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# CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY

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## Book Reviews

TEACHING CREATION SCIENCE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS. By Duane T. Gish. El Cajon, California: Institute for Creation Research, 1995.

In recent years a considerable number of excellent books have been published examining the claims of evolution and creation as theories explaining the origin of the universe and living organisms. Busy pastors are handicapped in examining this literature both because of lack of time and scientific background. Hence Dr. Duane Gish's little seventy-page volume is particularly welcome. Not only is it brief, it is written in non-technical language well suited for the general public.

Dr. Gish is well known as an able and stout defender of the concept of creation and a perceptive critic of evolutionary theory. A holder of a doctorate in biochemistry, he enjoys a rich background of research both in distinguished universities and in industry. He presently serves as Senior Vice-President of the Institute for Creation Research and is also a founder and member of the board of the Creation Research Society.

The announced goal of this little volume is to demonstrate how creationism may be taught in public schools without violating the Constitution of the United States of America. In accomplishing this task, however, Gish provides a concise and compelling presentation of evidence which clearly shows the superiority of creation over evolution as a theory explaining origins. All this work is done from a purely scientific point of view, although Dr. Gish personally accepts creation primarily as an article of faith based upon the Holy Scriptures. His thesis in this booklet is that the created universe itself calls for the conclusion that there is a Creator. Both evolution and creation are ultimately based upon faith. Gish writes, "No theory of origins can be devoid of philosophical and religious implications. Creation implies the existence of a Creator. . . On the other hand, evolution is a non-theistic theory of origins which by definition excludes the intervention of an outside agency of any kind. Evolutionists believe that by employing natural laws and processes *plus nothing* it is possible to explain the origin of the universe and all that it contains" (page 4).

Many, unfortunately, believe that evolution has been proven as a scientific fact and, consequently, are willing to bend their theology to accommodate "science." Gish shows that such surrender is totally unnecessary. He contends rather, that the scientific findings provide powerful support for creation. In building his case Gish includes an impressive array of quotations from scientists in various fields. He is careful to include a high percentage of evolutionists who admit the problems facing the theory. Nor does he quote them out of context. It is evident that evolutionists hold to the theory, despite these many problems and defects, largely because they cannot bring themselves to accept the religious concept of a Creator. Gish quotes the British molecular biologist Michael Denton. Denton, who is neither a Christian nor a professing

creationist, writes, "The hold of the evolutionary paradigm is so powerful, that an idea which is more like a principle of medieval astrology than a serious twentieth-century scientific theory has become a reality for evolutionary biologists" (page 30).

Gish concludes: "There is a vast body of well-established scientific evidence that supports creation while exposing fallacies and weaknesses in evolution theory. Thus creation of the universe and its living inhabitants by the direct volitional acts of a Creator independent of and external to the natural universe is not only a credible explanation for our origin but is an explanation that is far superior to the notion that the universe created itself naturally and that life arose spontaneously on this planet" (page 63). Another valuable feature of this little book is a two-page list of suggestions for further reading. This up-to-date bibliography will be helpful to anyone wishing to follow up on Gish's excellent review of the current situation.

Paul A. Zimmerman  
Traverse City, Michigan

THE THEOLOGY OF MATTHEW. By Ulrich Luz. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Narrative criticism is more and more the criticism of choice among scholars and to date seems to be the most productive in providing usable theological substance. Luz follows the traditional views concerning Matthew's use of Q, Mark, his own private source, and his own variation which provides for a written source for the Sermon on the Mount (pages 6-10). Ultimately questions of origin are less important than the meaning of the *story* for the community. On the one hand, this approach takes the text at its face value, treating each word or discourse with equal value; but, on the other hand, it tends to be historically agnostic by ignoring the question of whether the things narrated really happened. Luz himself has admittedly become less confident of finding authentic words of Jesus (page 142). Historical questions are not ultimate for narrative criticism, which sees the gospel *chiefly* in terms of the evangelist and his readers. We are not really learning about Jesus but about Matthew and his community, which are poles between which the story or narrative slides back and forth. Since the *gospel*, in this case Matthew, is the only source, we are never quite sure what his readers understood when they heard it.

On the positive side, with narrative criticism the gospel can be approached *theologically*. What did Matthew and his hearers believe? The prologue, for

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example, now has clear christological implications (pages 22-41). Seeing the gospels only in historical terms produces a meager theological harvest, but narrative criticism can operate without any agreed historical foundation. It is a science of interpreting texts without asking or presupposing events. Easter is “a clear act of God impinging on the physical world” which only later (as for example, in the *Gospel of Peter*) is transformed into “an objective and describable event” (page 137). Many may seek instruction as to how one distinguishes between “act” and “event” and how or why this former develops into the latter.

Narrative criticism assumes that the writings of each author often reflects the beliefs of different communities. These communities could have opposing theologies, as, for example, those of Matthew and Paul (pages 146-153). Now comes the problem of why this opposition was unrecognized, not only by those who put a full-blown canon together, but even earlier by those churches which first heard both authors read in their services. There is no solution in saying that those communities saw a unity among these writings which modern scholars see as diverse.

Again, these remarks are not to slight the benefits or the attractiveness of the approach. Events following the crucifixion are correctly seen as signs of the judgment (page 136). But still the practitioner slides from side to side, from profound theological insight to agnosticism. Narrative criticism is really *story criticism* and, even where one agrees with some conclusions, finding this or that story line seems arbitrary. Luz, for example, places the law *after* the gospel in his interpretation of the Great Commission: “Jesus’ commandments are the gospel that his disciples owe to the world.”

Those who practice this method in our circles leave no doubt about an historical foundation for the gospels, but this historical certainty is *not* derived from narrative criticism. It must be imported into the process or it comes in faith, which *cannot*, of course, provide historical certainty. Narrative criticism does allow a document to be understood on its own terms, something which is often done by those who correctly see the Bible as totality. It also places too much weight on the individual books, ignoring the problem that writings did not arise *autonomously*, but in relation to other communities and writings. The approach is somewhat anti-incarnational or, at least, anti-catholic—each church for itself! In theology or exegesis the historical question can only be temporarily ignored. When narrative criticism asks this question, it crosses the boundaries which it has established for itself.

**READING SCRIPTURE IN PUBLIC.** By Thomas Edward McComiskey. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991.

If the parish pastor does not sense a noticeable hush coming over the congregation as it is seated following the collect in the Divine Service, it probably means that the pastor should obtain and read this small book. For the congregation that does not quiet itself for the reading of Holy Scripture, suggests Thomas McComiskey, is probably not hearing the Scripture read in an arresting fashion. McComiskey urges the reader of Scripture, by the interpretive act of reading, to "create a solemn worshipful moment in the service" and makes the unassailable point that, because "the way we read the Bible says much about the way we view it," it is all too possible to "hear the Scriptures read in a manner that fails to reflect their authority."

Inasmuch as the reading of Scripture is a delivery of the grace of God, preparation for the task is a self-evident requirement for the reader. With this point in mind, McComiskey seeks to provide an approach to weekly preparation rather than a once-for-all-time make over of one's reading style. He calls attention to the different reading styles which are called forth by different literary structures, notes the effects of punctuation and phrasing upon the spoken text, and cautions the reader to pay attention to the presence of Hebraic and Greek constructions, which remain embedded in English versions. He insists, above all, upon the subordination of self by the reader to the author's intended meaning.

Reading about reading is no substitute for actually hearing a text read well; the book, therefore, would benefit from an accompanying audio-tape. But any set of audio-tapes of the Bible as read by Alexander Scourby will suffice to this end. This book explains why we drop what we are doing and listen when Scourby reads and why we should seek to have this same effect upon our own hearers.

Andrew W. Dimit  
Fort Wayne, Indiana

**PAUL AND PERSEVERANCE: STAYING IN AND FALLING AWAY.** By Judith M. Gundry Volf. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1990.

Judith M. Gundry Volf's *Paul and Perseverance*, a slightly revised version of her dissertation submitted in 1988 to the University of Tübingen, is a thorough if not consummate treatment of the Pauline understanding of election and perseverance. Though her conclusions fit comfortably within her

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Reformed tradition, her exegesis is both stimulating and instructive—and, from a Lutheran perspective, can foster a fresh examination of these themes, especially in the wake of the “decision theology” which has dominated so much of American religious life and has left its mark on Lutheranism as well. Rarely does one encounter so much careful exegesis in a given amount of space. Volf deserves a hearing—not because she is correct, but because she is so rigorous in her grappling with the texts.

For Volf, the teaching of Paul is that “sure continuity characterizes the salvation of individual believers” (page 283). In line with the Lutheran Confessions, she sees the apostle as portraying “the various aspects of Christian’s salvation as interconnected links of a chain [Romans 8:28-30] whose last member is glorification.” This “chain” of God’s predetermined intervention in human lives is not to be construed, however, as a logical deduction “which guarantees final salvation with mathematical certainty,” for the faithfulness of God alone is salvation’s guarantee (page 283). Her understanding of the Pauline doctrine of election is quite compatible with the Formula of Concord: God works through His own predetermined “means” (word and sacrament) to bring about the salvation of those whom He both foreknew and elected for eternal salvation (FC: SE11).

The real rub, however, comes in Volf’s treatment of Pauline “perseverance.” Can one fall from grace? Is the axiom true: “once saved always saved”? It is her contention that it is. In her exegesis of numerous Pauline texts Volf has concluded that Paul does not lay out before the believer the prospect of losing his or her salvation; indeed, “repentance,” as she sees it, is directed not to the converted with a view toward the possible loss of faith, but only to the as yet unconverted or to the Christian in the sense of encouraging a more manifest Christian witness. 1 Corinthians 11:27-32 is interpreted, for example, not as a warning that sin on the part of the Christian can lead to eternal condemnation, but as an example of the paternal chastisement by God: those in the Corinthian church who have “died” (verse 30) are not to be seen as receiving eternal condemnation; rather, the illnesses and deaths in the congregation have as their effective goal to “scare” or shame the members into God-pleasing behavior (but one may compare FC: Epitome 7:16-19). Their illness or death is a sign not of their unbelief, but of the will of God to formulate holiness within His body (page 112):

The Corinthian Christians who became guilty of the body and blood of the Lord by participating inappropriately in the Lord’s Supper and who were chastised with physical death will, in the end, be saved. Paul does not make repentance from sin for which a Christian incurs temporal judgment pivotal for escape from final condemnation.

Rather, Christians' relation to God as God's children is here presented as definitive for their final destiny. (p. 112)

At issue here is not whether God will see through on His promise to save the elect, but whether true "saving" faith can ever exist for a time in one who is not "elect." Though perhaps not intended, the approach of Volf has the effect of making justification the effectual beginning of the salvation of a Christian (one may note the affinities here with Roman Catholicism) rather than the status in which the Christian must continually walk. Baptism, for example, in the Lutheran Symbols is not merely the first link in the chain of salvation (i.e., the "calling" of Romans 8:30), but rather "the daily garment which [the Christian] is to wear all the time" (LC 4:84); "a Christian life is nothing else than a daily baptism, once begun and ever continued" (4:65) precisely because of the very real tension of sin and forgiveness. Forgiveness is always the desperate and eschatological *need* of the Christian even if it is also the assured hope and expectation of the one divinely elected to everlasting salvation.

Patrick J. Bayen  
Lexington, Kentucky

**CALVIN AND SOCIAL WELFARE: DEACONS AND THE BOURSE FRANÇAISE.** By Jeannine E. Olson. Cranbury, New Jersey: Susquehanna University Press, 1989.

Increasingly historians of the Reformation are asking questions about how the reformers actually implemented religious change when they were in a position to do so. It is relatively easy to investigate what a Luther or a Calvin *said* ought to be done, but it is an entirely different matter to find out what actually happened. While the former sort of inquiry relies primarily upon the published record, the latter often involves trying to make sense of old hand-written records, usually imperfectly preserved—visitation-records, account-books, episcopal registers, and the like. Deciphering them is difficult enough, but then using them to tell the story of what the Reformation actually meant for those who lived in it is work that demands skill, erudition, and enormous patience. Jeannine Olson's *Calvin and Social Welfare* is the product of such work.

By careful and thorough examination of the records left in the state archives of Geneva, Professor Olson has uncovered the story of the *Bourse Française* (literally, the "French Fund"), a welfare system established by Geneva during the days of John Calvin for the support of foreign refugees. Calvin himself laid the theoretical foundations for the organizational structure of such a fund by his contention that the diaconate was an office established in the New Testament



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not for the proclamation of the word but for the relief of the poor and needy. Accordingly, as Geneva became a place of refuge for Protestant exiles in the 1540s, Calvin and his followers accepted it as their obligation to do something on behalf of these newcomers by establishing the *Bourse Française* and placing it under the supervision of deacons. The virtue of the work of Olson is that it shows how the church of Geneva converted Protestant theory into actual practice.

Not everyone will find a book like this interesting reading. Although the prose of Olson is quite readable, her argument is based in part on statistics that show patterns and amounts with the result that her text includes five tables and thirteen appendixes with titles like "Selected Expenditures from the Extraordinary Accounts of the *Bourse Française*: August 1559-November 1562." However, those who do read the work will discover some fascinating bits of information. For example, the *Bourse* not only spent money to provide food, housing, and clothes for the refugees but also to care for the sick and in some cases to pay for schooling and vocational training. Furthermore, Olson also shows that for some years before the outbreak of the wars of religion in France in 1562 as well as after, the administrators of the fund used their resources to support Protestant efforts in that country by purchasing Bibles, catechisms, and hymnals for distribution and by supplying aid to Protestant ministers and their families who were being persecuted in France. Finally, it was this fund that paid the copyist of Calvin's sermons!

The work of Professor Olson is obviously that of a specialist in the Genevan Reformation that will appeal primarily to other such specialists. But some of the readers of this journal may be particularly interested in how the Reformation actually worked and in how one would go about answering such a question. *Calvin and Social Welfare* is to be recommended to anyone with interest of this kind.

Cameron A. MacKenzie

ISAIAH IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK, I-VIII2. By Richard Schneck. BIBAL Dissertation Series, 1. Vallejo, California: BIBAL Press, 1994. xii and 339 pages.

The revised and amplified version of a doctoral dissertation presented in 1992 to the faculty of theology of the Universidad Javeriana in Bogota, Colombia, this volume attempts to show that at least one significant reference to the book of Isaiah appears in each of the first eight chapters of the Gospel of Mark. For Schneck (professor of Sacred Scripture in Universidad Católica

del Ecuador) the frequency of such references shows that Isaiah was the evangelist's favorite prophetic book. More than any other, therefore, Isaiah was influential in shaping the plot and christology of the gospel.

In his introductory remarks Schneck offers a number of important preliminary observations. According to Schneck, the evangelist cites and alludes to the Old Testament using a variety of literary techniques—word repetition, contrasting motifs, concentric patterns, etc., which Schneck views largely as a “mnemonic device in order to aid the preacher and to act as a prompt for the catechist” (page 2, comparing pages 14-17). The Old Testament, he asserts, represents “the privileged background for a correct interpretation” of the New Testament (page 17). The correct starting point for any examination of the gospel's use of Isaiah is, therefore, the texts of Mark and Isaiah. The voluminous secondary literature on this topic must be judiciously considered, and a wide range of interpretive methods is to be considered. But such methods should be used in a complementary fashion, and the text of Mark itself is to be treated in order that it might tell a story.

The gospel's references to Isaiah are then examined according to the following outline: the beginning of the good news (1:1-4a, 9-11); controversy and confrontation (2:7, 16-20; 2:27); Jesus speaking parables (4:12, 24); the miracles of Jesus (5:1-20; 6:34-44); Jesus teaching and healing (7:1-23, 31-27); and the obduracy of the human heart (8:14-21, 22-26). Mark's references to Isaiah are determined to be of three types: (1.) quotations from the Old Testament; (2.) Definite allusions (where it is assumed that the writer had in mind a specific passage of Scripture); and (3.) Literary and other parallels. The evangelist's references evince consistent regard for the Old Testament context from which they came. And they are derived, it seems, from sources of mixed type, including the Septuagint, Masoretic Text, and the Targums. The evangelist, concludes Schneck, “cites Isaiah more than any other Old Testament source because such a preference already existed in the primitive tradition” (page 248).

Schneck's thesis concerning the evangelist's predilection for Isaiah is an attractive one. And there is much, it would seem, to support it. No other classical prophet is explicitly identified, as is Isaiah, in this gospel. It is questionable, however, whether Schneck has convincingly established that which he set out to prove, namely, that a “significant” reference to Isaiah appears in each of the gospel's first eight chapters. Much of his argument relies far too heavily on references which can, at best, be described as “indirect allusions,” but in other cases only qualify as references with “several points of contact,” or with nothing more than “similar wording-phrases,” etc. (noting especially pages 252-253). Schneck's evidence for the influence of a variety

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of textual types depends on these same references, not on the more certain basis of the gospel's explicit citations. His overall effort to demonstrate clearly the pervasive influence of Isaiah therefore fails to convince.

Bruce Schuchard  
Victor, Iowa

THE ENGLISH BIBLE FROM KJV TO NIV: A HISTORY AND EVALUATION. By Jack P. Lewis. Second Edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991.

Some can still remember when the King James Version was *the* English Bible. Those days, however, are long gone and English-speaking Christians must *choose* a Bible from an ever-increasing number, and pastors must be prepared to guide them. There is no substitute, of course, for actually studying a version in the light of the original text, but also important is reading the reviews of others who have taken the time and have the expertise to evaluate the current crop of English Bibles; and *The English Bible from KJV to NIV* is a good place to begin such reading.

Jack Lewis, a retired professor of the Bible at Harding Graduate School of Religion, has put together a very useful handbook on the main versions used today—as the title indicates—from the King James Version (1611) to the New International Version (1978). Actually, however, this second edition has been expanded to incorporate analyses of the New King James Version (1982), the Revised English Bible (1989), and the New Revised Standard Version (1990). It also includes, with only minor changes, chapters from the first edition of the Good News Bible, Living Bible, New World Translation (Jehovah's Witnesses), New American Bible, Jerusalem Bible, New American Standard, New English Bible, Revised Standard Version, and American Standard Version, as well as a couple of brief introductory chapters on the history of the English Bible and “doctrinal problems in the King James Version.”

The chapter on the doctrinal problems in the KJV indicates two characteristics of the work—(1.) that the author accepts the Bible as the word of God and therefore considers doctrine an important consideration in the evaluation of a translation, and (2.) that one of the purposes of the work is to demonstrate the propriety of replacing the King James Version with a contemporary translation. With respect to the first point, Lewis regularly assesses a version from the standpoint not just of accuracy but of accuracy as it pertains to doctrine. So, for example, he is especially critical of the New World Translation, and rightly so, for its “tendentious” treatment of passages

dealing with God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the crucifixion, and eschatology (pages 230-234). But even in the case of more widely accepted translations like the RSV or the NKJV, Lewis does not hesitate to criticize a particular rendering as giving "an unbiblical doctrine" (as the RSV in Romans 11:20, [page 127]) or as lending "encouragement to the dispensational interpretation" (as the NKJV in 2 Thessalonians 2:7, [page 347]).

With respect to the King James Version, Lewis argues not only that archaic language hinders contemporary communication of the word, but also that the majority of textual scholars today—though certainly not all—reject the underlying text of the versions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, so that the KJV does not fully represent the text of the original Scripture. For this reason, too, Lewis questions the value of the New King James Version, the only one of the contemporary versions to use the *Textus Receptus* for the New Testament, and wonders whether this translation does not represent "the last gasp in traditionalism's dying struggle to maintain itself" (pages 334-335). Not everyone, of course, will agree with Lewis' assessment and he does not pretend to treat the issue in a comprehensive manner; but by raising the question of the text—and not just with respect to the KJV and the NKJV but in the case of each version discussed—Lewis indicates to his reader the mind of the translators as they approached their task regarding an issue that does much to explain the final outcome of their endeavors.

Besides the underlying text of each version and the accuracy of the translation, Lewis also discusses philosophy of translation (e.g., dynamic equivalence versus formal equivalence), English style (e.g., capitalizing divine names), changes in subsequent editions, and whatever else he deems relevant to the description and evaluation of a particular translation. In each case he provides copious examples to demonstrate the point which he is making.

The examples themselves are worth the price of the book, since even when Lewis himself does not make a judgment regarding an issue, the citations permit the reader to do so. Regarding, for example, the use of feminist terminology in the New RSV, Lewis is not particularly exercised, content simply to remark that "only time will tell how the NRSV effort [to eliminate traditional terminology] commends itself to the Bible-reading public" (page 403). Lewis does, however, cite several instances of the various ways in which the translators have accommodated the feminist point of view so that the tendentious and inaccurate nature of this translation is evident even without Lewis saying so explicitly—e.g., singulars changed to plurals and *andres adelphoi* rendered "friends" (on pages 401-404 one may find the entire list). Thus, on account of the abundance of examples cited, readers can form their own opinions regarding this and other characteristics of the versions discussed

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in Lewis' book. He also includes a brief treatment of the history and background of each version as well as a very good bibliography for those interested in doing more research. Although one may not always agree with Lewis' conclusions, his clear discussion of the issues and his thorough presentation of the evidence make this book an excellent resource for the evaluation of contemporary versions of the English Bible.

Cameron A. MacKenzie

**BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION IN THE EARLY CHURCH: AN HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO PATRISTIC EXEGESIS.** By Manlio Simonetti. Translated by John A. Hughes. Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1994.

This volume is an English translation of a short essay in Italian first published in 1981. As a result of his teaching experiences Simonetti thought it necessary to fill a perceived gap in the literature regarding the exegesis of the fathers of the church by supplying an historical outline. Thus, this book is concise and yet argues a line of historical development in exegesis.

The author has been true to his task. He provides a good introduction to the exegetical writings available in this period. His analysis, on the other hand, of these writings is not always helpful and at times very shaky. Simonetti concludes, for example, that Ignatius indicates a "certain suspicion. . .*vis-à-vis* the Old Testament, reflecting a strongly anti-Jewish approach (page 13). Specific references to the Old Testament are limited in the seven letters of Ignatius, but the very context of the remarks assumes a familiarity with the details of the creation-narrative, the temple, the importance of blood, and the Psalms. The epistles of Ignatius are not primarily exegetical works, but pastoral encouragements to hear the word of God from faithful bishops who give the gifts of Christ. It is, therefore, a significant leap to argue that they indicate opposition to the Old Testament.

Simonetti does, on the other hand, offer some helpful historical insights into the divergence of the so-called "schools" of Alexandria and Antioch. He also sets forth the context of pagan thought that frequently forced Christian responses to criticism. The discussion of allegories, types, *theoria*, and literal interpretations recognizes that these were not always opposed to each other. As the author supplies some comments on each exegete, he makes references to specific works which indicate the level of interest in various biblical books.

There is, finally, a helpful chapter on the decline of exegetical activity in the fifth and sixth centuries. It is in this period that *catenae* gained favor. These contained the biblical text surrounded by the interpretations of selected authors.

At first glance this approach may seem a good idea, but, much like the practice of biblical proof-texting, the context became less important than the "sound-bite" offered from the fathers. In addition, the comments of the fathers sometimes became the final word on the text. Good Lutheran exegesis will anchor itself in the unity of Scripture, read the wisdom of the fathers of the church, know the Lutheran Confessions, and then venture out upon the deep and sometimes treacherous waters of Scripture.

This book would serve well as a textbook. (It will be more valuable if future printings correct the large number of typographical errors.) It would also serve as a historical reference point for exegetical discussions in our own day. The author makes frequent references to the connection between preaching and exegetical writing. Is literal exegesis or allegorical exegesis more valuable for proclamation? What effect did the literacy of the hearers have upon the preaching task and exegetical style? These and many other important questions are raised. More importantly, this work will suggest a need to read some of the fathers themselves and give one an idea where to start.

Karl F. Fabrizio  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**GOSPELS AND TRADITION: STUDIES ON REDACTION CRITICISM OF THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS.** By Robert H. Stein. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1991.

*Gospels and Tradition* is a compilation of previously published articles by Robert H. Stein, gathered around the general theme of redaction criticism. The intent of the work is to argue for the validity and vitality of the hermeneutic, especially within evangelicalism, the tradition with which he wishes to be identified. The introduction and opening chapter set forth the understanding and evaluation of the discipline by Stein. Redaction criticism is quite narrow in scope; its objectives, as Stein sees it, are four-fold: to ascertain "(1.) what theological views the evangelist presents that are foreign to his sources; (2.) what unusual theological emphasis or emphases the evangelist places upon the sources he received; (3.) what theological purpose or purposes the evangelist has in writing his gospel; and (4.) out of what *Sitz im Leben* the evangelist writes his gospel" (pages 17-18). The last two, he repeatedly observes, are the most slippery for the exegete. The redaction of the evangelist of received texts is not to be equated with his "theology"; the latter includes that which he leaves intact as well as that which he changes.

In chapter two Stein analyzes the Lukan prologue (1:1-4) and postulates that

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the author of the third gospel knew of at least three *Sitze im Leben* of the gospel materials: (1.) the situation of the historical Jesus; (2.) the situation in which the eyewitnesses “delivered” orally “these things fulfilled among us”; and (3.) the situation to which Luke and his writing belong. It is the task of the exegete to be cognizant of and uncover, if possible, these three levels of Christian witness, each of which is involved in the “divinely inspired purpose” for the writing of the gospel (page 47). The evangelicalism of Stein keeps him from falling prey to the current penchant for asserting that “older is better”; and this is true for his treatment of “authenticity” as well.

The strength of Stein’s approach lies in its ability to flesh out the gospel as it moves to levels two and three. The pitfalls lie in the inherent subjectivity of the method, for the redaction critic must begin by assuming that the evangelist had certain materials at his disposal with which to work. In the case of Mark (assuming Markan priority, as Stein does), this assumption puts the exegete at a disadvantage since the sources of Mark are not equally at our disposal. For that reason the remaining eight chapters of Stein’s book deal with questions relating to the redaction of Mark, that is, how Mark wishes the reader to understand and apply specific events in the life of Jesus. Stein’s conclusions fall on the conservative side; the transfiguration, for example, is not a misplaced account of the resurrection. Unfortunately, no new ground is broken here; the sections on Markan techniques (“sandwiching” of pericopes, etc.) and vocabulary have been treated sufficiently elsewhere.

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