinent books in the bibliography" (p. 95). But the author takes no stand, thus giving the impression again that either view is acceptable. The same procedure is followed in the discussion of the Book of Esther. Arguments for and against the historicity of the book are presented with the reader permitted to accept which ever view appeals to him.

A good feature of Stuenkel's book is his setting forth of the Messianic character of the Old Testament. Appendices II and III give an overview of Old Testament Messianic prophecy (II) while in III he lists those Old Testament passages which were predictive of the Messiah together with their New Testament fulfillment. Over against the critical position he states that "Malachi stands on the threshold of four hundred years of prophetic silence between the Old and New Testament revelations." Critical scholarship holds that a considerable number of books were written between 400 and 100 B.C.

Raymond F. Surburg

A READER'S HEBREW ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Ferris L. McDaniel. Published by the Author, Dallas, Texas. 125 pages. Paper. \$3.50.

The purpose of this volume is to help students to read the Old Testament by providing them with an aid that takes care of words that occur ten or less times in the Old Testament. McDaniel's lexicographical effort was not designed to replace the standard dictionary of Koehler-Baumgaertner or that of Brown, Driver and Briggs, lexica not easily displaced. Often students of the Hebrew Old Testament are discouraged from reading many of its books because of the occurrence of numerous unfamiliar words. "This reader's lexicon is a pragmatic solution to the problem in that it provides quickly the definitions to many of these words"—is the reason for the publication of this linguistic help.

Words that occur ten or less times, as determined by Lisowsky's *Konkordanz zum Hebraeischen Alten Testament* (Stuttgart: Wuertembergische Bibelanstalt, 1958) were listed alphabetically by chapter for each Biblical book. This count was checked against Brown, Driver and Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907). The definitions were taken from the same lexicon and checked against Koehler and Baumgaertner. McDaniel states that "where these lexicons differ significantly, both definitions are provided. An attempt has been made to provide the definition which fits the context of the passage as expressed in these lexicons. In the case of verbs, the definition attempts to give the meaning of the stem involved. Where the definition is not certain or where the problems are involved, the definition(s) are followed by the sign (?). These will deserve special attention on the part of the reader.

McDaniel's vocabulary guide thus supplements vocabularies like that of Landes who stops his listing with vocables which occur between 24-10 times. (Cf. his *A Student Vocabulary of Biblical Hebrew, Listed According to Frequency and Cognitive*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961, pp. 39-

41; or that J. Barton Payne, *Hebrew Vocabularies*, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1956, pp. 4-6 (verbs), 11-15 (nouns).

Raymond F. Surburg

A CHRONOLOGY OF THE HEBREW KINGS. By Edwin R. Thiele. Zondervan Publishing House, 1977. 93 pages. \$2.95.

Chronology plays an important part in the presentation of Biblical history. Without chronology history cannot properly be understood; in fact, it is the backbone of history. Not only in the historical books is chronology important, but there are chronological references in the prophetic writings, in the four Gospels, and in the epistles of the New Testament.

The chronological problems connected with the period of the Divided Monarchy in the Old Testament have defied solution for over 2,000 years. Some forty years ago a former missionary to China and later a professor in the department of religion at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, decided to tackle this thorny problem. In connection with his doctoral studies at the University of Chicago he did research on this problem. The results of his study were published as "The Chronology of the Kings of Judah and Israel" in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, July, 1944. The same dates given in this journal article were set forth in Thiele's book, *Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, 1st ed., University of Chicago Press, 1951. A revision of the 1951 book was published under the same title by Eerdmans in 1965.

A perusal of books dealing with the Old Testament whether they be books of introduction, commentaries, Bible dictionaries, histories of Old Testament times reveals a plethora of different dates given for the same kings or historical events. For the average reader this is extremely confusing. Many scholars have tried to synchronize the data of the kings of Israel and Judah and have been unable to do so, and as a result concluded that the Biblical records are replete with errors and not trustworthy.

In his preface Dr. Thiele writes:

So intricate and perplexing are the chronological problems of the Hebrew kings that many of the most careful Bible students have come to regard them as beyond solution. When I first began to give attention to the difficulties involved, I had serious doubts as to whether a solution could ever be reached. Today I believe the problem to be basically solved and in the following pages the solution will be followed (p. 8).

This rather short volume, when compared with the two editions of his *Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, represents the distillation of four decades of research and publication. The Zondervan publication, one of the latter's *Contemporary Evangelical Perspectives* volumes, is designed not only for the specialist in the Biblical field but is also meant for laymen who desire to understand the Bible better. Thiele hopes that this volume will help those whose problems with Old Testament chronology was instrumental in causing them to question the veracity of the Word of God.

In setting forth his results, Thiele has given extensive diagrams, charts, and tables. A glossary of technical terms as well as an index of Bible passages referred to and discussed further enhances this study.

Raymond F. Surburg

UNDERSTAND. A STRAIGHTFORWARD APPROACH TO INTERPRETING THE BIBLE. By Walter Heinrichsen. Navpress, A Ministry of the Navigators, Colorado Springs, Colo, 1976. 107 pages. Paper. \$1.95.

Frank E. Gaebelein, cited by Robert D. Foster in his foreword, has aptly said:

Christianity is peculiarly a religion of a single book. Take away the Bible and you have destroyed the means by which God chose to present through

successive stages His revelation to man. It follows, then, that knowledge of the Bible is an indispensable prerequisite for growth in the Christian life.

Although the Bible is vital for learning how to be saved and how to live a God-pleasing life, the Bible is not easily understood in many of its portions. At the present time we are living in a world of biblical illiterates who are not only ignorant of the teachings of the Word of God, but also do not know how to proceed in ascertaining its teachings and saving truths. Henrichsen published this book to help the average layperson to understand the Bible. In the opening chapter he defends the proposition that the Bible is for everybody. In chapters 2-5, he has given 24 rules with a half dozen or so corollaries; these 24 basic principles of interpretation he has grouped under four major categories: 1. General principles of interpretation; 2. Grammatical principles of interpretation; 3. Historical principles of interpretation; and 4. Theological principles of interpretation.

One thing may be said for certain. These rules represent the old hermeneutic and have nothing in common with the radical character of the so-called new hermeneutic. This volume could profitably be used by pastors with Sunday School teachers' instructional meetings or in a Bible class. Some statements the orthodox Lutheran pastor will challenge. A number of times examples will be given from the Scripture and the reader will be asked: "how would you understand this passage as you apply this rule of interpretation?" He appears to do this where there are serious denominational differences and inasmuch this book is intended for different Protestant groups, this appears to be a way out of the dilemma.

On the last page of this interpretative tool Henrichsen correctly warned: "In seeking to apply these rules you must remember that there is a difference between the rules being biblically correct, and using them properly. A hammer is the correct tool to drive in a nail, but using hammer does not guarantee that you won't bend the nail. As you apply these rules of interpretation to your Bible study you are not guaranteed a correct interpretation at every try. You will make mistakes. But hopefully proficiency and accuracy will come with faithful practice."

A pastor can help his people greatly by giving such a basic course in biblical interpretation and by supervising the work of those with whom he undertakes such a worthwhile endeavor.

Raymond F. Surburg

GOOD NEWS FOR MODERN MAN. HOW TO USE THE GOOD NEWS BIBLE. By Eugene A. Nida. Word Book Publishers, Waco, Texas, 1976. 119 pages. Paper. \$3.25.

In the early part of 1977 the American Bible Society published the Old Testament counterpart of the *Good News For Modern Man*, available in the New Testament only till recently, but now the 66 books of both Testaments have been published and will be disseminated in millions of copies. This version is also known by the name, *Today's English Version* (TEV).

Good News for Modern Man, How To Use the Good News Bible was written by Dr. Nida, internationally respected scholar and translation expert. This book is a companion volume to *The Good News Bible*. The publishers believe that the use of Nida's help will enable the readers of the TEV Bible to understand the new translation better, irrespective whether it is the King James, the Revised Standard Version, the New English Bible, The Living Bible or any other Bible translation read or consulted.

There is no doubt that in this volume, which records the story how the Good News Bible came to be, Nida exposes difficulties other translations have had to face over the years; he points out problem passages, geographic ambiguities, words which lost their meaning, variations among manuscripts which showed

the need for a translation in understandable English. Many readers are not aware of the various helps which were incorporated in this new translation and, therefore, Nida shows how to use the following helps: section headings, parallel passages references, the word list, the index-concordance, with its list of data on important persons, events and themes of the Bible, the chronological table, historical maps, illustration by Annie Valerie, who provided such dynamic art for *Good News for Modern Man*.

In Chapter 4, Nida informs his readers how it happened that *Good News for Modern Man* came into being. The New Testament portion was translated by Dr. Robert G. Bratcher, once a Protestant missionary to Brazil. This English version was a tremendous success from the moment of its publication. The demand for *Good News for Modern Man* (New Testament)) led to a demand for a similar rendering of the Old Testament, following the same principles of translation as had been used in rendering the Greek New Testament into twentieth-century English.

In September, 1967, work was begun on the Old Testament. The personnel of the Old Testament committee consisted of the following: Dr. Bratcher, chairman of the committee, Dr. Roger A. Bullard, Dr. Keith R. Crim, Dr. Herbert G. Grether, Dr. Barclay M. Newman, Dr. Herbert F. Peacock, and Dr. John A. Thompson and for the British and Foreign Bible Society the Reverend Brynner F. Price. These scholars, a number had been missionaries, in producing the basic draft of the O.T. (called "stage 1") in the translation process had to face three phases of work: (1) deciding upon the text of the Hebrew (or Aramaic for some chapters in Ezra and Daniel), (2) determining the meaning, and (3) expressing this meaning accurately on a common-language level. It would be impossible, claims Nida, to list the many problems faced by the translators.

Future scholars will want to have opportunity to evaluate the Hebrew and Aramaic texts which serve as the basis for the O.T. part of *Good News for Modern Man*. That this newest of all Biblical translations can be beneficially utilized by scholars this reviewer does not question. That in their approach to Biblical studies a number of the translators were affected by a critical approach to the Bible this reviewer also believes was the case. Thus in the Hebrew Old Testament in the Book of Psalms over 100 psalms have superscriptions, which both the King James Version and The Revised Standard Version have not omitted but translated. In the Hebrew printed text they are always the first verse of the psalm. But the TEV, like *The New English Bible*, omits them. That reflects a higher critical bias. In Proverbs the translator (or translators) adopted the theory that Prov. 22:17-24:22 was influenced by the Egyptian work of The Wisdom of Amenemope. The Hebrew adopter of this material is supposed to have taken thirty sayings from the thirty Houses (i.e. "chapters") comprising this Egyptian wisdom book. The truth is that the consonantal letters in Hebrew, translated as "thirty," can also be rendered in three other ways. The caption over 21:17: "The Thirty Wise Sayings" is an interpretation that does not correctly reflect the teaching of 22:19. The word *almah*, always meaning "virgin" in the passages where it occurs in the Hebrew Old Testament, is rendered "young woman" in Isaiah 7:14, which contradicts Matthew 1:23.

Good News for Modern Man uses the principle that the translator must render his translation in English or the target language in such a way that the reader believes the original Bible was written in his own language. Dr. Nida is an advocate of what he calls "dynamic equivalence." This is good and sound if the translator has correctly grasped the meaning of the text. However, if he fails, then the rendering in the target language is not actually what God has revealed in his Word. If the translator has correctly understood the original text, rendering it in a non-literal or paraphrastic way may be all right, but there are instances where the translators have failed to do this.

Nida's book will be a great help in showing American and English readers how to better appreciate the distinctive features of one of the newest and popular English versions.

Raymond F. Surburg

BACKGROUNDS TO DISPENSATIONALISM. By Clarence B. Bass. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1977. 184 pages. Paper. \$3.95.

This is a part of a series of previously published books (about 40 volumes) which are out of print and which were books that were adjudged significant and as valuable contributions to the four areas of theology: the exegetical, dogmatical, historical and practical.

Bass' book was originally published by Eerdmans in 1960. Clarence Bass, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Bethel Theological School of St. Paul, was trained in the dispensational system, but left it when he began to understand the foundations on which the dispensational framework are constructed. Bass in a scholarly manner treats of the historical genesis and the ecclesiastical implications of dispensationalism.

The theses proposed, supported and proved by Bass are the following: 1) dispensationalism is not a part of the historic faith of the Christian Church; 2) It is not the only premillennial view, since there was a historic premillennial interpretation for eighteen hundred years before the formulation of dispensationalism; 3) Dispensationalism rests upon a faulty hermeneutical system.

Bass claims that historic premillennialism, dispensationalism, and amillennialism hold this truth in common that there will be a visible earthly return of Christ in the future. "Having this central truth in common, adherents to all these three views should be able to have fellowship in love and tolerance. Eschatological interpretations may differ, and should be debated sharply to find the truly biblical principle, but should not be made a test of fellowship." (p. 155) Bass is convinced that dispensationalism is wrong! How then can a believer claim that a wrong system of Biblical interpretation may be countenanced, when it affects a number of different Biblical doctrines?

Lutherans would also disagree with Bass' view that historic millennialism is the correct New Testament teaching. Revelation 20:1-10 is misunderstood and misinterpreted by premillennialism. Bass' work is useful in seeing the dependence of dispensationalism on Scofield and in turn Darby's influence on Scofield.

Raymond F. Surburg

THE BLESSED HOPE AND THE TRIBULATION. By John F. Walvoord. Zondervan Publishing House, 1976. 174 pages. Paper. \$3.95.

In this book Dr. John F. Walvoord, the President of Dallas Theological Seminary, examines the posttribulationist viewpoint and contrasts it with the pretribulationist. To completely follow the argumentation of the author, the reader should have to have read his book on *The Rapture Question* published in 1957. The subject matter of post- and pretribulationism is an aspect of eschatology. The president of Dallas Seminary contends that post-tribulationism is wrong on exegetical and hermeneutical grounds. The big issue of this apologia of the event relating to the Second Coming of Christ is the question: Does the rapture of the church precede or follow the Great Tribulation?

It is the author's contention that there are four schools of thought within posttribulationism and Walvoord purports to challenge those scholars who do not share his interpretation of the Bible point for point. It is his conviction that pretribulationism affords the most Scriptural and logical understanding of the Christian's assurance of the "blessed hope."

Historic Lutheranism and historic Calvinism both reject the basic her-

meneutical position of Walvoord's school of dispensationalism, premillennialism and his literalistic interpretation of Biblical prophecy. The system of Scofield, which has exercised such a tremendous influence through the Old and New Editions of *The Scofield Reference Bible* (1909, 1917, 1967) affects the interpretation of the Old Testament, the Gospels, the parables, the Book of Acts, the Pauline Epistles, the General Epistles, the Book of Revelation and a number of Christian doctrines. Those readers who wish to see how complex the doctrine of Christ's Second Coming can become should read this volume.

Raymond F. Surburg

THE MEN BEHIND THE KING JAMES VERSION. By Gustavus S. Paine. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1977. 212 pages. Paper. \$3.95.

This is a paperback version, formerly published under the title, *The Learned Men* (Thomas Y. Crowell Co.) in 1959 by Diana B. Paine and Bela Paine. The purpose of this book is to help students and Bible readers to know more about the men who made the King James Bible and about their work with it. Paine traces the history of the events as to how the 54 or more men were chosen to revise the English Bible from 1604 to 1611.

Thirteen chapters of this fifteen-chapter book are devoted to tracing and portraying the events which led up to the decision to revise the Bible till its final printing in 1611. Questions the author answers are such as these: Were the translators happy in their labor? Did they live with success after their work was completed? What is the difference between the Authorized Version and those which preceded it, such as the Geneva Bible, Bishops' Bible, Coverdale Bible, the contemporary Roman Catholic Douay, and later the Revised Standard Version? Since the King James Version was a group effort, was it better than a translation made by one person?

In recent years there has been a tendency no longer to read the KJV. H.L. Mencken, not known as a friend of Bible and religion, wrote about the Bible translated in Elizabethan English as follows:

It is the most beautiful of all the translations of the Bible; indeed, it is probably the most beautiful piece of writing in all the literature of the world. Many attempts have been made to purge it of its errors and obscurities. An English Version was published in 1885 and an American Revised Version in 1901, and since then many learned but misguided men have sought to produce translations that should be mathematically accurate, and in the plain speech of everyday yielded to any of them, for it is palpably and overwhelmingly better than they are, just as it is better than the Greek New Testament, or the Vulgate, or the Septuagint. Its English is extraordinarily simple, pure, eloquent, and lovely. It is a mine of lordly and incomparable poetry, at once the most stirring and the most touching ever heard of.

Three different groups of scholars: the Westminster group, the Cambridge group, and the Oxford group contributed to this remarkable translation. At least fifty men were involved, whose contributions can now be better understood since Paine's discovery of the Bois notes, which were made by one of the editors and never previously discussed.

Only in this volume can students of the KJV find material pertaining to all its major contributors: Puritans John Rainolds and Laurence Chaderton; Miles Smith, the author of the seldom-printed Preface to the Reader and the final editor; devout Lancelot Andrews, the then famous Dean of Westminster; Bishops Bancroft, Bilson, Abbot and others.

The author expresses the hope that reading about these stalwarts of over 370 years ago as they endeavored to put the Bible into the best language of their day, so present users of the Bible will experience the urge anew "to revise the phrases in any way you please, and then compare your wordings with what we have so long deemed our standard Scriptures. Thus you may keep the Bible

alive for yourself, really be active as you read and study it, and be at one with the learned men, those common people who gave us their splendid best." (pp. viii, ix)

Raymond F. Surburg

THE NEW TESTAMENT. AN INTRODUCTION TO ITS LITERATURE AND HISTORY. By J. Gresham Machen. Edited by W. John Cook. Banner of Truth, Edinburgh, Scotland, and Carlisle, Pa., 1976. 387 pages. Cloth. \$8.95.

This writing of J. Gresham Machen is a popular work in the best sense. It is designed for both private and group study. In plain yet graphic fashion the former Princeton Theological Seminary and later Westminster Theological Seminary professor, has set forth the New Testament's message and history. Those individuals embarking on a study of the New Testament will find this work an excellent introduction; even mature students will discover this writing of Machen to be stimulating and penetrating in setting forth the essential facts of the history and literature of the New Testament's twenty seven books.

By 1930 Dr. Machen was recognized as one of the leading scholars of conservative New Testament theology. Machen is better known for such volumes as *The Origin of Paul's Religion, Christianity and Liberalism, The Virgin Birth of Christ, The Christian View of Man*. The publishers believe that the books just enumerated will continue to be consulted and "that the abiding value of his Introduction may well prove to be his most influential work in the last quarter of the present century."

Machen was totally unsympathetic with all forms of radical criticism. When differences are discussed they relate only to such issues where Bible-believing scholars may legitimately entertain differences of opinion. The book written for the general lay Christian avoids all footnotes as well as references to other scholarly works.

Machen favors the North Galatian theory relative to the question as to when Galatians was penned over against the South Galatian theory. The Captivity Epistles of Paul, Philippians, Philemon, Ephesians and Colossians, according to Machen, come from Paul's First Roman Imprisonment. The Two-Source and Four-Source hypotheses as views setting forth the relationship of the synoptic Gospels are never mentioned and not seriously considered as options.

The writing of this New Testament Introduction is characterized by clarity of thought, depth of scholarship and an evident passion for explicating the message of the New Testament.

Raymond F. Surburg

THE NEW TESTAMENT: AN INTRODUCTION. Edited by Norman Perrin. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1974, 385 pp.

In Res. 3-11 of the Dallas Convention the Missouri Synod went on record as rejecting and repudiating "any view of the Bible and method of interpreting it which relates history to the production of the sacred writings in such a way as to diminish their 'not of this world' character and to deprive them of their divine authority." Anyone who might wonder why the Synod took this position against the historical-critical method of Bible interpretation should really read Perrin's *The New Testament: An Introduction*. In this book the author of *What Is Redaction Criticism?*—published a few years ago by Fortress Press as part of their series of *Guides to Biblical Scholarship*—applies historical-critical methodology to the entire New Testament. A person who is interested in knowing how far New Testament scholarship has departed from the traditional view under the influence of form and redaction criticism would do well to read this book.

In the first chapter the author gives an overview of his way of looking at the New Testament. He admits that he has been influenced by Bultmann's ap-

proach to Jesus. For him "the New Testament is a fascinating blend of history and myth" (p. 1). The material found in the synoptic Gospels "reflects the teaching, understanding, and concerns of early Christian communities, and much of it was in fact created by the prophets and scribes in those communities" (p. 5). He says that the Gospels were not written by eyewitnesses of the ministry of Jesus. Paul did not write 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Ephesians and the Pastoral Epistles. Also 1 & 2 Peter, James and Jude are pseudonymous writings. The Gospel of John, the Epistles and Revelation were not written by the Apostle John but rather by various different men. Except for the seven letters that Paul wrote, all of the New Testament was written somewhere between A.D. 70 and 140. In regard to the Gospels he maintains that "form critics have been able to show that the sayings and stories in the synoptic gospels have a long history of transmission in the history of the church, during which they have changed and developed in all kinds of ways" (p. 12).

In discussing the nature of the New Testament, Perrin maintains that there are marked differences in the theology of the various books, for the authors "develop their understanding of the nature and meaning of Christianity differently" (p. 18). He reveals his existentialist point of understanding life by supporting the views of Strauss and Bultmann. He says that "the story of the resurrection of Jesus is myth, a crassly human story about the resuscitation of a corpse and its eventual elevation to a region above the earth via the clouds as a kind of celestial elevator. But the reality so described is the spiritual presence of Jesus in the kerygma, the proclamation of the church" (p. 22). By responding to this myth of the resurrection in the kerygma, man can achieve the reality of authentic existence. While he admits that there is history in the New Testament, for it is about a man who lived and taught, suffered and died in Palestine, yet for him "the New Testament interweaves myth and history" (p. 27). Thus, for example, he considers the narrative of the last Passover meal and the institution of the Lord's Supper "a product of the piety of early Christianity" (p. 30). He says that "a fundamental aspect of the New Testament texts is that they are in no small part the end product of a long and constant process of interpretation and reinterpretation" (p. 34).

In chapters 3 and 4 Perrin surveys what he considers the theological development of early Christianity. He believes that "the Christian Church began as sect within ancient Judaism" (p. 42). Jesus Himself had simply proclaimed the coming of the Kingdom of God, that is the "imminence of the interruption of God in history to judge and to renew, and to destroy and to remake" (p. 42). The source "Q" represents this early Palestinian Christianity. It proclaims the imminent coming of Jesus from heaven. As this did not occur, the Christians had to adjust and reinterpret their beliefs. Apocalyptic Christianity was challenged by a more Hellenistic form of Christianity, yet we see a resurgence of the earlier form in the Gospel of Mark and in Revelation.

Chapters 5-11 are an overview of the books of the New Testament interpreted according to the various "schools" of Christianity which they supposedly represent. The author believes that Paul did have a vision of Christ on the Damascus road and that he understood this as a resurrection experience (p. 94). It was Paul who developed the doctrine of justification. He was no doubt put to death at the time of his first Roman imprisonment. Perrin believes that the author of Luke-Acts has taken liberties with historical events to make them fit his purposes (p. 199). Thus the speeches of Paul, Peter and Stephen are not summaries of what they actually said but rather are simply examples of Hellenistic Jewish Christian mission preaching (p. 196). Luke-Acts has a different Christology than Mark (p. 217). "The Jesus of the Gospel of Luke is the first Christian, living out of the power of the spirit of God in the world. He is not the Jewish Messiah whose death ransoms men from the power of sin over them" (p. 218). He is rather the primary example to be imitated. Perrin

claims that the Fourth Gospel has been redacted from an original text (p. 223). It was written somewhere in the Hellenistic world. "The gospel and letters of John are not the product of an individual but of a 'school'" (p. 249).

In the final chapter Perrin deals with Jesus as the heart of the New Testament. Once again he emphasizes the fact that the outline we have of the life of Christ in Mark—or for that matter in any of the Gospels—is theological and so has no historical value. He says that "the most that can be argued for the gospel outlines is that some aspects of the story they tell have an element of inherent historical probability" (p. 279). Yet very few facts about Jesus' life can actually be established as historical reality. However, by using certain criteria for authenticity, more can be known about the message of Jesus than about His life. He summarizes what can be known for sure about the life of Jesus in less than one page! That summary, incidentally, contains nothing about His birth, His miracles or His resurrection! Jesus' teachings are summarized under the proclamation of the Kingdom of God, His parables, the proverbial sayings He spoke, the Lord's Prayer and what He said about the future. Many of these teachings of His were reinterpreted by the early Church to fit its needs. Thus Jesus Himself never claimed that He was the Messiah (p. 301). Furthermore, Perrin maintains that "we simply do not know how Jesus thought about his own death" (p. 301). In fact, he says that "the historical details of the movement from the Jesus who proclaimed the Kingdom of God to the New Testament and its various proclamations of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, are probably forever lost to us" (p. 302).

The book closes with five appendixes that contain some very useful information about the Hellenistic world in New Testament times, the history of the Jews before and during the time of Christ, the development of the canon of the Bible, the text of the New Testament and the various English translations of the Greek New Testament.

The New Testament: An Introduction by Norman Perrin is a good example of where New Testament studies are today as a result of historical-critical methodology. It should help one to see clearly the wide gap that exists between the conclusions reached by the historical-grammatical method which has been used since the days of the Reformation and the historical-critical method as it is practiced in many areas of the Christian Church today. Even though the claim is often made that the method used today is different from the destructive higher criticism that came out of the Enlightenment, it is obvious from this book that very little of the New Testament is left as authentic and historical by those who follow the approach of Norman Perrin. What does remain are various theologies—often in conflict with one another—that are supposed to reflect the faith of the Christians in the first 100 years after the death of Jesus. This, of course, is the general conclusion reached by those who use historical-critical methodology in interpreting the New Testament.

Norman Wangerin
Concordia College, Milwaukee

CHRONOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST. By Harold W. Hoehner. Zondervan Publishing House, 1977. 176 pages. Paper. \$3.95.

The purpose of this book is not to discuss the life of Christ but to establish certain fixed dates in the Savior's life. There has been a considerable divergence of opinion on the part of scholars as they have attempted to establish a framework for the life of Christ. In the past there has been vagueness about dates in our Lord's life. Reasons for this situation are stated by Dr. Hoehner as follows: First, "there is not a series of concrete dates given in the Gospels." Gospel writers were more interested in recording the facts of the events and words of Christ than to give a record of when they occurred. Second, "since there are great differences of opinion among scholars concerning each of these events given in this book there is a tendency to abandon the

effort rather than attempt to see if one can make sense with the date of each event as well as seeing if they can make a sensible chronological scheme from all events." (p. 9).

The various chapters first appeared as contributions to *Bibliotheca Sacra* in the years 1973, 1974, 1975. In this six-chapter book, the first five treat the following key dates: Ch. 1 "The Date of Christ's Birth;" Ch. 2 "The Commencement of Christ's Ministry;" Ch. 3 "The Duration of Christ's Ministry;" Ch. 4 "The Day of Christ's Crucifixion;" and Ch. 5 "The Year of Christ's Crucifixion."

Important dates for Christ's life are Jesus' birth in the winter of 5/4 B.C., shortly before Herod's death. Hoehner places the 12 year old Christ in the temple at the passover April 29, A.D. 9. The beginning of John the Baptist's ministry is put in A.D. 29 and the beginning of Christ's ministry, summer/autumn A.D. 29. Hoehner also postulates four passovers attended by Christ: the first (John 2:13), April 8, A.D. 30; the second, April 25, A.D. 31; the third (John 6:4) April 13/14 A.D. 33. According to Hoehner's computation the last week in Christ's earthly life was March 28—April 5, A.D. 33. The triumphal entry is put on Monday, March 30. On April 2, A.D. 33, Jesus ate the passover, was betrayed, arrested and tried. On Friday, April 3, Christ was tried and crucified and laid in the tomb. Christ's resurrection is given as Sunday, April 5. Christ's ascension occurred on Thursday, May 14, A.D. 33. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost took place on Sunday, May 24, A.D. 33.

Not all scholars will agree with Hoehner's interpretation of Daniel's Seventy Weeks as given on the chart on page 139, where the seventy weeks are worked out according to a dispensational system of hermeneutics. Keil, Leupold, Payne and Young are some of the scholars who differ with Hoehner's understanding of Daniel 9:25-27.

A sixteen page bibliography will be found extremely useful for a study of Christ's life chronology. The discussion cannot but lead to a greater appreciation of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, a wish with which this excellent volume ends.

Raymond F. Surburg

CAN WE TRUST THE NEW TESTAMENT? By John A.T. Robinson. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977. 142 pages. Paper. \$1.95.

This volume is by the author of *Honest to God*, a diatribe in favor of theological liberalism. Last year (1976) Dr. Robinson dropped another bombshell into the theological world by a rather scholarly book, entitled, *Redating the New Testament*. In the latter volume the now dean of Trinity College, Cambridge enunciated views of New Testament isagogics which were very conservative and which constituted a serious attack on a number of the cherished positions of what Robinson called Critical Orthodoxy. While the more liberal New Testament scholars of today believe that the books of the New Testament as a collection were not available before A.D. 150, Robinson argues that the 27 books were in existence by A.D. 70. The Gospel of John, usually dated as coming from A.D. 100 and not written by an Apostle, is said to be apostolic and written by A.D. 70. He places John's Gospel between A.D. 50-55, 2 and 3 John and 1 John between 60-65. The two Epistles of Peter are assigned to A.D. 61-62. The Book of Acts was written by A.D. 62 and the Pastoral Epistles are assigned prior to Paul's death.

These views are very startling and in some respects represent views held by fundamentalists and by Christian scholars before the appearance of Biblical criticism with its disturbing views in the 19th and 20th centuries. However, if any reader of *Redating the New Testament* thinks that Bishop Robinson has espoused a different theology since the publication of *Honest to God*, the

bishop's latest literary creation will reveal that his liberalism is the same as it was over a decade ago.

CAN WE TRUST THE NEW TESTAMENT?, following *Redating the New Testament*, might have given the impression that the trustworthiness of the New Testament writings as the Word of God was being defended. Anyone who expects to find such a defense will be in for the shock of his life. The miracles of Christ are not accepted, the Virgin Birth is not true, the bodily resurrection of Christ is denied. In the New Testament he claims a distinction must be made between what is fact and what is interpretation. Facts are true and taken seriously, but theological interpretation (including anything smacking of the supernatural) can be allegorized and explained in a manner palatable to human reason. While in his own way Robinson claims that the New Testament is trustworthy, yet by following his types of the historical-critical method nothing but doubt and uncertainty remain as the residue remaining after Robinson's filtering process. This book supports a form of unitarian theology by his elimination of the deity of Jesus Christ.

Raymond F. Surburg

II. Theological-Historical Studies

I BELIEVE IN REVELATION. By Leon Morris. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976. 159 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

This volume by the Principal of Riddley College, Melbourne, Australia is the third book in a series known as *I BELIEVE*, edited by Michael Green. Previous volumes dealt with belief in the Holy Spirit by Michael Green and *The Resurrection of Christ* by George E. Ladd.

The *I BELIEVE* series is intended to take a new look at controversial areas of the Christian faith. The contributors are to be "from different nations, cultures, and confessional backgrounds, all anchor their work in the Bible."

The meaning of revelation has been a subject under discussion and debate ever since the coming of rationalism as a major disconcerting movement of modern church history.

In nine chapters Morris treats the subject of revelation from every conceivable angle. By revelation Morris would mean that teaching that the Triune God has made himself known "through the beauty and order of his creation, the message of the Bible, and climactically, through his Son."

Principal Morris sets out to counter the trend which has rejected or watered down the Bible's teaching about "general" or "special revelation." Morris is abreast of the latest scholarship as it is reflected in books written in English, most of which are published in Great Britain. The only Lutheran contribution to this subject is represented by Dr. J.A.O. Preus' volume, *It is Written* (Concordia, 1971).

This is a discussion of revelation which liberal and neo-orthodox theologians will not appreciate and to which they would raise serious objections. Conservatives will concur with most of Morris' judgments and evaluations.

Raymond F. Surburg

JEWISH PHILOSOPHICAL POLEMICS AGAINST CHRISTIANITY IN THE MIDDLE AGES. By Daniel J. Lasker. Ktav Publishing House Inc., New York, 1977. Cloth. 286 pages. \$17.50.

The resolution of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod at the 1977 Dallas Convention urging concentrated efforts in the conversion of the Jews received a wider press than generally earned by evangelism resolutions. In fact few could remember a comparable evangelism resolution of any kind having been

recently adopted by any other major Christian body. Caught up in the guilt of post-World War II Germany, most Christian bodies have been devoting their efforts to understanding the Jews instead of converting them. The published Brandeis University doctoral dissertation analyzing Jewish polemics against Christianity could not have come at a more appropriate time. This is not the time to open old wounds and new hostilities between Jewish and Christian communities, but Christians should understand there are basic differences between them and Jews. Most Protestants probably look upon themselves as Gentile unitarians and Jews as Semitic ones. Jews like Christians fall into religious and cultural groups. Preaching the Gospel to a cultural Jew involves an appreciation of his unique heritage, but to a religious Jew an understanding of Jewish ideas of Christianity is absolutely necessary.

During the first half of the second millenium, Jewish polemics against Christianity received their classical formulations. As this understanding has not developed noticeably into our present age, the religious Jew is still looking at Christianity from the same perspective. Professor Lasker's quite readable dissertation will let Christians share in this perspective. Before zeroing in on the four Christian doctrines of Trinity, Incarnation, Transubstantiation, and Virgin Birth, Dr. Lasker sets forth the philosophical framework of the Middle Ages. In the use of reason Jews and Christians were closer than in their understanding of Biblical interpretation and history. Analysis of the philosophical debate between the two groups is found by Lasker to be more profitable than an analysis of Biblical and historical ones.

In reading through this totally fascinating study, three thoughts continually crossed this reviewer's mind. (1) Various Jewish arguments of logic against Christianity were in fact not those of logic but of philosophy. (2) Many Jewish understandings of God surface again in the Calvinistic discussions of Christ and the Lord's Supper. (3) The Jewish polemicists failed to understand the Christian position and instead dealt with caricatures. Moses Mendelssohn found the suffering of the second person of the Deity as against "reason and cogitation" (p. 38). Christianity does not teach that the Deity actually has human emotions as Jewish polemicists held. The impassibility of the Deity is a revealed doctrine and not one which arises from logic. The Jewish application of the Aristotelian argument against the incarnation that only one object and not two can occupy a given space reminds Lutherans of the Calvinists' arguments against the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper. Lutherans have reminded Calvinists that their understanding of the Lord's Supper logically leads to a denial of the incarnation.

If Lutheran pastors are going to take seriously the Synod's directives for the evangelism of the Jews, then the time has also come for learning the Jewish mindset. Lasker has filled in the gap for us. It is difficult to imagine that any pastor working in a community with a good proportion of Jewish people can afford not to obtain this study. The price of \$17.50 is a little steep, but perhaps the cost can be covered by the budget of the evangelism committee.

dps

CHRISTIANS AND JEWS. Edited by Hans Kueng and Walter Kasper. The Seabury Press, New York, 1975. 93 pages. Paper. \$4.95.

This is a part of the Roman Catholic Series, *The New Concilium, Religion in the Seventies*. New Series: Volume 8, Number 10: Ecumenism. In this Roman Catholic-sponsored volume six Christian and six Jewish scholars engage in dialogue about Christianity and Judaism. The editorial, which begins this work, was written by Hans Kueng and Walter Kasper. The latter assert: "Jews and Christians rarely meet on a religious footing, and seldom engage in theological discussion with one another, despite the declaration of Vatican II on the Jews and the corresponding pronouncement of the World Council of

Churches. There is still a considerable amount of hidden mistrust on both sides and, above all among Christians, a great deal of ignorance."

This section of Concilium is designed to help both Jews and Christians to speak to each other and to relate to each other's theological views and beliefs. The men who were invited to participate among the Jews were: Louis Jacobs, a Rabbi of the New London Synagogue, London, England; Joseph Heinemann, Senior Lecturer of Rabbinic Literature at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem; Samuel Sandmel, Professor of Biblical and Hellenistic Literature at the University of Cincinnati; Jakob J. Petuchowski, Research Professor of Jewish Liturgy at the Hebrew Union College and Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati; David Flusser, Professor of History of Religions, the Hebrew University, Jerusalem and Uriel Tal, Professor of Jewish History at Tel-Aviv University. Among Christians asked to participate were: William David Davies, Professor at Duke University; Clemens Thomas, Professor of Biblical Science and Judaic Studies in the Faculty of Theology of Lucerne University, Switzerland; Jan Mlic Lochman, former Professor of Systematic Theology in the University of Prague and now Professor of Systematic Theology in the University of Basle, Switzerland; Jurgen Moltmann, Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of Tuebingen; Bernard-Dominique, Director of the Istina Study Center, in Paris and Kurt Hruby, Director of Judaism section of the Paris Ecumenical Institute and Professor of Rabbinic Hebrew and Judaism at the Catholic University of Paris. These Jewish and Christian scholars presented their respective views on the following topics: 1. The Significance of the Law. 2. Liturgy. 3. Religiousness. 4. Messianic hope. 5. Jesus. and 6. The Future of Christian-Jewish dialogue.

Those interested in the theological views of twentieth-century Jews pertaining to their religious beliefs will find these expressions instructive. However, none of the Christians writers takes the New Testament seriously, for Matthew, Mark, John, Paul and many other Jews in the New Testament accepted the claim of Jesus of Nazareth that in Him the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament were fulfilled. In John's Gospel, those Jews who refused to accept Jesus Christ's claims are described as unbelievers, who will die in their sins. Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the father but by me" (14:6). Peter, the Jew, told the rulers, elders and scribes in Jerusalem: "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12)." In chapter 3 of Acts Peter asserted before the temple in Jerusalem: "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus Christ; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of Life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are all witnesses" (3:12-15).

Both Jews and Gentiles, black, whites, yellow and red men need Jesus Christ, if they are to die happily and spend a happy eternity with the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, the angels and the company of the redeemed.

Raymond F. Surburg

HARD QUESTIONS. Edited by Frank Colquhoun. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois 60515, 1977. 131 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

The title of this symposium was inspired by the Biblical verse from 1 Kings 13: "Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon she came to Jerusalem to test him with hard questions. . ." Thirty-six "hard questions" are answered by thirty-six different British evangelical scholars. Among the contributors are men of the stature of Michael Green, J. I. Packer, John R. W. Stott, Colin Brown, D. K. Dean, Timothy Dudley-Smith.

The editor, Canon Frank Colquhoun of Norwich Cathedral, states in the preface: "The purpose of this collection is to make available in a compact, convenient form some plain biblical answers to the sort of questions which are commonly voiced by people today, both in the church and on the fringe."

There is no doubt that the questions treated "are big ones and raise all kinds of issues." Each hard question is answered in about 1,000 words, which means that the questions cannot be adequately or completely dealt with. All each writer was asked to do was to deal honestly and sympathetically in the light of modern trends. The approach to these problems is from the perspective of the Christian viewpoint which holds to those doctrines of the Apostle's Creed accepted by historic Christianity.

With thirty-six different contributors it is to be expected that on certain topics there would not be complete agreement. This reviewer would sharply disagree with the presentation and handling of the Biblical data allowing for the existing of charismatic gifts (cf. John Goldingay, "Should all Christians seek to speak in 'tongues'"?). In general, the contributors defend and support those teachings without which Christianity would cease to be the only saving faith among the religions of the world.

Raymond F. Surburg

FANNY CROSBY. By Bernard Ruffin. A Pilgrim Press Book from United Church Press, 1976. 275 pages. Cloth. \$8.00.

The Lutheran pastor of Gloria Dei Church, Alexandria, Virginia has written a very interesting and informative book about a blind poetess, who during a goodly portion of her 95 years of existence exercised a considerable influence on her surroundings and generation. Fanny Crosby, whose marriage name was Van Alstyne, was the author of over 9,000 hymns, including such well-known evangelical favorites as "Rescue the Perishing," "Draw Me Nearer," "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior," "Blessed Assurance." By these and many others Fanny Crosby influenced thousands of people between 1820-1915.

The Reverend Ruffin in 24 chapters has presented a chronological account of Fanny Crosby's life beginning with her childhood, followed by adolescence, her stay at the New York School for the Blind, where she for many years was a student, then a teacher and also for many years the attraction of this New York institution. It was only after many years that Fanny Crosby, "the Blind Poetess," severed her connections and went forth on her own.

Mrs. Van Alstyne became a famous person and met many important political and religious personalities of the last half of the 19th century and also a number of the early 20th century. In the nineteenth century she had associations with such religious figures as Dwight L. Moody, Ira Sankey, William Howard Doane, Robert Lowry, Henry Ward Beecher, Sylvester and Hugh Main, W. B. Bradbury and George Stebbins.

"The Blind Poetess" was a remarkable person. Theologically speaking she would be classified as conservative, some would even say a fundamentalist. She believed in the necessity of conversion, in accepting Jesus Christ as Savior and that all who would die in saving faith would go to heaven. She had a great heart for suffering humanity. She worked in the Bowery and in other missions and especially places where the downtrodden of society would congregate. She received little and inadequate compensation for her literary efforts; she preached, delivered lectures and participated in programs without remuneration; often when she was offered money for her services, she refused to accept it. She lived very humbly; sometimes in conditions of squalor. Ruffin states on page 187 about Miss Crosby: "And, of course, a great deal of Fanny's appeal was due to her charisma and indefinable mystique, a mystique that overwhelmed all who met her. There were few who failed to come under her charm. It is amazing that of all the contemporary accounts which describe Fanny Crosby and her work, not one falls anything short of adulation for her

as a person. Even those who bitterly criticized the quality of her hymns had to admit that as a person she possessed an irresistible charm and an indisputable holiness."

This biography will also help the reader to understand the American scene and in some respects the religious scene in America during the nearly century-long time that Fanny Crosby was granted by her Creator to live and work. In some respects she was a religious enigma; never specifically identifying with one church. Her hymn "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior," in some Lutheran hymnals promoted Calvinism and was not in harmony with true Biblical teaching.

The author of this volume devoted many years to historical study before writing this interesting and inspiring life of this unique Christian woman.

Raymond F. Surburg

III. Practical Studies

THE LONELY HOUSE. STRENGTH FOR TIMES OF LOSS. By Lowell O. Erdahl. Abingdon Press, 1977. 112 pages. Cloth. \$5.95.

The senior pastor of University Lutheran Church of Hope, Minneapolis, has written a book that pastors as counsellors and people who have suffered the loss of some dear one will find useful and instructive. The Reverend Erdahl offers the bereaved fullness, direction, and hope in these topics: "The Lonely House" . . . "The Promises for Terrible Times" . . . "A Time to Mourn" . . . "Terror on Every Side!" . . . "The Anguish of Regret" . . . "The Weight of Resentment" . . . "The Will of God?" . . . "Why?" . . . "Our Quest for Meaning" . . . "Coping with Every Day" . . . "The Pain of Loneliness" . . . "Antidote for Self-pity" . . . "How Long, O Lord?" . . . "Six Weeks 'till Frost" . . . "Sing a New Song."

These are devotional readings which treat a theme for each week. There are devotions for fifteen weeks, which can also be read in weekly sections or right through, as the reader prefers. Erdahl seeks to show those who grieve and those who seek counsel "how fullness, directions, and hope can replace emptiness, confusion and despair." In his short devotions the author employs Bible passages, longer and shorter, personal suggestions based on psychological insights and memorable thought to bring "from the virtually inconsolable stage of mourning to the seemingly unreachable stage of recovery".

The use of Scripture is appreciated by the reviewer but at times Bible passages are given different meanings than those which were the intent of the text. Passages misapplied are Romans 6:4 (p. 13), Romans 1:7 (p. 14), Ephesians 6:12 (p. 47), Matthew 6:12 (where the Greek *poneros* means the Evil One or Devil), John 4:24 (p. 48), Luke 9:59-60 (p. 85), 1 Cor. 2:9 (p. 110). On page 65 Erdahl belittles correct theology. What is theology? Correctly understood it is God's Word correctly enunciated. A false theology can result in a person's eternal death. The devotion on page 65, entitled "Believe What You Can" contains assertions that are not theologically or scripturally sound. The discriminating pastor will find much of use and help in this book.

Raymond F. Surburg

KNOW THE TRUTH. By Alfred Doerfler and Wm. H. Eifert. Revised and Enlarged by Phillip B. Giessler. Adam/David/Zerubbabel Press, Cleveland, 1977. 60 pages.

The title of this reissued confirmation book for adults, originally published by Concordia Publishing House, in 1944, is based on John 8:31, 32; "Then Jesus

said, "If you live in My Word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will free you."

The present revision was prompted by five considerations, stated by Giessler on page IV as being: 1) it has been a valuable doctrinal tool in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod since 1944; 2) it needed updating since new issues, such as abortion, TM, new examples, etc., have come to the fore; 3) it was felt that proof texts would be more meaningful to adult converts if a more modern translation were used; 4) its former outlining seemed somewhat crammed; and 5) it lacked the incorporation of various written-out parts of Luther's Six Chief Parts, as well as a few of the more important questions and answers from the Schwan edition of Luther's Small Catechism.

Besides giving attention to these points, all Scriptural quotations are cited in William F. Beck's, *An American Translation*. It has also used *Luther's Small Catechism with An American Translation Text* as the basis for the Ten Commandments and those parts of the Small Catechism using the Bible as proof.

This new edition of *Know the Truth* would be useable not only for confirmation classes. In this day of doctrinal confusion and of theological uncertainty this book, by means of which many were introduced to the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, could render a like service for Lutheran congregations as this book did a few decades ago.

Raymond F. Surburg

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR LIBERATION AND OTHER UPSETTING IDEAS. By J. C. Wynn. Abingdon, Nashville, 1977. 111 pages. Paper. \$3.95.

Dr. Wynn, professor of pastoral theology of Colgate-Rochester Divinity School/Bexley Hall/Crozer Theological Seminary and an active member of the Religious Education Association, wrote this brief, easy-to-understand book whose main thrust is to deal with current issues of education inside the church. In this contribution to the field of religious education, Wynn discusses what Christian education *is*, what it *ought to accomplish*, as well as the *nature* of its task.

Under six different topics he introduces upsetting ideas. He is critical of both modern education as applied to Christian education and at the same time berates traditional orthodoxy. With some of the criticisms made against modern religious educators the reviewer would agree. Some of his observations are accurate and true. How true is Wynn's observation that "church education always reflects, like a mirror, the image of the body of the ecclesiastic itself. Seldom do we see a strong church with weak education or, obversely, a weak church whose educational program is very good. Indeed, if current tendencies persist without amelioration, future generations will face dark ages in which they could be denied an understanding of Christian faith and order," (p. 19).

One topic discussed by Wynn is the place of "liberation theology" in the Christian Churches. Wynn believes that active participation in the promotion of education for liberation of the poor and disadvantaged is imperative and to participate in helping the Third World Nations, sharing our resources and wealth with them, means involvement in "incarnational theology."

From a Lutheran and Biblical standpoint, Wynn fails to grasp the true nature of the Kingdom of God and confuses the social gospel with the Biblical doctrine of redemption.

The last topics discussed by the professor from Colgate-Rochester Divinity School is "the conspiracy of silence about eschatology in Church Education" (pp. 89-100). Here again his understanding differs from the traditional understanding. In discussing the nature of the second coming of Christ he adopts Dodd's "realized eschatology" concept. Wynn does not present a consistent

view of what really is eschatology and what is involved in teaching this doctrine in the program of Christian education.

Raymond F. Surburg

A NEW CLIMATE FOR STEWARDSHIP. By Wallace E. Fisher. Abingdon, Nashville, 1976. 127 pages. Paper. \$3.96.

Undoubtedly, there is a need for a new climate for stewardship, and the rediscovery of Biblical stewardship, for which the author calls. We look for a reexamination of stewardship in the light of God's Word and of the responsible stewardship of Biblical truths. We second the motion of the "call for fundamental change." It is vital to emphasize the care of persons, evangelism, social action, ethical individual acts, and race relations as a stewardship responsibility.

The author is to be commended for condemning the reliance on budgets, manipulative techniques, and preoccupation with raising money and meeting institutional needs. But so much is promised and so little delivered. Many valid questions and issues are raised, some of which are handled quite adequately, but many of which are left at loose ends because a liberal theology is promoted.

Wallace E. Fisher has written some very stimulating books and is a provocative writer. It is the impression of this reviewer that the publishers recognized this and asked Fisher to write a book on stewardship. Possibly, the stewardship efforts of Fisher's congregation are good, but that does not make him competent for providing solutions to the stewardship problems of our day. He raises the right issues, but his answers do not satisfy in many cases.

Fisher promotes a liberal theology and the historical-critical method. His definition of God's Word is: "The Word of God is the good news of God's saving work in Christ." He claims to take the middle road, for on pages 38-40 he seems to advise that we should not be too conservative and not too liberal. But Fisher plainly sides with the liberal side when he says that the congregation can accept myth, legend, drama, etc., in the communication of the Creation, the Fall, etc. That, of course, is corrupt stewardship of the Word. He commends "solid Biblical scholarship" that equipped the clergy in mainline Protestant churches to discern "more clearly the divine Word in human words," and he wants the laymen to be taught likewise, approving the J and P sources to help understand better the Creation stories (page 53).

Rightly, he raises questions about protecting human rights and avoiding pollution, but he apparently equates these with specific political methods. He does not seem to understand that sin exists, which is at the base of ecological problems.

The section on quotas and apportionments is good. The treatment of sales and bazaars is bad.

Fisher pecks away at many problems, settles some, but this is not the book for congregational stewardship committees or their leaders. It is stimulating, but mostly in the political arena, where it takes the liberal view. A smorgasbord is offered, some tasty, some not so tasty.

Waldo J. Werning